

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE SMALL SIZE OF THE HOUSEHOLD, AS EXEMPLIFIED BY STRATFORD-ON-AVON

J. M. Martin

J. M. Martin lectures at the Middlesex Polytechnic. He is interested in the economic, social and demographic history of Warwickshire between the Restoration and the nineteenth century.

Introduction

Recent work¹ on the household in pre-industrial England has succeeded in establishing that households were generally small and simple in structure. We now know how many contained servants and how few contained relatives and that the predominant familial group then as now consisted of parents and unmarried children. It is less clear to us why households were so small. How significant, for example, was it that couples postponed marriage until their late twenties? To what extent was the household influenced by changes in the local economy? Did trade depression reduce household size or leave it untouched? These questions cannot be answered except by means of a detailed study of a local community. In this article and the one that follows I shall look at differences in the households of rich and poor, of migrant and life-long residents in eighteenth century Stratford-on-Avon.

The sources

A listing of persons residing within the borough of Stratford-on-Avon in April 1765² was drawn up by George Beauchamp, an ironmonger in the town and one of its principal citizens at that time. The purpose of the listing seems to have been to discover the number of persons within each family who had survived or escaped infection from the scourge of smallpox. In the sudden bunching of child burials the register of Holy Trinity bears the clear imprint of this disease which preyed on the townspeople at frequent intervals during the first half of the century. A careful record was made of the total number of persons within each household and of how many had already contracted the disease. It would seem likely that the survey was intended as a preliminary to the carrying-out of a large-scale inoculation of the inhabitants.³ From the 1760s onwards a form of mass inoculation gained increasing acceptance within country-towns boasting a large middle-class element. In addition the practice had apparently won powerful friends within the ranks of the local medical profession in Warwickshire.⁴

Apart from this useful document the Shakespeare Birthplace Collection also contains an annotated rating-list of the Borough's houses dated 1801. This records the location and occupation of almost all householders, including those exempted from the payment of rates. These two documents, when linked to other sources, particularly the ecclesiastical registers, shed new light on the character of the household in a typical English country-town in the mid-eighteenth century. Beauchamp notes also the parish of settlement of almost all household heads; consequently his census throws up interesting information about the pattern of migration within the Felden and its connection with the size of the household.⁵

We should say a word about the geographical areas covered by the sources mentioned above. The most important point is that the Borough of Stratford formed the major component of the Parish of Old Stratford, but that Borough and Parish were not identical. The Visitation of 1782, for example, records 700 families within the Parish of Old Stratford, and it is known from an independent source that upwards of 500 were found within the Borough at that date.⁶ This distinction must be borne in mind when we draw on information extracted from the register and relate it to features of the Borough household.

One further matter needs to be cleared up. Beauchamp does not state clearly what the figures in the 1765 listing represent. The listing suggests 511 separate household units, and there are only sixteen instances where inmates of any description are bracketed with the principal householder. Had the listing been organized in housefuls one might have expected to find more frequent bracketing of family names. We shall assume therefore that we have here a listing of households. At the first census of 1801 there were said to be 510 houses and 550 families. It is not impossible that a similar excess of families over houses also existed in 1765. We must be cautious, however, in accepting this conclusion. The Rev. J. Green noted that, in the year 1759 'A careful Survey of the Town and an Exact Plan of the same was made, and the number of houses therein was found to be 552 ...'⁷ This high figure can be explained, Robert Bearman, archivist of the Shakespeare Birthplace Library, suggests, by regarding the 1759 survey as that of an historian, which probably took in areas outside the Borough boundary, while the Beauchamp count, being a purely legalistic affair, was confined to the Borough.

It is important to note that, because of the infrequency with which inmates of any sort are recorded by Beauchamp, whether these are counted as separate households or not makes little difference to the pattern of results. This is evident from the breakdown figures describing household size.

The last important source is a series of Hearth Tax Returns for the years 1663-73.⁸ They indicate the relative wealth of the various wards into which Stratford was divided, while the total number of houses can be profitably compared with the totals for the same wards in 1765 and 1801.

Economic background

At this point it may be fitting to turn to a brief examination of the economic experience of Stratford between the Restoration and the early census

era. Despite the largely agricultural character of the Felten, the Avon and its tributary the Arrow encouraged the rise of a medley of industries during the late seventeenth century. This and the resulting prosperity stemmed from the scheme, completed by 1672, to render the lower Avon navigable as far as Stratford. A project to introduce new industries into the town and neighbouring communities was also mooted around this time by the indefatigable Andrew Yarranton and others. Yarranton's declared ambition was to make Stratford to the West of England, 'as Dantzich is to Poland'.⁹ These grandiose schemes were not entirely lacking in results, as is shown by certain Petitions to the House of Commons in the 1740s, and Wheler's description of Stratford as having the appearance of a small seaport in the early years of the century.¹⁰

The chief importance of Stratford thus arose from this river trade and the growing specialization and inter-dependence of the agricultural economy within the Midland region during the century after the Restoration. The town was situated at the centre of a road network linking different cultivation systems within the neighbourhood. Berrows' *Journal of Worcester and Aris' Gazette of Birmingham* frequently quoted Stratford market grain prices alongside those of Bear Quay in the years before 1750. As early as 1675, John Quilby, describing the towns on the road from London through Banbury to Bridgnorth, refers to Stratford's several good inns, observing that it 'drives a good trade in Malt'. Along the whole route Stratford's boast of five annual fairs was surpassed only by Buckingham's six and Banbury's seven. Though the prosperity of Stratford thus rested on its trading rather than on its manufacturing activity,¹¹ it had a long-standing malting industry serving the needs of the midland industrial towns: Stratford had the same relationship to Birmingham as the towns of Hereford and Ware had to the metropolis in gathering in the grain from nearby counties and transporting the processed commodity to feed the urban masses. By the mid-eighteenth century the town also boasted a considerable body of workers engaged in jersey-combing and flaxdressing.

In the second half of the century, however, the situation deteriorated. The prosperity of the Avon navigation and of Stratford suffered from the tightening grip of northern manufacturing competition assisted by the spread of the canal network. It was a time of general depression in the town. The celebration of the annual Shakespearian Jubilee, started in 1769, petered out after six years because of the decline of the jersey-combers and flaxdressers who had been its chief support. In the annotated rate-list of 1801 only three of the Borough householders were of either calling. Furthermore, we find that of almost all of the 511 Borough households where occupations are recorded only seventy were inhabited by craftsmen, while 125 were in the hands of trading families. The largest social group was that of common labourers which occupied no less than 150 of the 437 households headed by male adults within the town. (If tenements whose rates were paid by non-occupiers are included, the figure for labouring families would be nearer 180).

Writing in 1806 Wheler observed that 'at present the trade by water is now much diminished', and went on to express a fear that it 'will in a short time utterly cease'. This gloomy prophesy was not unfounded. In

1820 the Stratford Canal, begun about 1800, had still not reached the town, and as late as 1831 Lewis could claim that little trade was carried on, 'the inhabitants being principally employed in agriculture', while 'the only manufacture is that of patent Florentine silk buttons . . .'. The same observer remarked upon the shrinkage of trade and manufacture which had taken place at Warwick lying eight miles upstream.

The vicissitudes in the fortunes of the townsmen is reflected in the population figures for Stratford. Philip Styles' study of the series of surviving Hearth Tax Returns led to the conclusion that there were between 421-29 houses within the Borough in the years 1663-73. As already mentioned, the survey of 1759 refers to some 552 houses. The economic depression of the following decades was, at first, accompanied by population stagnation, and the 1765 listing records only 511 households. Later, in 1785, a figure of 500 households is quoted by an anonymous writer who also suggests an average of five persons per household, while the enumeration of 1801 records some 550 families residing in 510 houses, with twenty houses remaining uninhabited. It appears likely both from the register series and from these household figures that the population expanded, if only slightly, at the end of the century despite persisting economic depression in the town. Family reconstitution also suggests that a fall occurred in the decades after 1775 in the age at first marriage of women, if not of men, who married in Old Stratford.¹²

The Hearth Tax Returns throw interesting light on the number of houses and level of wealth of the six wards into which the Borough was divided. Three categories of poor are distinguished in the Warwickshire Returns in some years: those described as 'poore no distresse' (third column), the 'certified poore' (fourth column), and actual paupers 'receiving Collection and living in Towne houses or on the Common' (frequently recorded at the end of the fourth column). We should note, however, that even the fullest Returns do not appear to distinguish in every parish the 'certified' poor from actual paupers. The most consistent separate recording of the two groups occurs in the northern half of the county where the incidence of poor squatting communities was greatest. In the Stratford Return those dwelling in town houses are listed in Church and Chapel Street Ward.

In addition empty houses are recorded (as illustrated in column two of Table I), and also those newly erected or 'in building'. Thus we find twelve separate new dwellings listed in the 1673-4 Returns for the Borough wards. On the basis of Hearth Tax data Philip Styles noted that 'there seems to have been remarkably little new building of any kind [in this area] throughout the third quarter of the seventeenth century', an observation confirmed by 'the surviving architectural evidence'.¹³

The 1673 Return shows High Street and Bridge Street wards to have under half the houses of the other four wards, but to possess the highest overall level of wealth (compare Table 1, columns 1 and 8). Sheep Street, on the other hand, with 58 per cent of its households exempted from payment had the lowest. If, however, the exempted category is left out of account, then Wood Street can be seen to have the fewest hearths per

Table I Six Stratford wards, 1673 — Households and hearths

Ward	all houses	empty houses	all payers	hearths of payers	hearths pr payer	exempt households no	exempt %	hearths pr household including exempt
High St.	31	2	29	120	4.13	0	0	4.13
Church and Chapel St.	109	9	38	138	3.63	62	62.0	2.00
Sheep St.	90	3	35	86	2.45	52	59.7	1.58
Wood St.	84	2	59	141	2.38	23	28.0	2.00
Henley St.	63	3	28	77	2.75	32	53.3	1.82
Bridge St.	36	0	33	109	3.30	3	8.3	3.11

household (see Table 1, column 5). Again, if the twelve almshouses in Church and Chapel Street Ward are not included, then the proportion of exempted dwellings for the ward falls to 56.8 per cent.

It is not always possible to detect any correlation within the six wards between the level of wealth based on a calculation of average hearths per household and the proportion of households gaining exemption. In four of the wards the level of wealth was between 1.58 and 2.00 hearths, but while three of these had between 53 and 62 per cent exemptions, the fourth (Wood Street) had only 28 per cent exemptions, though the number of hearths per household amongst payers was lower.

The impression produced by the Returns appears to be one of sharp contrasts between wealth and poverty in close proximity, evident in all the wards except in High and Bridge Streets. This can be seen clearly in Church and Chapel Street ward. Amongst the payers ten of the thirty-eight households were assessed at five hearths or above and the average number per household was second only to High Street. But of the six wards it had the highest number and proportion of exempted households.

Size of Household

The figures for the various wards in the Beauchamp listing of 1765 indicate that the expansion of 429 to 511 households during the previous century was not evenly spread, but was concentrated almost entirely in the two relatively poor wards of Wood Street and Henley Street. The most remarkable increase, from eighty-four to 143 households, had occurred in Wood Street Ward. The 1801 rating list suggests that there was no spectacular change in the distribution of housing between the dates of the two later lists. Some increase in houses occurred in Sheep Street, balanced by a shrinkage in numbers in Church and Chapel Streets (Table II). Wood and Henley Street Wards in the western fringes of the town (Greenhill, Rother, Arden and Grove Streets), increased so that their growths between 1673 and 1765 represented a pattern of natural expansion along the main roads out of the town but still within the confines of the Borough.

When we consider the question of household size, we find that the 1765 listing suggests an overall mean for the Borough of between 4.30 and 4.47 persons. The lower figure excludes the people dwelling in institutions:

namely the thirty-nine persons putting up at the White Horse Inn, the thirty paupers found in the Borough Workhouse, and the twenty-one persons recorded as inmates of an undefined number of 'almsrooms'. If, as seems likely, the twenty-one almsmen were solitaries, the figure of 4.47 is reduced to 4.29. If all sixteen households which contained lodging inmates, who were apparently unrelated to the household head, are regarded as each constituting two separate households, then, leaving aside the three institutions, the size of the Stratford household would be further reduced to 4.18 persons.

Table II Six Stratford wards, 1673, 1765, 1801 — distribution of households

Ward	1673 houses		1673 households		1765 households		1801 households	
	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%
High St.	31	7.5	29	7.4	30	5.9	38	7.4
Church and Chapel St.	109	26.4	100	25.4	121	23.7	93	18.2
Sheep St.	90	21.8	87	22.1	79	15.4	101	19.8
Wood St.	84	20.3	82	20.8	142	27.8	135	26.4
Henley St.	63	15.3	60	15.2	91	17.8	87	17.0
Bridge St.	36	8.7	36	9.1	48	9.4	57	11.2
6 Wards	413	100.0	394	100.0	511	100.0	511	100.0

The overall mean household size in Stratford is not high, but this need not surprise us. R. Wall and C. M. Law have noted that differences in household size between communities are, in all probability, linked to differences in their rate of growth.¹⁴ Such a thesis lends plausibility to the figure found in Stratford at a time of incipient economic stagnation in the Borough. In early eighteenth-century Birmingham, where population growth was substantial and the economy booming, a contemporary journal¹⁵ recorded 23,286 persons and 3,719 houses in the year 1730. This would suggest a figure of 6.26 persons per 'houseful'. It might well, however, reflect the pressure of numbers on the existing housing stock and the consequent high incidence of house-sharing along with a complex pattern of multiple households.¹⁶ Birmingham may not, therefore, offer a meaningful comparison with Stratford where there was a surplus of houses over households.

More relevant, perhaps, are figures drawn from other rural parishes in the neighbourhood. For Chilvers Coton, an exceptionally poor mining and weaving parish located on the north Warwickshire coalfield, Mrs Gooder and Peter Laslett give a household figure of 4.43 persons in the years 1681-4.¹⁷ The Gregory King manuscripts also contain information on this subject for two other Warwickshire villages in the year 1698: Coleshill, a populous community of 1,109 inhabitants yields a mean of 4.52 and Shustoke, consisting of 245 souls, one of 4.66.¹⁸

Several local estimates of family size have come to light and are worth mentioning. One must, however, be cautious in making a direct comparison with the Stratford figures since the relationship between 'house

hold' and 'family' units is never made clear (it would appear that local scribes used the latter expression where today we would use the former). In the year 1676 the parish clerk of Wellesbourne, close to Stratford, noted in the parish register that there were 400 inhabitants and eighty-seven 'families' at that time: this would yield a mean of 4.59 persons per family. A similar insertion stated that in 1767 there were 717 persons and 146 'families', suggesting a rise to 4.91 persons. For the town of Atherstone, the Mancetter register records 2,120 persons and 416 'families' in the year 1785, which yields the fairly high figure of 5.09 persons per family unit.

This information confirms the impression of the modest dimensions of the Stratford household in 1765. A contributing factor was the virtual absence of housesharing. Beauchamp's notes lend strength to this suggestion: no more than sixteen (2 per cent) of the 511 households appear to contain lodgers. This is of the utmost significance to an understanding of the character of society in the Felden. Mrs. Gooder has found that of the 176 families in the parish of Chilvers Coton only six shared house in 1681. Dr. Tranter, discussing the listing of the Bedfordshire parish of Cardington, notes that seventeen of the 146 households (11 per cent) shared.¹⁹ The recent work of the Cambridge Group has traced a similar pattern on a wider national canvass.

Household composition

It would have proved instructive to have looked more closely at the proportion of surviving offspring who remained resident within the parental household, but we could not do this on the basis of the Stratford listing. However, we were able to examine the average number of persons per household in 1765 in the light of information extracted from the parish registers on the marriage dates and the number of baptised offspring of the household heads of the Beauchamp listing. We could then subtract from such reconstituted families those offspring and parents who failed to survive up to 1765 (Table III).

Only ninety-three, a comparatively small proportion of the 511 households where the linkages with a previous marriage were unambiguous, could be used. The exercise yielded, nevertheless, some interesting results. The mean size of thirty-six households, recorded by Beauchamp, where the register proves that offspring under fifteen years of age were still at home in 1765, was found to be 6.30 persons. This works out at one third higher than that of twenty-three households where marriage had taken place during the years 1725-39, and where, consequently, all surviving offspring had attained adulthood. It is significant that the overall mean number of persons per household in the Borough in 1765 (4.30), was much closer to the latter figure than the former. From this we may tentatively conclude that the majority of households had been established some time prior to 1765, though the smallness of the sample dictates caution. A further point of interest is the size of the surviving family group resulting from thirty-four marriages formed during the years 1740-9 in relation to the size of the household unit of 1765.

The two are very similar. Families in this group must have been started

Table III Stratford, 1765 — family formation and household size

Mar. date	no families in sample	children up to 1765		net of children dead before 1765		persons ¹ in family, 1765		persons ¹ in household, 1765	
		no	mean	no	mean	no	mean	no	mean
1725-39	23	142	6.17	107	4.65	142	6.17	96	4.17
1740-49	34	196	5.76	135	3.97	199	5.85	197	5.79
1750-64	36	159	4.41	130	3.61	201	5.58	227	6.30

¹ including adults

about twenty years before the Beauchamp listing was compiled, so that these couples would just about have completed their family formation in 1765. The similarity between surviving family and household size found in this group fails to show any evidence of movement of offspring out of the home at puberty. (It is impossible to draw any definite conclusion about the customary age of movement on the basis of this evidence; it could in any case be concealed by the replacement of offspring at puberty by living-in servants.)

It is of interest to attempt a breakdown of Stratford households by the number of their members (Tables IV and V). The overall pattern of household sizes is roughly similar to that found in Peter Laslett's sample of one hundred communities for the period 1574-1821.²⁰ Of the 511 units recorded by Beauchamp no less than forty-seven consisted of one person and, even more striking, 221 (43 per cent), of between one and three persons. For the latter category Peter Laslett's figure was 36 per cent. The ninety-three households (16 per cent) composed of three persons formed, as in Laslett's sample, the largest single category within the Borough. It is worth noting that there are only seven instances where two households of the same family name appear together in the Beauchamp survey. It is possible, for example, that '[. . .] Keene, widow', who, one might suppose from the record to be a solitary, was in fact residing in the same house as 'W. Keene', whose household of three persons is set out immediately above Widow Keene in the listing. We simply cannot tell, but the number of such instances is negligible. From this evidence it is clear that the statistical make-up of the Stratford household supports the assertion by Laslett that, 'In England . . . the large joint or extended

Table IV Stratford, 1765 — household size by number of persons

Persons in household	No of households	% total households	No of persons	% total persons
1	46	9.0	46	2.1
2	81	15.9	162	7.4
3	93	18.2	279	12.7
4	82	16.0	328	15.0
5	66	12.9	330	15.1
6	46	9.0	276	12.6
7	44	8.6	308	14.0
8	25	4.9	200	9.1
9	18	3.5	162	7.4
10+	10	2.0	100	4.6
Total	511	100.0	2191	100.0

Table V Stratford, 1765: 100 English Communities, 1574-1821¹ — households and persons in households of various sizes

Persons in household	no of households	Stratford, 1765		100 comms, 1574-1821		
		% total households	no of persons	% total persons	% total households	% total persons
1-3	219	42.9	484	22.0	36.3	17.5
4-5	149	29.1	662	30.1	30.5	30.5
6+	143	28.0	1,053	47.9	33.2	53.0

¹ P. Laslett and R. Wall (eds), **Household and family in past time**, 1972 Table 4. 3, p. 136.

family seems never to have existed as a common form of the domestic group at any point in time covered by known numerical records'.²¹

Against this it should be said that in Stratford, as in Laslett's sample, approximately half of the members of the community resided in households of six or more persons. Laslett noted that less than 20 per cent dwelt in households of three or fewer persons, while in Stratford 22 per cent did so, (Table V). That a substantial part of the Stratford community lived in households of six or more persons clearly cannot be explained in terms of the multi-family household. But it may be partly explained, though the listing says nothing about it, by 'living-in' members of the household. This may have been a considerable group.²² In the tiny Felden parish of Fenny Compton Philip Styles found that in the year 1698 some forty-five of the 415 inhabitants consisted of single living-in servants, while a further forty were known to be bachelors and spinsters over the age of twenty-one years.²³ At Clayworth in Nottinghamshire the unmarried living-in group was calculated to be 16 per cent of the inhabitants, described by Laslett as 'typical enough'.²⁴ Nor were servants confined to the wealthy: in a more recent sample of seventeenth century communities, Laslett has noted that between one third and one quarter of all domestic households retained servants.²⁵

Delayed marriage and the small household

From this account of the character of the pre-industrial household we can begin to understand the assumption underlying Malthus' description in his well known **Essay**, that, whatever was happening to the customary practice of marriage in 1799, he could look back to a recent past in which the 'prudential' postponement of marriage was a universal habit (outside still untypical industrial communities, at any rate)²⁶. This would seem to indicate that in Stratford in 1765, a man did not normally take a wife until he was able to maintain himself in an independent home. Household structure must surely be regarded as intimately bound up with customary marriage practice.

Given the universality of the small household composed of independent, one or two generational 'nuclear' families, and given also the probable prevalence of the living-in element, it is not surprising that in Fenny Compton the mean age at first marriage in 1698 was over thirty for men and twenty-nine for women. An exercise in family reconstitution based on the ecclesiastical register of the parish of Old Stratford (at least five in seven families were in the Borough and the remainder were drawn

from the surrounding hamlets), has served to confirm this evidence of the practice of late marriage in the Felden. The mean age at first marriage remained at over twenty-seven for grooms and at over twenty-six for their brides throughout the third quarter of the eighteenth century, spanning the years in which the 1765 householders came to wed. A yardstick of the prevailing custom is the rarity of teenage marriage amongst either sex. Only ten of 103 Stratford bachelors, and twenty-three of 156 spinsters entered wedlock below the age of twenty in the year 1754-74 (Table VI)²⁷.

Table VI Stratford, 1754-74 — age at first marriage¹

Sex	no events	% total marriages	mean age	median age	under 20 years	
					No	%
Male	103	20.2	27.2	26.6	10	9.7
Female	156	31.5	26.4	25.0	23	14.7

¹ Based on reconstitution of families.

Conclusion

The listing of 1765 in conjunction with the parish registers and the hearth tax returns has enabled us to establish that in Stratford at this period the overall household size was between 4.30 and 4.47 persons. The size of the household varied with the time interval between the marriage of the household head and the making of the listing. A group of households formed in the years 1725-39 suggests a figure of 4.17 persons, while another group begun in the years 1750-64 suggests a mean of 6.30 persons. Multi-family or multi-generational households were rare in Stratford: no more than sixteen of the 511 households recorded any kind of lodger in 1765. In breaking down these 511 households according to size it was found that 9 per cent consisted of one and 43 per cent of between one and three persons.

In the eighteenth century marriage was late for both bachelors and spinsters. During the decades in which the families listed in 1765 were formed the mean in Old Stratford was over twenty-seven for men and twenty-six for women. Age at first marriage was not the only significant factor affecting the size of the household. The widespread distribution of the unmarried, living-in servant influenced the custom of nuptiality and the character of the households. The importance of the living-in element become evident when we come to investigate in the second article the effect of wealth, poverty and migration on household size.

NOTES

1. See for example: P. Laslett and R. Wall (eds) **Household and family in past time** C.U.P., 1972; P. Styles, 'A census of a Warwickshire village in 1698', **University of Birmingham Historical Journal**, Vol. III, 1951, pp. 37-41; N. L. Tranter, 'Population and social structure in a Bedfordshire parish: the Cardington Listing, 1782,' **Population Studies**, Vol. XXI, 1967, pp. 261-78.
2. Both this document and the rating list described below are copies of the originals, written in the hand of R. B. Wheler; his **History and Antiquities of Stratford-on-Avon** appeared in 1806. Both are in the Shakespeare Birthplace Library.

3. The parish register shows that at least two people died as a result of inoculation, a month after the listing was composed. For this and a discussion on the information relating to the incidence of smallpox contained in the listing, see J. M. Martin, 'The rise in population in eighteenth century Warwickshire,' **Dugdale Society Occasional Paper**, no. 23, 1976.
4. See, Sir C. Shuckburgh, **A Treatise upon the Inoculation of the Smallpox**, circa 1770, Warwick County Record Office, C.R. 1248, Box 51, pp. 194, 207.
5. The Felden was the southern half of the county: a neighbourhood of deep, mixed soils, still surviving common field agriculture, and nucleated settlement pattern. See, J. M. Martin, 'The Parliamentary enclosure movement and rural society in Warwickshire,' **Agricultural History Review**, Vol. XV, 1967, pp. 23-32.
6. 'State of the Bishopric of Worcester,' 1782, **Worcester Historical Society Publication**, New Series, Vol. 6, Deanery of Kineton, p. 179. 'Contains 700 families . . . 3 Papist families, and a few Methodists and no other dissenters! See also, L. Fox, (ed.), 'Correspondence of the Rev. Joseph Green,' **Publication of the Dugdale Society**, Vol. XXIII, 1965, p.157: ' . . . Scarce any market-town in England has in it so small a number of dissenters . . . of any denomination.' Also, Anon, **Draft history of Stratford**, 1785, Birthplace Library, MS, D.R. 124, ff. 5-6.
7. L. Fox, p.157.
8. The Hearth Tax Returns for this county are in the Warwick County Record Office, Q.S. 11/5, 1663; 11/2, 34-35, 1673.
9. See P. Styles, (ed.), **Victoria County History of Warwickshire**, Vol. III, 1945, pp. 223-42. In 1764 at the end of its period of prosperity Stratford was described as a large populous town 'which carried on a great trade in corn and malt.' See R. and J. Doolsley, **England Illustrated**, 1764, Vol. II, p.308. For a vivid contemporary account of the growing agricultural specialisation taking place in Warwickshire by 1700 see, E. Gibson, **Additions to Camden's Britannia**, 1695, p.510.
10. **Commons Journal**, Vol. XXIV, 26-3-1744, pp. 830, 842: 'from the manufacturers in woolen yarn hose in and near the towns of Evesham and Pershore . . . on behalf of many hundreds employed in the manufacture . . . mostly exported to . . . Germany.' Also Wheeler, p.24, for the rise and decline of the Avon Navigation over the course of the century. Hose manufacture was still carried on in Warwickshire in 1819. See, J. Dugdale, **The New British Traveller**, 1819, Vol. IV, p.393; I. Brewer, **Topographical and Historical Description of the County of Warwick**, 1820, pp. 20-21; S. Lewis, **A Topographical Dictionary of England**, 1831, pp. 207, 397.
11. See, J. Ogilby, **Britannia**, 1675, Vol. I, p.25; Styles, p.242.
12. For the 1785 figure see, Anon, ff. 5-6. Little is known about marriage habits. Regional data drawn from the 1841 census has shown that teenage marriage was at that time subject to regional differences, but was markedly higher for both sexes where rural under-employment and poverty prevailed (rural Bedfordshire which is compared with the Metropolitan Division). See, R. B. Outhwaite, 'Age at marriage in England from the late seventeenth to the nineteenth century,' **Transactions of the Royal Historical Society**, Vol. XXIII, 1973, p.59. For Warwickshire evidence with a bearing on this topic see, J. M. Martin, 'Marriage and economic stress in the Felden of Warwickshire in the eighteenth century,' **Population Studies**, Vol. 31, 3, 1977; *Ibid*, 'The rise in population in eighteenth century Warwickshire,' **Dugdale Society**, 1976.
13. This observation is qualified by the statement that 'the 1690s saw a marked increase in activity, and the spread of contemporary architectural fashion to the smaller houses both in town and country.' P. Styles, 'The social structure of the Kineton Hundred in the reign of Charles II,' **Transactions of the Birmingham Archaeological Society**, Vol. 78, 1962, pp. 112-3.
14. C. M. Law, 'Local censuses in the eighteenth century,' **Population Studies**, Vol. XXXIII, 1969, pp. 94-6; R. Wall, 'Mean household size in England from printed sources,' P. Laslett and R. Wall, (eds.), **Household and Family in past time**, pp. 199-201.
15. 'Surprising increase of Halifax and Birmingham,' **Gentleman's Magazine**, October, 1743 p.539.
16. Large-scale growth, mainly resulting from immigration did not, apparently, have this effect in seventeenth century London. Parliamentary surveys of East End parishes have revealed that of 768 houses only 4 contained more than one household. Within households, however, there was considerable overcrowding, the result of the taking-in of

servants and of lodgers of one sort or another. M. J. Power, 'East London housing in the seventeenth century,' P. Clark and P. Slack (eds), **Crisis and order in English towns, 1500-1700**, pp. 254-6.

17. I am grateful to Mrs. E. Gooder for permission to quote from her study of the **Hewitt Survey**, Warwickshire County Record Office, C.R. 136, Vols. I-IV, 101-22.
18. The figures for all three parishes described here are recorded in Laslett, Table 4.1, p.130 and Table 5.1, p.187.
19. N. L. Tranter, p.271.
20. Laslett, Table 4.8, p.146.
21. P. Laslett, 'The comparative history of household and family,' **Journal of Social History**, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1970, pp. 76-7.
22. The 'living-in' element could be formed of servants, sojourners, and also, as in Fenny Compton, of unmarried adult offspring.
23. Styles, 'A census of a Warwickshire village,' pp. 39-40.
24. P. Laslett, 'Clayworth and Cogenhoe,' in H. E. Bell and R. Ollard, (eds), **Historical Essays**, p.169.
25. R. Wall 'Mean household size in England from printed sources,' Laslett and Wall, pp. 150-3.
26. J. M. Martin, 'Marriage and Economic stress.'
27. **Ibid**: as late as 1796 it could be claimed in Parliament that, 'By the pressure of the times . . . marriage was discouraged, and among the labouring classes . . . the birth of a child . . . was considered a curse.' See, 'Debate on Mr. Whitbread's Bill to regulate the wages of labourers in husbandry,' 36/Geo. III, **Parliamentary History**, Vol. 32, pp. 703-5.

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