
Book reviews

Maren Clegg Hyer and Gale R. Owen-Crocker eds, *The material culture of daily living in the Anglo-Saxon world* (University of Exeter Press, Exeter, 2011). xii+386 pp. ISBN: 978 0 85989 843. £60 (hardback).

Historians, art historians and archaeologists working on the early medieval period have a long tradition of engaging with the material culture (artefacts, things, objects) of the Anglo-Saxons. There has, however, often been a tendency for these separate constituencies to work in parallel to each other, rarely straying into each other's territory. This volume makes a brave attempt to demonstrate the value of a more integrated approach.

It is important to be clear what this volume is not. It is not intended to be a comprehensive overview of all aspects of Anglo-Saxon material culture. It does not attempt to provide a 'Dummies' Guide' to Anglo-Saxon artefacts nor replicate the important but now very dated chapters on material culture in David Wilson's 1976 *Anglo-Saxon archaeology*. Some of the papers, such as Win Stephens' on early medieval glass or the editors' paper on making and using textiles certainly do offer a general overview of all aspects of their particular topics. Others, however, focus in on more specific topics or aspects of particular areas of material culture. For example, Anglo-Saxon metalwork is addressed through a typically thorough paper on metalworking by David Hinton, a detailed case study of the Fuller Brooch by Elizabeth Coatsworth and Michael Pinder and a consideration of the impact of the Portable Antiquities Scheme by Michael Lewis, Andrew Richardson and David Williams. There are also certain aspects of Anglo-Saxon material culture that are not addressed, most obviously ceramics, coinage, stone and non-metallic personal items (such as beads, jet, amber). Other papers are perhaps on topics that might not be considered as traditionally 'material culture', such as Christina Lee's paper on disease and impairment. Carol Biggam's paper on plants and Christopher Grocock's on sheep and cattle, whilst both very useful, also are more related to the 'daily living' element of the title than 'material culture'. Overall, I was not convinced that this combination of general overviews and detailed specific discussion worked terribly well, and it means the intended audience of the volume is not entirely clear.

The strongest papers successfully integrate the archaeological and textual evidence. Archaeological approaches to material culture (a term with a good archaeological genealogy) have not always engaged with the textual evidence, although to be fair, the documentary evidence only really becomes extensive in the later Anglo-Saxon periods. Equally, analyses of objects based purely on historical sources can be somewhat dry and disengaged with artefacts themselves. Here, though, we see in papers such as Carol Biggam's overview of the role of plants the potential of bringing the two separate

academic traditions together to produce a genuinely informative overview of the range of plant-sources that could be utilised and their cultural context. The balance is not always equal; the chapter by Lewis, Richardson and Williams is avowedly archaeological in tenor, not surprising given its focus on articulating the research dividend provided by the PAS (although why no reference to the University of York's Viking and Anglo-Saxon Landscape and Economy project, which put the interpretation of metal-detector finds at its very heart?). Christina Lee's paper on disease and impairment is more resolutely based on documents and touches only lightly on the evidence from palaeopathology and osteology, which is a little surprising given the central role of burial studies in Anglo-Saxon archaeology.

The overall tone of this volume is very traditional; no references to artefact biography or Actor Network Theory lurk between these covers. For many this might be interpreted as a virtue! However, the introductory essay is perhaps a missed opportunity to have addressed in a little more depth the historical and interpretative relationship between material culture and documentary sources and reference to important work by John Moreland and Anders Andrén is notable by its absence. Intriguingly such conceptual engagements with this complex relationship tend to be written by archaeologists rather than historians.

In addition to the detailed bibliographies, there are also shorter lists of suggested reading connected to each paper, which would serve as a useful point of departure for students wanting to take an interest in a particular area further. There are plenty of images, drawings and graphs. A little colour would not have gone amiss considering the topic, although coming in at £60, the associated price increase would perhaps have been a little less welcome. Overall, there are some very useful papers in here, but coverage is patchy and a little uneven. Many of the individual papers will certainly end up on reading lists for my students, though this is perhaps a book that will be plundered for its individual elements rather than read through as a single cohesive volume.

Dr David Petts
University of Durham

S. J. Connolly ed., *Oxford companion to Irish history* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, new edition, 2011). xix+650pp. ISBN: 978-0-19-969186-9. £12.99 (paperback).

Over a decade since its original publication, the *Oxford companion to Irish history* remains an important resource for anyone curious about Ireland's past; new and rewritten entries in this 2011 paperback edition reflect developments since 1998 in Irish politics and society, as well as growing popular and scholarly interest in Irish history and culture. The *OCIH* is an alphabetical listing of nearly 2,000 headwords with descriptions; a Subject Index provides a guide to this vast volume's themes by grouping key headwords together in categories from 'Acts of Parliament' to 'women'. Connolly skilfully assembles contributions from nearly a hundred respected scholars of Early Mediaeval, Gaelic,

Mediaeval and Modern Ireland. Indeed, the organization, variety and quality of the entries serve well the *Companion's* two objectives: quickly to provide a definition of, or information on, an organisation, individual, place, event or concept in Irish history; and to facilitate leisurely browsing by topic, thus providing a springboard for further learning (and entries on important topics such as 'Catholicism' and 'nationalism' include select bibliographies further to help the reader in this regard).

A one-volume *Companion* cannot answer every question. However, every academic should find his or her area of interest competently covered and can trust the *OCIH* as a reference for topics outside his or her specialism. My research focuses on the occurrence of local violence during the Irish Civil War; short definitions concerning the conflict are clearly written. Even more impressive are longer entries on related concepts such as 'agrarian protest' (p. 5); this entry is especially useful for contextualising 1920s rural agitation because it combines a succinct account of the tactics and demands of groups engaged in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century agrarian violence with an assessment of the changing interpretations of the causes of this protest. The *OCIH's* even-handed and authoritative treatment of a range of topics is very welcome given the political and sectarian agendas that have beset Irish history. Entries on events and organisations associated with what has become known as the Irish Revolution (the transfer of state power from Britain to Ireland during 1916–23) cut through the polemic that has engulfed this particular period's history. Indeed, given the emergence over the last decade of a 'new revolutionary history' advanced by local studies such as Peter Hart's research on the early IRA, it is surprising that there are no headwords such as 'Revolution (1920s)' or 'revolutionary history' in this edition, especially given the attention paid to the process of history-writing elsewhere in the *Companion* ('history and historians', pp. 254–6, and 'colonial and post-colonial models', p. 109).¹ It is reasonable that a companion to history does not reflect all modern academic developments; however, it seems that the *OCIH* does not embrace the 'challenge of writing about the recent past' (p. xii) as fully as does the *Oxford companion to British history*, which covers living figures such as Tony Blair. This is, though, a quibble about an otherwise solid reference work.

Undergraduates and postgraduates regularly will use the *OCIH*; the *Companion* is certainly accurate and accessible. However, the general reader without prior knowledge of Irish history may struggle slightly in the absence of chronological structure. Narrative histories, such as Foster's seminal *Modern Ireland*, provide a clearer sense of time passing and of the development of certain themes throughout Irish history. Of course, reference works, such as the *OCIH*, are meant to complement rather than replace general histories, but the *Companion* could, with an appendix akin to the *Penguin atlas of British and Irish history's* chronological table, offer a helpful, at-a-glance outline of its impressive ancient to present-day time-span. Early Ireland's complex royal hierarchy (pp. 301–2) does not lend itself to a conventional genealogical chart, as do the Saxons, Normans and other lines (provided as appendices to

1 Peter Hart, *The IRA at war, 1916–1923* (Oxford, 2003), 7.

the *Companion to British history*). However, the *Penguin atlas's* 'Rulers of Britain and Ireland' does include Irish high kings and prime ministers; a similar list appended to the *OCIH* would enhance the coverage of political leaders offered by the individual entries.

The *Companion* suggests that readers in search of a 'brief chronological narrative' of Irish history look to 'England', a 'suggestion that itself is testimony to the contradictions built into Ireland's history' (p. xviii). The long history, starting even before the twelfth-century Norman invasion of Ireland, of interaction between the two islands is certainly a prominent theme of the book. However, the *Companion* does not focus unduly on the high political realm of Ireland's relationship with its neighbour/conqueror. Many aspects of Irish life ('diet', 'dress', 'marriage' and 'sport') are covered, and the volume is useful for those concerned with social trends ('population' and 'urbanisation') and local history (maps are included showing locations mentioned in the text). Whether a particular place has an entry depends on its historical importance (as determined by the editor); for example, there is a headword 'Cashel' (both a royal seat from the fourth century and an ecclesiastical centre from the twelfth), but no entry for Cashel's county, Tipperary. However, readers interested in local landownership and governance will welcome precise definitions of legal and geopolitical terms—from 'Déisi' (Gaelic for 'tenants') to modern 'counties'. And, whilst the *OCIH* rightly does not attempt to compete with the *Dictionary of Irish biography*, it does include sketches of local characters such as Tipperary's Dan Breen (p. 60), and histories of the prominent Gaelic and Anglo-Irish families that controlled local politics and economics until the early twentieth century.

Through its interpretative essays and short definitions the *Oxford companion to Irish history* has, since 1998, met the needs of both scholars and general enthusiasts; the increased scope and reduced size and price of this new edition (compared with the 2004 paperback) ensure that the book remains one of the most usable, accessible and comprehensive reference works on Irish history.

Gemma M. Clark

Gemma recently completed her DPhil at Queen's College, Oxford

Celia Cordle, *Out of the hay and into the hops: hop cultivation in Wealden Kent and hop marketing in Southwark, 1744–2000* (University of Hertfordshire Press, Studies in Regional and Local History, Volume 9, Hatfield, 2011). xvi+183pp. ISBN 978-1-907396-04-5. £18.99 (paperback).

Hops were introduced to the Kentish Weald in the sixteenth century, and although their cultivation peaked in the late Victorian period and declined significantly in the twentieth century, they are still at the heart of the region's self-identity. Partly this comes from the survival of so many of the attractive and distinctive oast-houses, in which the hops were dried, but it also reflects a continuing popular memory of the trade, including the picking season, when temporary migrant workers, many from London, would descend on the county. Through most of modern times, Kent has grown around twice the acreage of hops as its main rivals combined.

This useful regional history, which describes the production of hops in the Kentish Weald and their marketing in the Borough of Southwark over the last 300 years, sets the history of the crop in the context of a series of developments, technological, political and social, such as the coming of the railways, the repeal of the hop duty, and the two world wars. It is largely based around a series of case studies of individual hop farms, and the deep analysis allowed by these vignettes provides some of the most interesting material. In addition, the author has used some fascinating oral history testimony which shows something of the culture of hop-production.

The case-study approach does not always make the overall narrative of hop production easy to tease out, and there is room for more contextualization within wider agricultural, economic, and social history of the period. Hop-production and marketing are treated as of self-contained interest rather than as a case-study of, say, alternative agriculture. At times this leads to some slightly questionable assertions about the roots of change. The 1950s, for example, are described as possessing a spirit of optimism and innovation, as 'people who had come through a war felt that they could do anything'. 'This', apparently, 'extended to hops' (p. 84). But the innovations then described, such as new hop-picking machinery, the cultivation of new breeds, and the introduction of tractors, presumably owed as much to late-twentieth century technological development and the demands of labour-saving.

A more serious problem, however, is the lack of any sustained discussion of the methodology. Offering a series of individual case-studies is a perfectly defensible approach to the study of the past, but it throws up issues of typicality and particularly of selection bias. We need some discussion of how representative the farms and families described were of hop-cultivation more generally. We also need some acknowledgement of the pitfalls of oral history. Some of the statements about hop-work being 'fun' seem nostalgic, for example; moreover, the author does not inform the reader about the number of people interviewed, the form of the interviews and the questions asked. The inherent issues of oral history are alluded to briefly at the end (p. 139), but a piece of serious history like this requires, surely, a more thorough discussion.

These caveats aside, this is an interesting piece of agricultural history. It will be of more interest to those studying agricultural techniques and the organization of agricultural marketing than it will to those looking at cultural aspects of rural society. Economic historians of a quantitative bent will find the extensive appendices a useful repository of data. But perhaps the most interest and indeed pleasure in this useful book will be found by local historians of Kent and of south London, who will enjoy its window onto a past age, now clearly lost to us.

Jonathan Healey
St Catherine's College, Oxford

Karen J. Cullen, *Famine in Scotland: the 'Ill Years' of the 1690s* (Scottish Historical Review Monographs, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2010). xi+218pp. ISBN 978-0-74863-887-1. £55 (hardback).

This is an important book on a neglected topic. The 1690s saw Scotland suffer its last national famine, yet this has not received the scholarly attention it deserves, eclipsed even by the relatively minor Highland famine in the 1840s. Based on an impressive body of primary research across a variety of sources, Cullen's book is a useful addition to the literature on early-modern famine, poverty, and indeed on Scottish history more generally.

Although the disaster was described by contemporaries as the 'Seven Ill Years', with some drawing the inference that God was visiting apocalyptic disapproval of the new Williamite regime, Cullen's crisis lasted 'only' five. Still terrible enough, though: few early-modern famines lasted anything like as long. The famine is seen as essentially a meteorological crisis. The 1690s saw large areas of Europe suffer food shortages. The wide geographical spread of the crisis made it especially difficult to import grain, a situation made worse by the major European conflict in 1689–97. Cullen's famine is strikingly non-Malthusian: she does not argue that Scotland's population was creaking at the seams of subsistence. References to the difficulties of production in marginal arable areas, particularly in the Highlands, call to mind the work of Andrew Appleby on the English shires of Cumberland and Westmorland, but there is unfortunately no discussion of whether the structure of agriculture and landholding made famine more likely at the twilight of the seventeenth century. She therefore paints a picture of an agriculture that was dangerously vulnerable to weather shocks, but does not explore whether this was a reflection of low capital inputs, cultivation at the margins of subsistence, whether it reflected social-structural weaknesses, or whether it was simply a product of poor soils and climatic deterioration during the 'Maunder Minimum'. There is also relatively little attempt to describe either the Scottish economy as a whole, or the domestic economy of the country's people. Furthermore, unlike Appleby, she does not suggest reasons for the retreat of famine thereafter.

The approach is thematic, with the main empirical chapters dealing with the grain market, poor relief, the demographic impact of the famine and migration. On grain markets, Cullen shows that food prices in northern Scotland did not rise as far as those in the south, but this reflected the greater purchasing power of the south, and the upshot was that while the north of Scotland starved, it was still exporting grain to the south, a situation—as Cullen points out—not dissimilar to that of 1840s Ireland and 1970s Bangladesh. A fascinating chapter on poor relief argues that while some support was available for the needy it was not universal and that ultimately attempts to prevent starvation were unsuccessful. This was not for lack of legal provision; it was just that central legislation was often ignored, and turmoil in the Church of Scotland after 1689, with many parishes lacking a minister, considerably exacerbated the situation. The problem was not just,

however, one of government: many parishes were simply too poor to support their indigent, and no amount of money could save lives if food was simply not available. It would have been useful to see some accounts of distribution of relief: do these not exist in quantifiable form? One minor gripe: burials of the 'poor' clearly increased in frequency, but this reflects more than just the disproportionate suffering of that group. In times of famine, 'the poor' was a larger group than at normal times because normally self-sufficient households dropped into indigence.

Cullen's chapter on the demographic impact makes the best of difficult data, and is able to make the striking point that the demographic recovery did not arrive until after 1705, suggesting that the famine caused 'structural damage' to the population, dampening its ability to reproduce. In particular, this suggests high mortality amongst adults of reproductive age, which in turn is probably reflective of the seriousness of the crisis. As Cullen points out, famine mortality usually arises out of a combination of brute starvation and epidemic mortality, carried by a dislocated population and preying on malnourished bodies. In Scotland, contemporary comment refers to both starvation and disease; there is only so much that the burial registers can add to this, but the occurrence of mortality peaks in which adult burials rose dramatically while child burials did not seems likely to indicate typhus and/or typhoid. It is a shame that she has not calculated ratios of male to female burials. Disproportionately high adult male mortality has been a feature of modern famines, and it is often supposed that the higher the male mortality penalty the greater the role of actual starvation. It is an uncharacteristic oversight.

The final chapter, on migration, identifies three main types of migrant: those in need of regular church pensions, but whose parish was not providing financial support; those living on marginal arable land, particularly in the Highlands, who were forced to migrate in search of food; and, perhaps smallest in number, tenants and subtenants either evicted from their holdings or who voluntarily migrated in search of better prospects. Cullen finds migration to England 'relatively small' (p. 173), but it is odd that she has not consulted any northern English parish registers or constables' accounts, which might provide evidence of a Scottish influx. Emigration to the New World was probably even smaller, so the focus is on the migrants who crossed over to Ulster. Although settlers numbered tens of thousands, perhaps 20,000 during the famine itself, Cullen points out that many migrants actually came back. Still, this was the crucial decade in the Scottish migrations to Ulster.

All this makes Cullen's book a very welcome addition to early-modern scholarship. It is a study which at times is forced to make the best out of obtuse and patchy source material, and it is unlikely to be the last word on the 'Ill Years', but it is nonetheless a major step forward in our understanding of this devastating crisis.

Jonathan Healey
St Catherine's College, Oxford

P. Cullen, R. Jones, and D.N. Parsons, *Thorps in a changing landscape* (University of Hertfordshire Press, Explorations in Local and Regional History, Volume 4, Hatfield, 2011). xviii+224pp. ISBN: 978-1-902806-82-2. £14.99 (paperback).

It is often customary to begin a review with comments on the excesses of a publisher's hyperbole. The 'sense of real excitement' which the blurb boasts of *Thorps in a changing landscape* makes this one of those cases. In this reviewer's experience, such a description has rarely applied to approaches to the study of place-names, with their photographs of road signs and lower case three-letter abbreviations of county names warning the non-specialist reader that dense onomastic arguments are on their way. Nonetheless, this book is not without intrigue, and as the implications of the authors' work are played out, it is possible to see and indeed share in their genuine excitement of the study. Places with a 'Thorp' name element have often been relegated to secondary importance, with 'Thorp' thought to indicate dependent settlements associated with more important places. In the Danelaw region of northern and eastern England, most subject to Scandinavian influence in the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries, the notion that places thus named represent a secondary level of migration has long been held. This book places Thorps in a more significant position in the history of the English landscape.

The authors, two place-name specialists and one landscape historian, guide the reader through Thorp places, making a case for them representing an 'intermediate' stage of settlement associated with arable farming. They suggest that such settlements took place at a later date to that which has formerly been assumed. Thus a chronology shifts from the ninth/tenth centuries to a period from the tenth century to as late as the thirteenth century. This is, the authors suggest, commensurate with changes in agrarian methods in terms of a process of what could loosely be called manorialisation.

It seems surprising that this has not been suggested before, and thus it is gratifying to see the authors' case put forward with clarity, and the final chapter, in which a working hypothesis for settlement development is proposed, is most welcome. However, because of the scale of the study and the size of the book, there is more work to be done to make a watertight argument. The authors make a good case for the utility of the extent of archaeological work which has taken place on settlements in recent years, and they cite common factors in places with Thorp names which have been excavated. 'Test-pitting', looking for evidence of discarded pottery fragments in gardens, which allows the centres of currently-occupied villages to be examined on a comparatively broad scale, has revealed relatively late settlement evidence in 'Thorp' places. The authors also suggest that 'single-row' settlement types reveal a particular commonality to Thorp settlements. I did not find myself fundamentally disagreeing with the suggestion but I did get a sense that the number of cases addressed in detail was small (especially given that settlement morphology lends itself to a large-scale study which does not necessarily require archaeological excavations to have taken place). I also wondered whether the hypothesis

could have been further tested by comparison with the morphology of other linear settlements that do not have 'Thorp' name elements or indeed with any 'Thorp' places which might follow non-linear patterns. Admittedly, other sites are discussed extensively in secondary literature cited in the book but some more summaries would have been useful to get a greater sense of the relative weight of the argument.

A second problem perhaps stems from the reading of the landscape. A series of maps assess Thorp names on different types of land, suitable for dairy and arable production. This is an interesting thesis but the scale of the survey makes it difficult to make real judgements on the predominance of particular land types, especially given a need for clarity regarding the former Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (MAFF) soil data used. Given the 1–5 scale of grading described by the authors, what is reported in the book as soil classification looks as though it has been confused with the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey, which, although based in large part on soil conditions, also takes into account such issues as relief, accessibility of land, climate and (modern) flood risk. These issues would not have been inconsequential to early medieval farmers but it would have been useful to have clarity, especially as reclassification of the original MAFF data in 1988 introduced '3a' and '3b' grades of land, which could have had a significant bearing on the thesis. Where local examinations of land types take place, the detail does not really convince: the example of Lincolnshire relies on a very narrow margin of probability and when the MAFF data, based on classification of 1-km grid squares, is applied to a map of Nottinghamshire of an area little more than ten miles across, eyebrows could be raised. I would have thought that Little Domesday Book, with its extensive evidence of livestock on settlements in East Anglia, could have given the authors a useful case study on which to test their hypothesis, especially given the authors' understandable misgivings about the MAFF data for the area. By comparison, the direct reading of the medieval documentary evidence presented seems to be limited to a single page of discussion of selected evidence from the thirteenth-century hundred rolls.

Nonetheless, the authors seem to be on to something. The notion of the implications of a shift from slavery to semi-servile service upon agrarian estates is of genuine wider significance. If Thorps were associated with an important phase in settlement development, the case has been put in the public domain in a book that is very affordable and accessible (notwithstanding the need to get out the Pritt Stick to replace a couple of erroneously printed maps with insertions: hardly criminal negligence on the part of the publishers at this price!). *Thorps in a changing landscape* is not, as the authors freely admit, intended as the definitive word on the subject. Had the authors' case been put forward more dogmatically in a longer book, it could have been dense and impenetrable. The accessible weight of the book lends it to easy consumption by a range of scholars in both academic and public domains. While the onomastic foundations of their hypothesis will no doubt be addressed within the discipline of place-name studies, the implications for

what is suggested are such that the hypothesis deserves to be tested in other disciplinary contexts.

Ryan Lavelle

University of Winchester

Christopher Dyer, Andrew Hopper, Evelyn Lord and Nigel Tringham eds, *New directions in local history since Hoskins* (University of Hertfordshire Press, Hatfield, 2011). xx+276pp. ISBN 978-1-907396-12-0. £16.99 (paperback).

This book includes a selection of papers given at a conference held in Leicester in 2009 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the publication in 1959 of W.G. Hoskins' *Local history in England*. In his opening essay in the collection, David Dymond quite rightly points out that Hoskins' 1959 book was 'an effective manual for legions of readers over decades' (p. 27). Consequently an opportunity to reflect on it is welcome, although the editors are at pains to suggest that the conference and book were less about celebrating Hoskins, and more about reviewing the current preoccupations of local history while pointing towards its future direction. Contributors were 'not expected to indulge in nostalgia or express their reverence for the great man, but rather to write about the local history that they know and practise' (p. 7). This they have done, but the resulting collection of essays is not as strong on 'new directions' as the title might lead us to expect; rather, the book is a series of essays which are presented under separate themes, which offer more, or in some cases less, reflection on the period since 1959.

The editorial introduction to *New directions* quite rightly attempts to define what the new directions might be since Hoskins wrote. The 15 essays are slotted into the book's five sections. These cover 'the practice of local history' (Dymond, Lewis), 'region, class and ethnic diversity' (Chase, Counce, Dick), 'making a living in town and country' (Sweetinburgh, Hey, Miller, Howells), 'religious culture and belief' (Cross, Watson, Royle, Smith) and 'sources, methods and techniques' (Paley, Ell). The editors suggest 'new directions' in terms of the study of the twentieth century, identity, inclusivity, gender and, making a surprise reappearance as a new direction, religious history.

Perhaps not surprisingly in a collection of this sort, the content and quality of the essays varies, as does the extent to which the contributors address Hoskins-esque themes. I particularly enjoyed reading Chase on the role of local studies in Chartist research, Counce on northern 'character', and Dick on ethnic communities and oral history; subjects in their infancy when Hoskins was writing. Hey links entrepreneurs on the edge of the Derbyshire moorland in the seventeenth century to a distinctive form of house, and Royle discusses nonconformity in the context of chapel building. Royle implicitly accepts Hoskins' own proposal that local historians should be aware of the need for 'careful architectural description' of chapels, but passes over in silence his follow up that 'in general their

buildings are deplorable'.² Howells writes of working wives in Victorian Salisbury, but reflects all too briefly in her final paragraph on the extraordinary (and important) growth of women's history since Hoskins wrote in 1959. Smith on North Oxford Evangelical-Catholic rivalry desperately needed a map for those who do not know the area—what would Hoskins' have said to such an omission?

More problematic are the essays on sources and methods. Paley's curious essay on 'the Kings Bench (Crown side) in the long eighteenth century' makes no mention of local history, or the important development of the history of crime within local history, and reads in part like a TNA guide to sources leaflet. Ell's on web developments is definitely a new direction, but the essay has almost inevitably dated even before it has appeared in print. Even so there was surely room for a mention of British History Online, Google books, and the recent guide to electronic resources published by the British Association for Local History? The essay also lacked much on how local historians might benefit from using new technologies. Ell's critique of the *VCH* web presence is probably justifiable but the resources needed to alter it in the manner he proposes do not exist.

Readers of this journal may be surprised at how little attention the contributors pay to population. Hoskins devoted more attention to early modern population measures than to the census, but he added a positive reference to *Local Population Studies* to later editions of his book. Only Miller on Skye, and Howells on Salisbury explicitly address population issues. Howells makes good use of the 1851 census to reconstruct the pattern of women's work in the cathedral city, but none of the authors look at some of the key post-Hoskins breakthroughs in family reconstitution and demographic analysis.

Overall, this is an enjoyable book. I found all the essays stimulating and generally a good read, but it is a shame that some of the writers did not take the opportunity to follow up and develop the proclaimed 'new directions'. We can learn a good deal from the book, but not as much about how the local history world evolved over the period 1959–2009 as the title of the volume might have led us to expect.

John Beckett

University of Nottingham

John Hare, *A prospering society: Wiltshire in the later Middle Ages* (University of Hertfordshire Press, Studies in Regional and Local History, Volume 10, Hatfield, 2011). xvi+240 pp. ISBN 978-1-902806-84-6. £35 (hardback).

Opinion is divided about the economic fortunes of England during the 180 or so years following the Black Death of 1348. Some see the later Middle Ages as a period of economic decline resulting, essentially, from a lack of demand in the economy because of the reduced population and the long period of demographic stagnation during the fifteenth

2 W.G. Hoskins, *Local history in England* (3rd edition, Harlow, 1984), 92.

century. Towns, in particular, were vulnerable to decay and even moribundity. However, other more optimistic historians have emphasised the growth in real wages, particularly among the poorer classes, which meant that—though there were certainly many fewer people than there had been before the fourteenth century epidemics—the prosperity of these survivors meant that they were able to generate a demand for both essentials and luxury goods which more than made up for their lack of numbers.

As is so often the case in these divisions of opinion, there is merit in both arguments, and empirical evidence to support both sides. England in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was a big country—big because travel was expensive and time-consuming—and local economies were by no means fully integrated. Some areas could prosper while others declined. Some towns were able to take advantage of opportunities for industrial development or trade, while economic activity in others fell in desuetude. A full picture of the fortunes of the country in this period can only be painted through many local and regional studies.

This point is admirably demonstrated by Hare's new book on Wiltshire. The county of Wiltshire is particularly apposite for understanding economic diversity, for as anyone with a passing acquaintance with the geography of the county will know, it is not a natural economic unit. Even today, it consists of two broad areas: the southern chalkland section centred on Salisbury is separated from the larger, northern section by the bleak expanse of Salisbury plain. This northern part is, in turn, divided into an upland area in the far north west which forms part of the Cotswolds, a broad clay vale through which flow (in opposite directions) the rivers Avon and Thames, and the chalk Marlborough Downs to the east. At a smaller scale, there are micro-regions such as the Vales of Pewsey and Warminster which have their own local geography and economy. Hare takes advantage of this economic diversity to illustrate how the fortunes of different localities were influenced by geology, soil and altitude, as well as by local landholding and landownership patterns. The first section of his book includes two introductory chapters which set the scene: one deals with the geography and demography of the county; the other with the administration of the land, and especially of the county's estates.

England was still overwhelmingly a rural country at this time, so the largest section of the book examines the fortunes of agriculture. The meta-narrative here is the familiar story of the decline of demesne agriculture, the leasing of the demesnes and the consequent emergence of a class of propertied villagers. Within this big picture, Hare is able to focus on differences in the pace of the process. For example, demesne farming lasted longer in chalkland areas than elsewhere, and direct ownership of sheep flocks continued into the second half of the fifteenth century, long after arable farming had been abandoned by the estates. In a chapter on the characteristics of the lessees, Hare stresses their diversity, though he also points out that few of them came from the upper echelons of society. Instead, they emerged as a group of villagers distinguished from the rest of the population by the breadth of their horizons, and their ambition for themselves and their children, who

were to form a new class which Hare suggests might be termed 'gentleman-farmers' (p. 116). A parallel development was the decline of serfdom. Hare emphasises that serfdom became a purely legal state, rather than being both an economic and a legal condition, as it had been earlier in the Middle Ages. In consequence, it was sometimes the richer villagers who found it most difficult to throw off the shackles of villeinage: a common way to achieve this was to move to another place, and this was more difficult for wealthier men with strong and complex economic ties to their home manor. Like demesne agriculture, serfdom lasted longer on the chalklands than elsewhere in the county but, by the early sixteenth century 'it had withered away' (p. 130).

The final section of the book deals with towns and trade, and the rise and decline of the cloth industry. The chapter on towns has a section devoted to the fortunes of Salisbury, by far the most important town in the county, with strong trade links to London and Southampton. But the smaller towns are not neglected, and Hare describes the occupational structure of Wiltshire's minor urban centres and the marketing networks of which they were hubs. The most important industry for many of these towns was that devoted to the manufacture of cloth, and in an excellent chapter Hare traces the history and geography of this industry from its fourteenth-century concentration to the south and west of Salisbury to the white broadcloth industry which developed in west Wiltshire in towns such as Bradford, Trowbridge and Castle Combe. He emphasises the three phases of the industry in the fifteenth century: rapid growth, depression in the 1450s and 1460s, and finally recovery and an increasing focus—at least in the west of the county—on producing heavy, undyed cloth.

The sub-regions of Wiltshire relied on different economic activities related to their specific geographical features. Hare has compiled an impressive array of quantitative evidence which he presents mainly in tabular form. There are sections of the book where this places heavy demands on the reader, and threatens to obscure the overall picture. It is very welcome, therefore, that, in the final chapter, Hare synthesises the material from earlier chapters and presents a general chronology of the economic fortunes of the various regions of the county. When I finished the book, I felt that I might have found it easier going had I read this final chapter before delving into the evidence presented in earlier chapters. This would have made it easier to see where the detailed analyses of particular topics slotted into the general picture.

Hare has written an important regional study of the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, contributing new evidence which enhances our knowledge of economic developments in the two centuries following the Black Death. The book also sheds light on the mechanisms by which England's medieval economy and society was gradually transformed into something recognisably modern.

Andrew Hinde
University of Southampton

Edward Higgs, *Identifying the English: a history of personal identification 1500 to the present* (Continuum Press, London, 2011). vii+286pp. ISBN: 978-1-4411-8203-6. £25 (hardback).

As the subtitle suggests, this book provides a history of personal identification between 1500 and the present day, which in turn is eminently readable. It is a work of synthesis, drawing upon the researches of many other historians as well as Higgs himself to explore the relationship between the individual and the state during a period of dramatic societal transformation. It is also accessible; while he positions his narrative within broader theorisations concerning the impact of 'modernity' on the three-way relationship between the individual, the state and civil society, this book is not a theoretical discourse. In particular the discussion in the second chapter of three case studies—the fifteenth-century royal imposter Perkin Warbeck, the remarkable nineteenth-century case of the Tichborne Claimant, and the more recent episode of John Stonehouse's disappearance in 1975—is entertaining.

Higgs opens his book with the paradox that the growth of methods of and places requiring personal identification has been accompanied by an increasing sense of insecurity over identity. He suggests that this expansion underlies the growth of identity theft, and in particular the transition from the authentication of individuality by humans to that by electronic means. His general approach is to challenge the idea that a link can be made between the rise of 'modernity' and the development of a heightened emphasis upon personal identification. He challenges the notion that modernity with its emphasis upon the civil and political rights of the individual resulted in a greater bureaucratisation of personal identity as well as greater state surveillance of the individual. The applicability of Michel Foucault's notion of 'governmentality' is also questioned.

Indeed, he suggests that neither of the existing models of 'rupture' and 'continuity' work particularly well in understanding the history of personal identification between 1500 and the present. Higgs bases his argument with reference to the historical literature on the operation of the poor laws and various parts of the legal system such as coroners' courts. The period of the Industrial Revolution was one of dramatic change, and yet there were comparatively few changes in the identification of the legal person and the citizen during this period. The transition from the use of seals to signatures took place during the early modern period, and the transition away from the signature to digital means of identification began in the late twentieth century. Meanwhile, the late nineteenth century witnessed the development of new technologies of personal identification based around biometrics, the first effective example being the emergence of fingerprinting. This period also witnessed a growth of centrally-administered government activity that gradually negated the older systems of personal identification that had functioned at the level of the parish. The replacement of the locally-administered system of poor relief by old age pensions, National Insurance and the post-war welfare state is taken as emblematic in this regard.

The discussion is structured so as to make a distinction between the identification of the citizen and that of the criminal, emphasising the distinction between the identification of those with a stake in the State with those who had transgressed against it. The final chapters of the book also highlight the role of personal identification of the customer by private commercial interests, and suggests that the key innovator in personal identification in recent years has been the private sector, with retailing in particular becoming a key player. The final substantive chapter discusses the rise of the 'digital database state', and suggests that this traditional English distinction between citizens, consumers and deviants may not be sustainable in the long run.

In conclusion, this is a very engaging, accessible and stimulating overview of personal identification between 1500 and the present day. Due to its wide chronological range, there will be parts of the book which appeal to some readers more than others, yet it provides an effective point of entry into much of the historiography relating to such matters as the operation of the Poor Law, the history of credit relationships, and parish registers. Its particular point of departure is a rather 'top-down' view of the relationship between the state and the individual with regard to the politics of identity, with an emphasis upon parliament and the central law courts, and herein lies the strength of this book. However, it may well be that there exists a politics of personal identification which can be seen from the 'bottom up'; it was the interaction of early modern English men and women with local governmental institutions—the civil parish as well as the ecclesiastical parish, in addition to county-level institutions such as Quarter Sessions—that forged the politics of identity during early modern and early industrial Britain. Higgs provides a very useful survey of the current literature on these matters. However, our empirical knowledge of the practical aspects of personal identification and population surveillance as performed by the institutions which regulated pre-industrial English society is rather thin, especially with regard to the case law in this area. It is an area where the readership of *Local Population Studies* is well placed to make important contributions to our understanding of this emerging area of research.

Peter Kitson

Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, University of Cambridge.

Robert Llewellyn Tyler, *The Welsh in an Australian gold town: Ballarat, Victoria, 1850–1900* (University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2010). xv+208pp. ISBN 978-0-7083-2266-6. £45 (hardback).

Kathryn J. Cooper, *Exodus from Cardiganshire: rural-urban migration in Victorian Britain* (University of Wales Press, Studies in Welsh History Series, Cardiff, 2011). xiv+249pp. ISBN 978-0-7083-2399-1. £24.99 (paperback).

A Welsh sailor, shipwrecked for 20 years on an uninhabited island, is rescued by a passing English ship. As the Captain rows his tender to the beach to pick him up, the Welshman—let's call him Dafydd ap Crusoe—beckons him on shore.

'Here,' he says, 'before we go, let me show you this', and as Dafydd leads him over the brow of a hill, a whole town comes into view made entirely of rough-cut coconut palms and thatched with leaves.

'See? I 'aven't been idle,' says Dafydd proudly. 'I built all this with my bare 'ands. Twenty years it took me.'

'That's amazing,' exclaims the astonished Captain, 'and I can see you've thought of everything. There's a grocer's store, a town hall, a post office, and that over there must be a bath house. But tell me,' he goes on, his brow creasing with puzzlement, 'it looks to me like you've built two chapels. Why on earth would you do that?'

Dafydd sucks in his breath, narrows his eyes, and points with a quavering finger to the chapel he built slightly outside the town boundaries.

'Oh, well,' he says gravely, 'you see that one there? That's the chapel I *don't* go to.'

Tales of Welsh religious factionalism are legendary, part of the stereotype that burdens the nineteenth and early-twentieth century Welsh nation, and a source either of amusement or irritation (depending on who is telling the story) for the Welsh themselves. From Robert Llewellyn Tyler's account of the expatriate Welsh in the goldfields of Australia, though, these tales are not so very far from the truth, and precisely this factionalism was to have serious consequences, not only for the cultural cohesion of Welsh communities in the goldfields of Victoria, but for the very survival of the Welshness of their inhabitants. As he describes it, the 'strife and partisanship between the different Welsh denominations' in the third quarter of the nineteenth century was 'accompanied by a decline in the position of the Welsh language' (pp. 69, 74) among the emigrant communities; and while it was not the only influence on a decline of 'Welshness' in the mining towns (many expatriates felt, for example, that assimilation into the greater English-speaking community was the only way to secure advancement in the new territory) it does seem to have been fundamental. As the Revd. Dr Bevan, chairman of the Welsh Independents of Zion Chapel in Sebastopol, remarked in 1887: 'the Welsh were the most evangelical people on the face of the earth, and the least universal' (p. 75).

This striking conclusion—that the very strength and commitment of Welsh immigrants to their (different) denominational identities contributed to the loss of Welsh identity in the territory overall—is one of many to be taken from Llewellyn Tyler's well-researched and persuasively-argued book. He admirably succeeds in fulfilling his stated aim of providing 'a micro-level analysis of a Welsh community as it existed in a particular area', demonstrating not only how and why cultural institutions, patterns of employment, and adherence to the Welsh language shifted and changed over the second half of the nineteenth century, but also giving the reader a detailed insight into settlement and migration patterns using data usefully drawn from census material. But, as the discussion above suggests, the real strength of this book lies in its insight into the process of colonial

assimilation; the way that minority communities, drawn from outside a colony's indigenous population, react to, and interact with, the colonial host. Of course, it might be objected that the Welsh (as part of the 'British colonial project') were far from outsiders in this experiment, but this would be to ignore the long-standing tensions between Anglo-British and Welsh identities *within* Britain which, to a large extent, came to a head with the rise of 'soft', or cultural and linguistic nationalism back home.

Llewellyn Tyler is a highly sympathetic and sensitive guide to the experiences of the expatriate Welsh. He clearly has a great deal of respect and admiration—even affection—for his Welsh forebears in Australia; and so it is all the more surprising that he should conclude so consistently that the very attributes and institutions that made the Welsh distinctive in their new home proved, in the end, to be both the agents of accelerated assimilation, and the downfall of 'Welshness' as a significant or unified cultural identity in Victoria. It was, as he demonstrates, their fierce denominational loyalty, their appetite for hard work and desire for advancement, and even the lively Eisteddfodau—which quickly became a cultural focus for all Victorians, Welsh or otherwise—that helped the Welsh to integrate so comprehensively with the colonial host; and it was, in the end, a quasi-national sense of responsibility that led them to take such pride in their place in the 'British' colonial experiment. Anyone interested in the history of minority colonial nations should read this book.

Kathryn Cooper's *Exodus from Cardiganshire*, on the other hand, is a much more conventional approach to the subject of Welsh migration in the nineteenth century. Relying almost exclusively on official papers and statistics (and, in particular, on census material) she points to a number of important findings. The first is that, across the nineteenth century, the pattern of migration for Cardiganshire was almost the exact opposite of that for England and Wales as a whole, with high emigration in the 1840s, and low migration to other parts of the United Kingdom (and, in particular, low rural-to-urban migration) until the 1880s. Much of this loss was (predictably, given the profile of Cardiganshire across the nineteenth century) down to the movement of rural labour, and in particular, untenured labour. A continuing preponderance of small farms in Cardiganshire, along with a rapidly increasing population, and the gradual decline of live-in service, meant that opportunities to move from free labour to farm occupancy within the county dwindled as the century went on; in addition to which, the march of mass-industrialisation put paid to the region's attendant small-craft manufacturing base. As a result, we can, perhaps, see in later-nineteenth-century Cardiganshire a microcosm of the push-pull factors experienced during the earliest years of English and lowland Scottish industrialisation.

There is, of course, much more to this volume than the statistics and figures relating to migration patterns. For example, Cooper here and there illustrates the experiences of individual emigrants through first-hand accounts such as letters home, most notably those of Jack Edwards of Aberystwyth who emigrated to Ohio (via Liverpool) in 1880. Elsewhere, she uses newspaper reportage and autobiography to evoke the lives of those

who left 'home', wherever they were bound. In the end, though—and illuminating as they are—these brief interludes tend to serve as a little light relief from the denser and more persuasive quantitative analysis of migration as a whole. Her conclusions are largely to be expected, and they tend to reinforce those of other works in the broad corpus of migration literature. Nonetheless, this is (as Keith Snell notes on the cover of the book) an important and timely intervention in the debate over rural-urban migration in nineteenth-century Britain, and it is invaluable reading for all students hoping to understand the process of change that overtook Wales during this period.

Overall, then, each of these volumes represents an important intervention into an under-researched aspect of Welsh social history, and each, in turn, is useful in its regional (or local) approach to questions and issues that have national, and even international, implications. As such, they will appeal to local historians (of Cardiganshire, South Wales, and even the Australian state of Victoria), but they should also be of real interest to students and scholars working on subjects as broad and diverse as the colonial experience, rural depopulation, migration, and the effects of industrialisation more generally. Finally, it is important to commend the University of Wales Press for its continuing commitment to Welsh academic excellence, and in particular for its ongoing series of *Studies in Welsh History*, of which Kathryn Cooper's book is the latest fine example.

Peter Jones

University of Leicester

Michael Lynch ed., *The Oxford companion to Scottish history* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, new edition, 2011). xxv+732pp. ISBN: 978-0-19-969305-4. £12.99 (paperback).

This book first appeared in 2001, and in paperback in 2005, and is one of a large number in the *Oxford companion* series—others include volumes devoted to J.M.W. Turner, Irish history (see review, above), English history, English literature and, most importantly, beer. The latter figures very infrequently in Michael Lynch's *Oxford companion to Scottish history*; this is not surprising, although the lack of an entry for 'whisky' or 'distilleries' is perhaps more so. There are brief references to whisky in the entries on 'Caledonian societies', 'living standards', 'rough culture' and, interestingly, 'traditional healing', while distilleries are considered also briefly—under the heading 'buildings'. Despite Scotch whisky's modern importance as an export industry, it does not feature in the entry on the economy.

It is, of course, easy to identify omissions in a work such as this, which aims at the comprehensive treatment, in a single volume, of the whole history of Scotland. It is also important to emphasise the very real achievement of Lynch, his eight 'section editors' and the impressive array of contributors that they have assembled. Unlike many encyclopaedia-type publications of this kind, the *Companion* focuses primarily not on 'great men' (by no means all Scottish kings have their own entries, though many do, including Mary and three of the Jameses) or 'events' (though see, for example, 'Glencoe, Massacre of', 'Disruption, the' and 'Rough Wooing'), but rather on a thematic

consideration of the historical development of the country. This is often done through 'chain' entries, an extreme example being the 44-page entry on 'culture', which is divided into 25 sub-sections, each with its own author. Scotland's economic history, kingship, national and regional identities and religious life are dealt with in the same way, as are, among other topics, the history of rural and urban settlement and the cities of Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen and Glasgow. This enables the contributors to present a more rounded picture of the nation's history, focusing on economic, social and cultural themes.

Such an approach will doubtless be welcomed by readers of this journal, but it is obvious that some entries are of greater relevance and usefulness than others to population historians. The entry on 'population patterns' is divided into two, with R.E. Tyson writing on the pre-1770 period, and Michael Anderson on the period since. This entry is rather short, and focuses on the national picture, but longer multi-authored entries on 'urban settlement' and 'rural settlement' offer more sustained treatment of the local history of Scotland, and are followed respectively by equally valuable contributions on 'urban society' and 'rural society'. Specific towns are not well served with entries, with a handful of unsurprising exceptions, mostly noted above. Places such as Dumbarton, Govan and Burghead appear, but as 'sites' rather than towns. Counties do not have their own entries, although some earldoms do. Other potentially important topics for population historians include 'living standards', 'emigration' and 'migration': in the latter Jeanette M. Brock briefly examines rural-to-urban movement, and also migration of Scots to England. There is also a section on 'immigration, Irish', but other immigrants to Scotland are overlooked. As Murray Watson has recently emphasised, the English are, and have almost always been, the largest group of incomers within Scotland, but this diaspora is not considered. Other absences include the poor law, which is subsumed under 'government and administration', and mentioned only briefly, while also cropping up in the entries on Thomas Chalmers and Archibald Alison; and parishes themselves do not get the treatment that some may feel they deserve. The entry on 'family' is brief and mostly focused on the twentieth century.

As noted above, it is always easy when considering such a volume to think of subjects that could have been covered in more detail (to give just one more—trade unions.) On the other hand, there is much of interest in this book, including sections on 'historians' and 'historical sources'. The latter is divided by period, and has an extra sub-section on genealogical sources, which may be useful for readers of this journal. Lynch himself, writing on historical sources for the period before 1750, reminds us that there is no Scottish equivalent of the *Victoria county history*, and is generally pessimistic about the availability of usable sources to historians in comparison with their English counterparts. He notes (p. 312) the 'considerable' but 'technical' difficulties associated with the use of charters; many of these have been overcome in the *Paradox of medieval Scotland* project, introduced by Amanda Beam in LPS 86. More optimistically, as Lynch points out, the Register of Sasines in Scotland long predates its English and Welsh counterpart (p. 314). Writing on the period

1750–1900, John McCaffrey notes the importance of local archives and census material for the historian of the Scottish people.

In a volume of this kind, the casual reader is sure to alight on something that intrigues. For me, sport provides some interesting examples. Although there is no entry on cricket, there are contributions on golf, shinty, football and rugby (the longest), and also curling. This entry, by David Smith, emphasises the popularity of the game in the nineteenth century: for example (p. 160), in 1869 the UK had 58 golf clubs, whereas 414 curling clubs were affiliated to the game's governing body (the forgotten popularity of curling in England might also have been noted here.) Full of interesting facts and insights, *The Oxford companion to Scottish history* is an enjoyable, as well as instructive, book, well worth the modest price charged for the new paperback edition.

Mark Freeman
University of Glasgow

Laura J. McGough, *Gender, sexuality, and syphilis in early modern Venice: the disease that came to stay* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2011). x+202pp. ISBN: 978-0-230-25292-9. £50 (hardback).

Interdisciplinarity is a tantalising concept: full of potential, difficult to define and even more difficult to execute. Laura McGough's book on female sexuality and the French Disease in early modern Venice has been much-anticipated, not least because of McGough's intellectual endeavours, which bridge early modern history and modern public health policy. The resulting monograph seeks to illustrate that 'the commonness and seriousness of a disease is no guarantee that public attention and resources will be devoted to it' (p. 149) and to challenge the public health agendas of societies both past and present by drawing attention to the social and cultural factors which shape perceptions of diseases. There is, disappointingly, no overt reflection on the juxtapositioning of history and public policy although, from the outset, the influence of anthropology as a methodology is clear. McGough's desire to draw in those interested in the public health of both past and present is laudable and cited as the explanation for the decision, strange by her own admission, to use the term 'syphilis' in the title (p. 10) but not in her analysis. It is a shame that the history and public policy reflections are consigned to the title and a brief afterword (pp. 144–52) but the information in the latter section is engaging.

The historical case study for testing McGough's thesis regarding public health is the Pox in sixteenth-century Venice. Using early modern mortality records, institutional sources, medical texts and Inquisition trials alongside modern analytical techniques, McGough seeks to illustrate that the endemic nature of the disease and ideas about gender and sexuality shaped perceptions of the Pox and the use of institutional structures in the name of public health. McGough claims that the Pox had become endemic in Venice by the mid-sixteenth century. Successive chapters consider the Pox as 'socially endemic', through an analysis of mortality and sexual networks, 'culturally endemic', considering, in particular,

perceptions of women, 'medically endemic', treated by networks of medical practitioners, and 'institutionally endemic', permanently represented in the charitable and medical structures of the city. All this is valuable for the contribution made to a history of the Pox which moves beyond stereotypes and myths of the origins of the disease, which have tended to focus upon Jews and prostitutes. The introduction provides an overview of this process by which the disease became 'domesticated'. It is useful to analyse the Pox as a permanent concern although this analysis does overstate the distinction between epidemic and endemic diseases and greater exploration of how each category became a permanent concern within early modern cities would be helpful.

Adorning the cover of the volume is Titian's painting *Mars, Venus and Amor* (1560)—an apt illustration of the centrality of gender and sexuality within the analysis of this book. The painting illustrates the ambiguity of beauty and sexual attraction for perceptions of femininity and masculinity; a theme which McGough has visited previously and which remains prominent in this monograph. Beauty is explored in relation to artistic representations, social perceptions, as well as ways in which medical advice incorporated cosmetic treatments to restore beauty in the face of the disfiguring disease (p. 77). It is surprising that this theme is supported mainly by printed tracts and secondary literature, rather than Inquisition trials or visual sources which might have provided detail regarding social and cultural perceptions. Nevertheless, there is engaging information here on the relationship between beauty, morality and identity. Gender dominates McGough's analysis to such an extent that it forces some awkward attempts to incorporate, for example, New World theories about the origin of the disease by considering the New World as feminised; such an interpretation is heavily influenced by Anna Foa's work. The centrality of ideas of gender and sexuality means that the discussion of contemporary views of non-sexual spread of the Pox are dealt with very briefly, although they are acknowledged. In addition, there is very little attention paid to issues of age and a discussion of the association between women and their children is an obvious omission, which is relevant to issues of both gender and sexuality.

In place of age, a secondary emphasis, after gender, is placed upon social status. Useful information is provided regarding the social make up of districts in Venice (*sestieri*) although there is little illustration or background information to substantiate the assessments. Of interest to the readers of this journal will be the analysis of the dense social (and sexual) networks along which McGough claims the Pox was able to spread quickly in Venice although here, as in many other places, comparative analysis is lacking, which makes it difficult to assess the 'uniqueness' of Venice in this regard.

A final contribution of this volume focuses upon the process played by institutions in 'normalising' diseases. The case is made that medical care for the Pox was short term and provided in *Incurabili* hospitals for both men and women (p. 102), but that women were both over-represented compared with their presence in the population and with hospitals in Rome, and targeted for long-term moral reform. Some of the most interesting

information in the book concerns contemporary debates regarding where to place women for this moral care, including other Venetian institutions. Within Venice, the holistic nature of the treatments provided within these institutions is documented in rich and revealing detail. We are given glimpses behind closed doors of domestic and institutional structures, including a horrifying story of rape of young girl in the context of early modern bed sharing (pp. 131–2).

The principal contribution of this volume is to align cultural representations of a disease with social structures, medical views and institutional responses, although the extent to which these relationships are specific to an endemic disease is overstated, as is the marginalisation of the institutions established to care for the sick (p. 113). The volume also represents another important step towards overcoming the often anachronistic divide between early modern society, culture and the history of medicine and adds valuable detail and engaging new ideas to the extant introductory volume on the French Disease in Renaissance Europe by Jon Arrizabalaga, John Henderson and Roger French.

Jane Stevens Crawshaw
Oxford Brookes University

Craig Muldrew, *Food, energy and the creation of industriousness: work and material culture in agrarian England, 1550–1780* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2011). xvii+355pp. ISBN 978-0-521-88185-2. £60 (hardback).

It seems appropriate that I read this book on work and energy while at the gym. However, as I balanced the slim but ambitiously wide-ranging volume on the exercise bike, I began to feel increasingly guilty about my preferences for exercise in a clean and controlled environment, as well as the ease with which I could go home for a restorative snack afterwards. What Craig Muldrew has done in this book is to analyse in detail the nutritional resources available for labourers in pre-and early-industrial England: literally, the fuel for agricultural work. The calculations and ingenuity this requires is quite staggering, and after every session I left the gym considerably more exhausted at the thought both of the labour carried out by the workers of early modern England and of the work required to produce this study than by my own efforts.

Muldrew gives an interesting insight into how the book came about in his preface. The initial impetus came from empirical evidence on consumption and market transactions of meat, but this eventually evolved into a wider theoretical consideration which engages with de Vries' ideas on industrialisation and 'industriousness', and Wrigley's on fuel and the industrial revolution. Thus while this book is based on empirical evidence from labourers' inventories, account books and contemporary works on diet which give a new insight into the standard of living debate, it is grounded in ideas about work and productivity among the labouring classes.

The book is divided into three sections: food, goods, and demand for labour. The first part, which takes up a substantial portion of the book, reviews the nature of the diets of the

labouring sorts and includes a detailed reading of individual foodstuffs. This sort of approach is becoming more popular among economic historians (see, for example, Joan Thirsk's recent book on diet); however, Muldrew does a particularly thorough and scholarly job of integrating contemporary evidence with secondary literature. The second chapter in this section provides most of the mental gymnastics in the book, by calculating the calories provided by the food consumed by labourers, the calories required for different types of work, and the food production available. The amount of careful work this must have taken is quite staggering and it is almost a shame that the impact is somewhat diluted by the fact that Muldrew continues in several other directions through the remaining chapters.

The second part of the book considers goods, using the probate inventories of agricultural labourers. Items connected with food preparation and consumption are considered, but the analysis moves into wider considerations of material acquisition in order to test the theory that greater engagement with work produced benefits in terms of wealth. This link is made overt in the third part of the book, which deals with industriousness: that is, an increase in labour market participation in order to maximise benefits (in earnings and goods, or alternatively, in leisure time funded by earnings). This section again ranges widely, including the work of women and children, and perquisites beyond the formal paid economy, and in the following chapter, a more theoretical consideration of the term 'industrious'. Ultimately, Muldrew reflects that his evidence does indeed point to a rise in industriousness especially in the second half of his period, when stagnant population growth and a raised demand for labour meant that labourers could feed a growing secondary and tertiary sector, and support their own rising living standards. This was all fuelled by a more plentiful food supply which supplied the large number of calories required.

It should be clear by now that this is an extremely ambitious book, with much of great value to say on a number of levels. Muldrew is also a very good writer, and is able to discuss a multitude of graphs and innumerable examples without losing the reader's interest. However, the wide-ranging nature of the project does make for some problems. One is the number of approaches and sources used. Food, work and goods have obvious areas of intersection, but by covering all three, the story ends up rather convoluted. The discussion of goods in particular does seem to stray off the main point somewhat, especially since items to do with food consumption may be particularly likely to be omitted from probate inventories (for example, if they were perishable, or were regarded as the wife's property). It is also a shame that although the sources represent a number of areas of the country, this is not really a story of regional tastes or stories, although Muldrew acknowledges that this is an important area for future study. And it grated a little with this reader that the study ends deliberately in 1780 in order not to connect with the very different situation of the more intensive period of industrialisation; and yet heavy use is made of both Frederick Morton Eden and David Davies, both of whom were writing

of this later period, and were spurred on precisely by the worsening economic situation of the later eighteenth century.

Finally, although 'industriousness' forms an important part of the story Muldrew has to tell, its remit is never quite pinned down. In particular, it is not clear whether the distinction between industriousness as a personal choice as opposed to a tool of social improvement is important or whether this changed over time. Muldrew's definition is deliberately wide-ranging: 'an entire attitude towards the improvement of both goods and effort, aimed at superior production and the increase in profit and wealth for both individuals and the nation' (p. 17), but by the end of the book little is clear other than that the term has become an increasingly evoked concept.

These quibble aside, this is an important book which is a significant addition to our understanding of how agricultural (and ultimately, industrial) growth in England was fuelled. Muldrew's conclusions speak directly to the notion of Wrigley's 'organic economy', as well as the concept of the industrious revolution, and the standards of living debate. And you'll appreciate your post-exertion snack all the more for reading it.

Alysa Levene

Oxford Brookes University

David Short ed., *An historical atlas of Hertfordshire* (Hertfordshire Publications, Hatfield, 2011). xx+204pp. ISBN 978-0-9542189-6-6. £25 (paperback).

Hertfordshire, as Nigel Goose emphasises in his introduction to this excellent historical atlas, is a county of considerable diversity, despite its relatively small geographical area. This diversity is amply demonstrated in the 82 chapters, organised thematically, each with one or more maps. The contributors take us on a journey through the topography of Hertfordshire, together with its population history and its economic, social and—significantly—religious development. It is thematically organised, in 12 sections, including 'Boundaries' (five chapters), 'Industries and Work' (12 chapters), 'Buildings' (seven chapters) and 'Social Issues' (a perhaps disappointing five chapters). The subjects range from general entries on geology, soil, rivers and navigations, parliamentary enclosures, and population in several different periods—such as one might expect to find in such an atlas of any English county—to examinations of topics of particular local importance, notably the straw-plait and hat-making industry, printing, film and television studios and an extended chapter on new towns. The atlas is particularly strong on the industrial history of the county, considering papermaking, nineteenth-century agricultural trades, bellfounders, silk and the pharmaceutical industry, among others. There are also chapters on the perhaps unexpected subjects of ice houses, executions, orchards (Hertfordshire has few surviving orchards, although it was noted for them in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), medieval and Tudor graffiti and City of London Coal Tax Markers. There are various notable absences, including social protest after c.1700, sport, disease and modern political history, and some readers might have preferred more

entries on specific towns, of which there are relatively few. The urban development of Watford would have made for an interesting map, for example.

The chapters on population will be of particular interest to readers of *Local Population Studies*. Mark Bailey maps data from the 1307 Lay Subsidy to show the number of acres per taxpayer (pp. 50–1), an interesting though admittedly problematic measure of the density of medieval population. Bailey shows a greater concentration of population in north and east Hertfordshire, with fewer people in the south and west, except for the concentration of population in St Albans. Goose does the same for the Tudor and then the Stuart population (pp. 52–4), showing an increase across most of the county, though he notes the relative paucity of urban development in the county during this period. Goose is also the author of the chapter on the nineteenth century, which emphasises the rapid expansion of Hertfordshire, though this was somewhat slower than that of England as a whole. Now the significant growth was in the south and west of the county, partly accounted for by the straw plait trades, which also skewed the sex ratio. Some parishes' population increased by more than 500 per cent in the nineteenth century, whereas in the north and east some parishes actually declined in size. For much of the twentieth century, as Evelyn Lord demonstrates (pp. 58–60), this pattern of population growth persisted, for different reasons, with additional expansion taking place on the southern urban fringe of Hertfordshire as commuting to London became the norm in many places. In addition, by the early twenty-first century almost one in five of the county's population were pensioners. As Lord (p. 59) notes, '[p]arts of the county had become dormitory suburbs for London or Cambridge; others were retirement enclaves, or country havens for celebrities'.

The differences between the two halves of Hertfordshire are a significant theme of many chapters in the atlas. They were not only demographic, but also industrial and cultural. The silk industry, for example, was almost entirely concentrated in the south and west, with particularly large mills in Tring, St Albans and Watford (p. 97). Meanwhile, the map of parliamentary enclosures reveals considerable differences (p. 119), as does the one showing church dedications (p. 125): in the east of the county, 81.3 per cent of medieval dedications were to St Mary, compared with only 18.7 per cent in the west. Judith Burg's chapter on religious worship (pp. 140–1), based on the census of 1851, shows that, while a majority of worshippers attended the established church, particularly for morning services, almost everywhere, Dissent was stronger in the west, while the nature of Dissent itself differed, as Baptism predominated in the west and Congregationalism in the east.

The atlas is attractively presented, although there are disappointingly few illustrations apart from the maps: a picture of an ice house, for example, would have enhanced chapter 14. The thematic structure of the atlas is welcome, although it is odd to read a chapter on palaeolithic settlements immediately after one on twentieth-century population. Some sections do proceed chronologically, where it is suitable for this to be the case. The entries on boundaries are useful, showing the hundreds, poor law unions, highway boards and other authorities in geographical context, but although most maps show the parish

boundaries, there is no key map showing the parish names. Sometimes the maps would benefit from clearer labelling: it is not always completely clear to which dates they refer. For example, the maps showing the proportion of the employed population and the employed female population working in the straw industry (pp. 91–2) do not give the date, and it is necessary to refer to the text (p. 90) to ascertain this. In at least two places (pp. 51 and 123) the text refers to a map ‘opposite’, which is actually on the same page. Finally, the map of Hertfordshire railways does not show all the stations on some of the smaller lines, while even some stations on the main lines are missing (for example, the disused station at Napsbury and the new one at Luton Airport Parkway). Railway historians may feel that this is a missed opportunity. Such infelicities of presentation are rare, however, and should not detract from the considerable achievement that this atlas represents, drawing together the work of a large number of local historians, each with an interesting story to tell about the historical development of London’s northern neighbour.

Mark Freeman

University of Glasgow

Carolyn Steedman, *Labours lost: domestic service and the making of modern England* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009). xvi+410pp. ISBN 978-0-521-73623-7. £17.99 (paperback).

Carolyn Steedman’s aim in this book is to restore to domestic workers a central role in the period 1760–1830, and especially in the making of the English working class. This is no less than a re-writing of the history of the industrial revolution. Servants were, she argues, part of the experience of all the significant writers of the day and became ‘a rich resource for thinking about the social order’ (p. 13). Legal theorists, political philosophers and historians used maids and menservants to demonstrate, amongst other things, how society functioned and how the constitution had developed. Sir William Blackstone considered the contract between master and servant to be the first of ‘the three great relations of private life’ (p. 54), giving it more prominence than the relationship between husband and wife or parent and child. Local magistrates were much exercised by legal niceties which arose in employer-employee disputes within the household. Hannah Wright’s case, which came before the King’s Bench in 1777 was cited for the next 40 years by JPs dealing with maids dismissed after their pregnancy was discovered. Domestic service became a frequent point of reference in the highly contentious debates on slavery and in 1785 the proposed tax on female servants occasioned what Steedman considers to be the first serious (if ribald) discussion of female labour in the House of Commons.

It is not surprising that servants feature so frequently in the social and cultural life of the period. They were the largest occupational group in the country and might be found not only in kitchen and scullery, but swelling the ranks of prostitutes and criminals when they fell on hard times. They appeared in court as witnesses to conflicts between their master and mistress and were indicted for forging their all-important ‘characters’ or testimonials.

Servants featured in the drama and fiction of the period, even if only as a 'plot mechanism' (p. 347) to assist the action. Others were poets themselves. At times they were centre stage, as when Eliza Fenning put arsenic in a stew intending to murder the entire household. Details of the case in popular assize accounts reminded employers of the dangerous powers servants might obtain. Others were more interested in Eliza herself, 'her demeanour, her alluring bosom, the little lilac boots she wore on the scaffold' (p. 244).

The great exception amongst the contemporary writers and thinkers was Adam Smith who, far from drawing on servant life to elucidate his ideas, dismissed domestic toil as (in Steedman's words) 'a kind of non-work, or anti-work' (p. 16). It had no saleable end product, no tangible commodity upon which a value could be placed. Most domestic workers, about 75 per cent by the late eighteenth century, were female and most worked in households employing only one 'maid-of-all work' (the 'slave'). These predominantly young workers, some no more than slips of girls, preoccupied with scrubbing, dusting, peeling, washing and much that was far less appealing, could hardly be ranked, in Smith's order of things, with the butchers, brewers and bakers, whose exchange of goods kept the economy moving (one of the excellent illustrations in this book (p. 25) shows a perplexed child servant with a broom that is far too big for her). Smith's view of labour was, Steedman contends, profound and enduring in its impact. Marx followed Smith in this failure to recognise domestic workers as a serious component of the working class. Twentieth-century historians, too, focused their energies on industrial and proto-industrial workers.

Of course there are practical as well as ideological reasons for this preoccupation. Source material for factory workers and miners has always been more accessible than evidence from thousands of individual households. The wealthier establishments are better documented, and Steedman's concern is to revisit the 'middling sort'. Her particular genius lies in her discovery in court cases, parish records and taxation returns and often in more unexpected places, evidence of her neglected workforce. In an earlier book, *Master and servant*, she brought to life the household of a Yorkshire clergyman through his previously unknown diaries. Here Steedman examines with a new rigour and purpose the detailed household account books of Frances Hamilton, the widowed owner of a small family estate in Somerset between 1779 and 1802. Between orders for items the household could not itself produce (tea, sugar, spices, almonds and raisins, for example) she details the wages of her maids, the arrival and departure of a string of young boy helpers, the placement by the parish of a pauper girl and the tasks performed by each in the course of a year. Male members of the household were required to be remarkably versatile: Thomas, her parish apprentice was most often to be found cutting or sawing wood, cleaning the cider-making equipment, working in the kitchen garden, accompanying her on shopping trips or mowing the clover grass. On occasions, however, he might be 'called in from the field, washed and brushed up and told to put on his stockings and slippers' (p. 72) to serve at table when guests arrived for supper.

No wonder those responsible for assessing the tax on male servants found it difficult to distinguish domestic servants from all others, who were exempt. First levied in 1777, the protests it aroused pale beside the furore occasioned inside and outside parliament by the tax on female servants launched in 1785. Steedman's investigation of this episode is one of the most engaging sections of her book. Charles Fox protested that while male servants were, on the whole, an idle set kept for appearance, maidservants 'were always employed in works of industry and management' (p. 146). Perceived as a tax on those least able to pay (all those small and middling households) and likely to result in destitution followed by prostitution for hundreds of dismissed maids, its unpopularity, widespread evasion and the many exemptions granted, made it a lost cause. It was withdrawn in 1792. No doubt many who protested were more concerned about their own pockets than the welfare of their maids but the episode serves to underline Steedman's contention that such women were seen as a vital component of eighteenth-century life.

Of course this did not ensure status or protection for the very young servant or apprentice: 'All this for a Parish Girl!' exclaimed the notorious Mrs Brownrigg, condemned in 1767 for causing the death of her apprentice by a severe whipping (p. 225). All the same, Steedman takes issue with historians who assume that a downtrodden state was inevitable for servants or that they accepted their role with equanimity. She finds too many feisty females prepared to take their employers to court for mistreatment and well able to present an informed account of their settlement rights when called upon to do so. Steedman also brings to our attention (Chapter 10) the subversive poetry of household workers—the 'knowingness' and wit in the work of the Warwickshire maid Elizabeth Hand which she finds 'intentionally offensive, and wonderfully so' (p. 289).

Labours lost is not always an easy read: Steedman takes a holistic approach to her subjects, seeking to access their psychological state, the nuances of their language, the pleasures and resentments of their work, their innermost thoughts. There is even a chapter on the importance of stays, the 'must have' item for English maids (p.340). However, it remains a compelling read, informed as it is by Steedman's intimate knowledge of the everyday existence of servant life and sensitivity to the 'felt conditions of their labour' (p. 254) whether shovelling out the privy, cleaning the knives or caring for children 'and their piggy little clouts' (p. 254). Thanks to Caroline Steedman's own toil, the labours of this under-represented work force have been brought into historical focus.

Jenny Dyer
Oxford Brookes University

Simon Szreter and Kate Fisher, *Sex before the sexual revolution; intimate life in England 1918–1963* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010). viii+548pp. ISBN: 978-0-521-14932-7. £19.99 (paperback).

Reaction to Szreter and Fisher's oral history of sexual behaviour before the sexual 'watershed' of the 1960s is likely to depend on the gender, age, birth place and class

background of the reader. This is perhaps not surprising, given the author's findings that attitudes to sex and its associated behaviours were very much tempered by these characteristics among their respondents, all born between 1902 and 1931 in Blackburn, (Lancashire) and Hertfordshire.

The vast majority of the 50 Blackburn and 38 Hertfordshire respondents were married in the 1930s or 1940s, and therefore their memories concerning attitudes to courtship, sex before marriage and intimacy within marriage were certainly formed before 'the sexual revolution'. This is no dry history; the well constructed and argued text is rich with vivid, verbatim transcriptions of responses to the researchers' probing questions, complete with giggles, elisions and evasions. While 'graphic detail' is not to the fore, the researchers have managed to 'push open the bedroom door', so often closed to historians because previous generations saw 'marital relations' as intensely private—as is clearly attested by the respondents here—and were this a television documentary viewers would be warned that it contains a few 'scenes of a sexual nature'. Readers, no doubt predominantly from younger generations, may be surprised by how the reminiscences of past generations challenge their own views of 'acceptable' behaviour and set them questioning their own sexual mores.

After an introduction discussing how the authors used oral history techniques to examine issues of 'sexuality and intimacy', and rehearsing previous academic knowledge and opinion of the evolution of attitudes to sexual behaviour, the book is divided into three parts. The first addresses the question 'What was sex?', the second 'What was love?', while the third 'Explor(es) sex and love in marriage'.

The chapters in the first part consider what, and how, young people learnt about sex growing up in the early decades of the twentieth century, and how they viewed sex before marriage. The second part then examines how they formed relationships, chose their partners and, once married, developed a special bond (or not). Unsurprisingly a variety of experiences and attitudes are recorded, with the respondents' life histories and personalities emerging to add weight and 'colour' to their statements. It becomes evident that there were general class, gender and geographic differences in the amount of information provided, acquired, expected or looked for on topics ranging from basic reproduction to sexual positions to contraception. Working class culture, at least in the two focal localities, appears to have set a particular premium on keeping girls 'innocent' through ignorance. This, it is argued, had a number of consequences—for example, a lack of language to discuss problems and issues to do with sex among certain groups, and class differences in which partner was responsible for contraception, and the methods used.

Amongst the several topics tackled in the third section of the book, is how respondents controlled their fertility within marriage. The discussion reveals how great the fear of pregnancy, both before and after marriage, was amongst a generation for whom the

contraceptive pill had little consequence. Another aspect with which the authors engage is their interviewees' attitudes to their bodies and those of their partners. This in some ways may give readers from younger generations greater pause for thought, and make them consider the wider changes wrought over the intervening years. Szreter and Fisher's respondents were not obsessed with 'looks'. Artifice was not generally approved of; what caught the eye was 'a healthy complexion', 'smart clothes', 'cleanliness' and 'good manners'. Emphasis was placed on health and hygiene and this, it is argued, could be seen in the way sexual relations were conducted. The value of oral history testimonies in uncovering nuance of meaning is amply demonstrated. For example, previous researchers have interpreted comments by wives referring to sex as a 'duty' as being disparaging. Here the authors tease out the idea that the feeling of 'doing one's duty' to one's husband could provide considerable pleasure, particularly when a woman lacked other ways of describing her enjoyment of sex.

The book's penultimate chapter turns the tables somewhat and considers the respondents' views of modern sexual behaviour and mores, compared to those of 'their day'. While some envy at the amount of knowledge now available is expressed, alongside acknowledgement that the fear of pregnancy has greatly abated, an impression is given that respondents considered that sex before the sexual revolution could be just as fulfilling, if not more so, than sex in the climate which emerged after it. Women may have won 'sexual freedom' but there had been a loss of stability, contentment, imagination and romance. Rather than feeling 'repressed' or 'inhibited' the great majority of respondents had enjoyed the sexual side of their marriages which they and their spouses had developed in private.

Szreter and Fisher are to be greatly commended for their interviewing, interpreting and writing skills which have produced a text which will undoubtedly become a classic in its field. The debt that they and their readers owe to their interviewees for the insights that they have afforded is, however, hard to overestimate. In a short review it is not possible to explore all the nuances of such a complex narrative. Many aspects of married and family life are touched upon and ideas and concepts encompassed by the previous literature are considered, discussed and, in several cases, debunked at relevant points throughout the book. There is a great deal to absorb, and the text will stand reading and re-reading. No doubt others will be inspired to test whether the findings hold when other sectors of society, or geographical locations, are investigated using similar methods. Those interested in changing beliefs and attitudes to sex, both within and outside marriage, birth control, behaviour during courtship and relationships between the sexes may do well to present this book to a variety of readers or reading groups, and then listen, as Szreter and Fisher have listened to their respondents, to the reactions to the notions expressed by these 'very senior citizens' on their own youth, and that of today. Such an exercise would reveal how the 'sexual revolution' has overtaken diverse corners of modern society, while leaving traces of the attitudes and beliefs expressed so

eloquently by these members of our parents', grandparents' and even our great-grandparents' generations.

Eilidh Garrett

University of Cambridge

Patrick Wallis ed., *London inhabitants outside the walls, 1695* (London Record Society, volume 45, Boydell & Brewer, London, 2010). xvi+359pp. ISBN: 978-0-900952-45-6. £25 (hardback)

This new volume in the London Record Society list is a belated companion to the much-used *London inhabitants within the walls* edited by D.V. Glass and published in 1966 (also available at <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>). The earlier volume appeared at a time when the ~~population and social structure of London was starting to come under detailed~~ investigation, and so it represented an important handlist for those working at the forefront of the field of historical demography. By the time of this current volume's appearance attention has shifted its focus somewhat and so its utility is somewhat less clear. However, it represents the logical culmination of a work begun in 1966 and, when read in conjunction with other sources, may well still prove useful to those working on London's social structure, as well as to those seeking to pinpoint individuals living in the outer City area at the end of the seventeenth century.

Both volumes are alphabetical indices of the inhabitants of London in 1695. The data were produced by an enumeration carried out in preparation for the new Marriage Duty Act, and which was, in Glass's words, an attempt to create 'a statistical system without precedent in Britain' (Glass, 1966, retrieved via www.british-history.ac.uk, 10 February 2012). It listed inhabitants by household with ~~indications as to levels of wealth, and~~ sometimes occupation. This current volume covers 13 parishes and 52,631 inhabitants outside the precincts of London's City Walls; thus covering what tended to be the larger and poorer areas ringing the inner heart of the City. As Wallis notes frankly, the set of returns is not complete (the area south of the Thames is partially missing, for example); nor can we be sure about the completeness of registration of the poor or children, neither of whom were liable for the Marriage Duty Tax.

One of the principal problems as far as the utility of the index is concerned, is that the entire area is arranged alphabetically. It would thus be extremely time-consuming to reconstruct data from one parish (each parish has an identifying number which is reproduced by each inhabitant's entry). This follows the format of the original volume, but given the trend towards enriched local studies (such as those produced by the People in Place project: <http://www.history.ac.uk/cmh/pip/> [10 February 2012]), this is a disadvantage for modern users. ~~Furthermore, servants, apprentices and lodgers~~ are listed under their own surnames, making the reconstruction of 'housefuls' almost impossible. Given Wallis's own interest in apprenticeship this is a shortcoming of which he was no doubt extremely aware, and a significant one given the high proportion of these people in

City households. Individuals with no surnames given (including many of those likely to have been servants and lodgers) are, however, listed separately at the end of the index, which offers an interesting opportunity to focus on singletons, albeit divorced from their households.

These formatting details make the index less effective as a source in its own right. However, taken in conjunction with other sources on occupation and household forms it may well prove to be a useful tool; certainly the source itself is still frequently used to provide a baseline level of data on local populations and social structure (see, for example, Merry and Baker's 2009 article in *The London Journal*). However, here its non-machine-readable format is a disadvantage; many of the current studies on London's population are heavily reliant on electronic databases and record linkage exercises. It would perhaps have been wise to issue the volume with an accompanying CD-Rom or searchable website.

These drawbacks do not detract from Wallis's careful work in editing and presenting the data. Nor do they overshadow the index's utility for studies of nuclear families where all members share the same name, or for tracing individuals of known surname. The alphabetical arrangement also lends itself well to studies of common surnames and unique names. In addition the volume contains a useful reference map, a list of abbreviated names, and a reference list of common occupations.

Overall, the way that the index is presented makes it difficult to see who exactly it is intended for in this age of digitisation and complex record linkage. Nonetheless, it is a careful and precise work which conforms to the aims of the Record Society, and which may yet encourage novel ways of studying the characteristics of Londoners in the late seventeenth century.

Alysa Levene

Oxford Brookes University

E.A. Wrigley, *The early English censuses* (British Academy Records of Social and Economic History New Series, 46, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2011). xviii+322pp.+CDROM. ISBN 978-0-19-726479-9. £55 (hardback).

A few years ago I carried out some research at the library of the Office for National Statistics. Every couple of days or so someone would come into the library with the aim of finding out the population of a certain place during the nineteenth century. Usually they would be directed towards the large bound volumes of published census returns and left to their own devices. Occasionally the librarian would take pity on them and offer some help. The following conversation would then take place—librarian: 'Exactly what do you mean by place X? Parish, hundred or registration district?'; researcher: 'I'm not sure what you mean'. After an explanation the relevant volume/s would be taken from the shelf and a short time later, on leaving the library, the researcher would thank the librarian, but I was not always convinced that they left with the information they were seeking.

Today it is no longer necessary to visit a major library to access the nineteenth-century census publications since they are available via the HistPop website (<http://www.histpop.org>). The problem of how to interpret the population totals included in these sources, however, remains, and this volume in the series of British Academy Records of Social and Economic History will greatly aid anyone using the English census returns from 1801 to 1851. One problem with these sources is that when the first census was carried out in 1801, the basic unit of enumeration was the parish, but by 1851, following the introduction of civil registration of births, deaths and marriages in 1837, it had changed to the registration district. Coupled with the fact that there were often considerable boundary changes between censuses (for instance, England lost 25,591 of its population to Wales in 1851: p. 72), tracing the population of a settlement from 1801 to 1851 can be far from a straightforward process. Such problems are addressed head-on in this volume whose aim is, 'to produce uniform and reliable population totals for each census place in England at each of the first six censuses (the term census place refers to the smallest units used in the census), and a parallel series of tables based on these totals showing the populations of larger divisions such as hundreds and counties; and, further, to match the population data with areal information for all the census units' (p. 2).

What is effectively produced is two series of tables, prefixed by A (ancient units, primarily the parish) and M (the modern unit of the registration district). Thus, table M2.2 provides male, female and total populations, 1801–51, for each English registration district with the totals for 1801–41 being reconstructed from the earlier census returns. Similarly Table A1.3 provides information for each ancient parish. Some of the smaller tables are reproduced in print, but others such as table A1.3 are too big and are only available on the accompanying CD which reproduces the full set of 24 tables in two forms of Microsoft Excel (2007 workbook and 97–2000 & 5.0/95 workbook) together with a simpler tab-delimited text format.

Within both A and M series two versions of the data are given. The first gives the population data as they appear in the census volumes with corrections only being made for obvious arithmetical and printing errors. The second makes an attempt at off-setting the under-recording of infants and young children, the absence of men in the army, navy and merchant marine and the problems caused by the absence of men in militia camps on census night. Accompanying the tables are 154 pages of text describing exactly how the various tables were constructed. The various difficulties in interpreting the sources are discussed in meticulous detail with interesting examples of different local registration issues being used as illustrations throughout the text. It is hard to see how a more rigorous examination of these sources could be provided.

The various tables are likely to become definitive estimates of England's population in the early nineteenth century, but the accompanying text also identifies and hints at many avenues where further research is possible. An obvious topic concerns relative rates of regional development: these are illustrated nationally in Figure 3.1 which shows

differential growth rates in registration districts, 1801–51. The growth of GIS opens up the possibility of many interesting research projects, especially as the data are now readily available in a machine readable format. Chapter 4 will be of especial interest to readers of *LPS* since it deals with the historical data collected by the early censuses. In order to assess whether or not the population was growing in 1801 Rickman required historical data on baptisms, burials and marriages in parish registers to be extracted and set alongside the population totals. These have allowed Wrigley to produce county population estimates (for 1600, 1700, 1750 and then every ten years from 1761 onwards) and hundred population estimates (every ten years from 1761 onwards): see also E.A. Wrigley, 'English county populations in the later eighteenth century', *Economic History Review*, 60 (2007), 35–69 and 'Rickman revisited: the population growth rates of English counties in the early modern period', *Economic History Review*, 62 (2009), 711–35. Unfortunately, only the tables reporting these growth rates are reproduced, and the original parish register abstracts are not included on the CD.

While this volume may not necessarily provide a simple answer to a researcher's query concerning the population of a settlement during the early nineteenth century, it does provide the means by which such questions may be resolved. The work that has been undertaken in order to produce this volume is enormous and anyone who is interested in population trends during this period needs to be thankful for the care that the author has taken in ensuring that these valuable sources are more readily accessible. This volume is an important resource which will no doubt be of enormous value to readers of *LPS*.

Chris Galley
Barnsley College

Minoru Yasumoto, *The rise of a Victorian Ironopolis: Middlesbrough and regional industrialization* (The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2011). xvii+230pp. ISBN 978-1-84383-633-9. £60 (hardback).

For those interested in the history of the iron and steel industry in Victorian England Yasumoto's *Ironopolis* is a treasure trove of facts and figures; a rich source of comparative statistics for those studying other centres of the industry. The wealth of detail is testament to many hours spent in the local and regional archives and builds up the picture of a town which rose swiftly to prominence only to fade just as quickly when confronted by new processes, superior raw materials and outside competition.

Readers of *Local Population Studies* might, on a first glance at a list of chapters with titles such as 'Town planning and the birth of Middlesborough', 'Industrial agglomeration in the Cleveland iron and steel industry' or 'The labour market in Cleveland iron and steel', feel this book had little to offer them. However, they would be mistaken. The chapters 'Demography and urban growth' and 'Welfare provision in mid-Victorian Middlesbrough' offer discussions of mortality and morbidity and a history of local hospitals and welfare institutions, but in a town with a population which grew from just

under 7,500 in 1851 to just under 36,599 in 1881, the focus is most definitely on migration. Yasumoto does not have registration data of demographic events with which to work, but he does have the census returns for Middlesbrough from 1851–1881 and, using techniques pioneered by the research team led by French and Tilley at Kingston University, he conducts a nominal record linkage which allows him to identify ‘stayers’, in-migrants, and out-migrants between consecutive censuses. Of necessity the analysis focuses mainly on males, but this allows an exploration of movement into and out of different sectors of the town’s economy; and comparison of the movement patterns displayed by various groups within the community, such as individuals and families arriving from Ireland, or men pursuing particular occupations. These observations contribute a great deal to the chapter on ‘The labour market in Cleveland iron and steel’.

Yasumoto notes that most of the comparative threads he is able to draw have to be with studies from Germany and the USA as there ‘have not as yet been enough quantitative migration studies based on record linkage of census enumerators’ returns in other Victorian industrial towns to make a systematic comparison possible’ (p. 62). Readers of *LPS* may wish to see this as a challenge. More such studies would undoubtedly lead to a greater understanding of the processes underpinning industrialisation and urban growth in Britain during the Victorian era, but the amount of time and effort involved is certainly downplayed in Yasumoto’s text, even with the advent of computerised data and record linkage programmes. As with the amount of archive work he has obviously undertaken, the author is very modest about the amount of effort required by the record linkage. The results, as represented here, are impressive, however. Both individuals and their families are considered so that a rounded picture of movement to and from the town is painted. The great amount of movement, both inward and outward, contributing to the town’s growth is strikingly captured. Some readers may miss discussion of fertility and marriage and this would certainly add an extra dimension to the exploration of urban growth but, given the constraints imposed by the available data, this is understandable.

A few small quibbles emerge—the reader has to work hard to gain the maximum understanding offered by the multitude of tables; some additional ‘signposting’ of how the data provided could be read and interpreted in conjunction with the text would be helpful. Occasionally the reader is left puzzling over the source of maps or tables, and in a few cases the titles of tables could be more helpful in indicating how to interpret the contents. However, these are small points. Yasumoto is to be congratulated on his achievement. Hopefully *Ironopolis* will inspire further researchers to pursue similar census-based studies and cast increasing light on the role played by migration and mobility in the growth of urban and industrial Britain.

Eilidh Garrett
University of Cambridge