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## Editorial

Our authors offer three articles in *LPS* 87 which are all very interesting, if in different ways. In reverse order, Peter Razzell needs no introduction to local population historians, for his distinguished contribution to the field of historical demography—and particularly to the history of smallpox—is well known. In the present issue he offers further commentary on the thorny question of the reliability of the London Bills of Mortality, a follow-up to the article by Boulton and Schwarz published in *LPS* 86. Another familiar name is that of Christine Jones, who has made such an important contribution to the Local Population Studies Society, of which she is currently secretary, as well as to local population history through her publications in this journal. Her contribution in this issue is a novel one, for despite the well-known inclusion of information on disability in the nineteenth-century census returns, no scholar has until now grasped the nettle and attempted to analyse this data systematically. Jones' study of Herefordshire is thus pathbreaking, as well as setting the scene for the much wider use of this information that will become possible once the Integrated Census Microdata project—on which she works at the University of Essex—has been completed. Finally, but particularly significantly, Paul Atkinson announces himself impressively to the world of historical demography by providing a new slant on the analysis of the fertility transition of the late nineteenth century, illustrating how cultural history can deepen an understanding of demographic change by presenting evidence about ways in which rising working-class expectations about appropriate living standards may have created additional pressures on the perceived costs of child-rearing, thus in turn contributing to family limitation.

In this issue we also present a report of our Spring conference, a debate between Peter Razzell and Chris Galley, Eildih Garrett, Ros Davies and Alice Reid on the viability of the 'same-name' technique to indicate the reliability or otherwise of Anglican parish registers, a research note by Kerry Husk on Cornish identity as revealed in the 2001 census returns, a sources and methods item by Gill Newton on the development of approaches to family reconstitution at the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure and a very extensive and valuable review of recent periodical literature by Andy Hinde, Rebecca Oakes and Jonathan Healey—in this issue arranged chronologically for the first time.

Readers of *LPS* will no doubt be familiar with the extensive publications on historical demography of Richard Wall, who sadly passed away earlier this year. Apart from establishing himself as one of the leading lights of historical demography through his published work, Richard was also for many years the driving force behind *Local Population Studies*. He was also a very gentle, kind and generous man, and I would like to pay a personal tribute, to both his academic credentials and to his personal qualities. A full obituary, by Kevin Schürer, is printed below.

### **The Local Population Studies Essay Prize**

The article by Paul Atkinson in this issue is his first academic article, and thus qualifies for the *Local Population Studies* Essay Prize. The LPS editorial board unanimously agreed that the prize should be awarded. Our congratulations go to Paul, along with a cheque for £250.

### **LPSS conferences**

The LPSS Autumn conference, on 'Death and Disease in the Community, 1400–2010', will already have been held at Leicester University by the time this issue appears. We are most grateful to the School of English Local History for offering to host this meeting. A full report will appear in the next issue. The chosen theme for the Spring 2012 conference is 'Regional Development in Industrialising Britain c. 1670–1860'. It will again be held at Campus West in Welwyn Garden City, on Saturday 21 April. Offers of papers will be gratefully received.

If you have any other enquiries or suggestions about LPSS conferences, past, present or future, please contact a member of our Conference Sub-Committee: Nigel Goose (n.goose@herts.ac.uk), Rowena Burgess (rowena.burgess@uea.ac.uk), Gillian Chiverton (gillian.chiverton@btinternet.com) and Graham Butler (g.a.butler@ncl.ac.uk).

### **LPSS publications projects**

*The New Poor Law and English society, 1834–1909: local and regional perspectives* remains on our agenda, but progress had been slow due to the editors' other commitments. Jonathan Healey has agreed to come on board as a third editor to help progress the volume. *Famine, diet and nutrition in England, c. 1500–1950* is also slowly taking shape, and contributors are now being chased along.

### **Editorial matters**

Some of our readers may know that Eilidh Garrett, whose long association with the Local Population Studies Society needs no rehearsal, recently experienced serious health problems. It is my happy task to report that Eildih is now well on the road to a full recovery. She has asked me to convey her sincere thanks to all those who sent their best wishes and supported her through these difficult months.

After a number of years of valuable service, Janet Hudson has stepped down from the editorial board. She will be missed both professionally and personally by all members of the team, and particularly by myself. Her place is taken by Nicola Verdon, who holds a readership at Sheffield Hallam University, and is the leading expert on women in rural society in nineteenth and early twentieth-century England.

## Editorial

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Those of you who picked up on my reference to escaping to the country in my last editorial may like to know that I have indeed now 'escaped', but my country cottage has arrived encumbered by new and surprising responsibilities. For further information please consult [www.yoxfordantiques.com](http://www.yoxfordantiques.com), and please do pay us a visit. A discount of 10 per cent is available to all *LPS* subscribers who pay by cash or debit card!

My thanks once again go to Viv Williams and Cambrian Typesetters for laying out this issue, and to our printer, Halstan.

Nigel Goose

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