
News from the universities

The Universities of Glasgow, Sheffield Hallam and Southampton

In a slight change to the accustomed format, this Spring we traverse the country and carry a brief news report from three universities: Glasgow, Sheffield Hallam, and Southampton, compiled by Mark Freeman, Nicola Verdon and Andrew Hinde.

University of Glasgow

At the University of Glasgow two major AHRC-funded research projects are likely to be of interest to readers of this journal. The first is 'The Breaking of Britain: Cross-Border Society and Scottish Independence 1216–1314', which is a collaboration with King's College London, Lancaster University and the University of Edinburgh. It follows on from 'The People of Medieval Scotland' (PoMS), which, under its original name 'The Paradox of Medieval Scotland', was described in *LPS 86* (Spring 2011) by Amanda Beam. In 'The Breaking of Britain' (BoB), the investigators will examine the extent of the homogeneity of cross-border society between the early years of the reign of Alexander II and Robert I's abolition of cross-border landholding after the battle of Bannockburn. The study will consider all strata of society, from the larger cross-border landholders, to the gentry, 'middling folk' and peasants. BoB will extend the database of biographical information on which PoMS was based to cover Scotland from 1286 to 1314 and northern England from 1216 to 1307. This will underpin an analysis of the politics of Scottish identity in this period, and the nature of cross-border society, government and the legal system. The principal investigator on the project is Professor Dauvit Broun. The project website at www.breakingofbritain.ac.uk includes a blog, a 'feature of the month' and resources for schools.

The second large project is 'A History of Working-Class Marriage 1855–1976', led by Professor Eleanor Gordon. This examines courtship, marriage and marital breakdown in Scotland between the introduction of civil registration (18 years later than in England and Wales) and the divorce law reform of 1976. The researchers will work with Scottish Women's Aid, the Glasgow Women's Library and Learning and Teaching Scotland, among other partners, as well as producing academic work on the history of family structure. A large database on household composition will be produced, along with a website that will be of interest to family historians as well as the academic community. There is further information on the project at workingclassmarriage.gla.ac.uk/

Sheffield Hallam University

History at Sheffield Hallam has traditional strengths in various aspects of imperial, European and British history. The group was recently reinforced by the appointment of three early-career historians, all working in the field of 'global' history (with research interests in Iran, Armenia and the US). Within these broad areas there are several historians whose work will be of interest.

Appointed in September 2013 Melodee Beals is a historian of migration and identity. The focus of her research has been Scottish migration to the US in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, including the study of both settlement communities and those left behind in Scotland, concentrating on perceptions of emigration, immigration and migration and how these affected personal, commercial and governmental policies. She gave a paper to the 2012 LPSS Spring conference on one aspect of this research, 'The business of migration: selling emigration to Scottish labourers, 1800–50'. Her current research project is entitled 'Here and There, Us and Them: Demography and the Imperial Public Sphere before Victoria'. Using newspapers, literary magazines and other public documents, this project explores public perceptions of identity at the start of the second British Empire and the relationship between demographic pressures and cultural identity within the Anglophone world. It further aims to develop our understanding of pre-telegraphic news networks by tracing the composition, reprinting, abridgment and paraphrasing of this content as it traveled along global dissemination networks.

Also looking at migration across long distances, Robbie Aitken (and co-author Eve Rosenhaft of the University of Liverpool) are about to publish their book *Black Germany: the making and unmaking of a diaspora community 1884–1960* (CUP, forthcoming 2013). This ground-breaking history traces the development of Germany's black community, from its origins in colonial Africa to its decimation by the Nazis during World War II. It follows the careers of Africans arriving from the colonies, examining why and where they settled, their personal and working lives and their political activities, and exploring questions of gender, sexuality and 'mixed marriage'. It gives particular attention to the networks through which individuals constituted community, and the ways in which networks spread beyond ties of kinship and birthplace to constitute community as 'black'. It proposes a critical perspective on narratives of 'race' in German history, while providing a new in-depth account of the impact of Nazism and its aftermath. Following some of its quintessentially transnational protagonists to France and back to Africa, the book also offers new insights into the roots of francophone black consciousness and trajectories of post-colonial memory. The study employs a wide range of primary material from state, missionary, and local archives retrieved from 11 different countries. The types of sources employed include the Hamburg passenger lists, German police registration records, the address books of German cities, baptismal and marriage records, citizenship applications, records of the French and German colonial administrations, local newspaper reports, film and music industry magazines, records of the Communist International relating to black

activists, and applications for reparations made by victims of Nazi persecution. These are complemented by interview and photographic material gathered in Cameroon, France and Germany.

Another project is being undertaken by Matthew Roberts on 'Rethinking Luddism in Nottinghamshire'. This research revisits the rural epicentre(s) of Luddism in the villages surrounding Nottingham. By carefully piecing together findings from a range of legal and demographic sources Matthew is unearthing new evidence to show how the Luddism of the villages was part of a repertoire of protest acts (arson, poaching, even robbery and attacks on rural property), the origins of which were to be found in the traditions and customs of the English rural community. Luddism was about more than wages and working conditions: it was also a response to the other contractions in the 'makeshift economy' of the knitters—poor relief payments, charity, mutual support and the exercise of common rights, and his research will highlight how Luddite cells grow organically from kinship, neighbourhood and trade connections. Machine breaking was thus part of a well-established pattern of survival crime which brought the knitters into conflict not only with their employers but also the local squirearchy and the forces of law and order.

Finally, the History Department is currently strengthened by the Leverhulme Visiting Professor Laura Tabili from the University of Arizona. She has just published a book *Global migrants, local culture* (Palgrave, 2013), which examines how overseas migration affected social relations and culture in the rapidly industrialising port of South Shields in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and includes a reconstruction and analysis of the entire overseas migrant population of that town. During her residency Laura will also lead a migration-themed workshop at Sheffield Hallam in May and will work towards developing sources for the study of migration history in the Sheffield area.

University of Southampton

Teaching and research in population history in Southampton is carried out in two separate faculties. In the School of Social Sciences, there is a small group of economic, social and demographic historians, including Bernard Harris, Aravinda Guntupalli and Andrew Hinde, working mainly on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and studying topics such as trends in morbidity, the use of anthropometric data to infer living standards, and sex differentials in mortality. In the Faculty of Humanities, several individuals have interests in topics related to population history, including Barry Sloan (rural life in the second half of the nineteenth century) and Mary Hammond (the migration of print workers throughout the Anglophone world).

Two recent developments might be of interest to readers of *Local Population Studies*. First, a new Centre for Nineteenth-Century Research has been established in the Faculty of Humanities. Designed to be interdisciplinary, this Centre brings together historians and social scientists with colleagues in the English department to explore common themes. On

20 September 2013 The Centre will hold a conference entitled 'Uneasy neighbours: rural urban relationships in the nineteenth century', at which the keynote speaker will be Keith Snell of the University of Leicester, whose work is well known to many readers of this journal.¹

Second, research into medieval population change in southern England has recently been boosted by the appointment of Craig Lambert as a Research Fellow. Craig has interests in the maritime history of the late medieval period. He is planning to undertake an assessment of English maritime capacity between 1400 and 1600. Most men who sailed on merchant ships were drawn from the towns and villages surrounding those ships' home ports, so assessing maritime capacity involves an assessment of the male populations of coastal communities.

1 Further information about this conference may be obtained by contacting Andrew Hinde (PRAHinde@aol.com) at Division of Social Statistics and Demography, Murray Building, University of Southampton, SOUTHAMPTON SO17 1BJ.