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The sections devoted to Progress Reports and Recent Publications will be continued in our next issue. They make way here for an enlarged Correspondence Section.

EDITORIAL

Readers may be wondering whether the change in our cover design and the dropping of the words "magazine and newsletter" indicate any editorial policy changes. The answer is that it does not. The new cover has been adopted (at no extra production cost) to make L.P.S. look more attractive and more easily identifiable. The qualifying phrase after our title has been dropped since the production so obviously is a magazine and newsletter. It will continue to serve as a vehicle for news from the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, and will continue to carry articles which we believe will be of use or interest to local historians in the field of population history, and to provide a place where they can exchange ideas and information through the correspondence columns. It cannot be otherwise with the material which our readers send us and on which we are dependent.

We are now entering our third year of life and this seems an appropriate time to give an account of some of the developments during the past two years. Our subscription list now consists of 550 individuals and institutions. Of these, 50 are from overseas (including two from the Soviet Union). We should very much like to see our foreign readership increase both because we should like historians overseas to appreciate the work being done by British amateurs and because in our experience foreign subscribers pay their subscriptions promptly!

The financial position of L.P.S. is precarious. Printing costs have risen sharply and without warning with the result that we have been forced to raise the retail price of our first supplement, A Glossary of Local Population Studies, to 8/- and the L.P.S. subscribers price to 6/-. For the moment we believe that the additional income from advertising and the growth in number of subscribers will offset rising production costs. But clearly, soon, L.P.S. subscriptions may have to be increased.

We have been very encouraged at the way our readers keep us supplied both with articles and with comments. We are in fact receiving rather more than we can adequately publish. This is why many contributors have been asked to condense the items they have sent to us and why there are delays of approximately nine months between the time we have first received an article and the time it appears in print. The procedure is for material sent either to

Colin Barham or to the Cambridge Group to be photocopied and circulated to the members of the editorial committee. Views are exchanged by telephone or post and at one of the four-monthly editorial meetings it is discussed at length. We often find that contributions from academics employ a high degree of technical language which would be difficult for the amateurs to follow, and that articles by local historians can sometimes be improved by an awareness of more general problems. So far we have always found that our comments on individual articles have been accepted by the authors, and that they understand the necessity of this in trying to maintain a balance between demography and local history. On other occasions we have received items for which L.P.S. is not the best medium, and when this has happened we have suggested other magazines which might be more appropriate.

We also have a considerable number of enquiries for advice on such things as to where readers can obtain certain publications or the best way to tackle a certain problem. We try to be helpful and provide an answer.

Our subscribers cannot have failed to notice that the last two issues have been late in appearing. We apologise. Delays often occur on the editorial side because our contributors fail to submit, or to re-submit, material promised for specific dates. This is probably inevitable and we realise that when it is time for an issue to be printed, we shall have to chase contributors for their articles. The overlong delay in the issue of L.P.S. number 4 was due in part to this factor and in part to illness both of certain members of the editorial board and of key figures on the printing side. We hope that the same combination of circumstances will not arise again although if it does it is difficult to see how we can avoid production delays since, due to our determination to keep the price as low as possible and to make no profit on sales, we are restricted to editorial and production techniques which are dependent on the good will and good health of a small number of individuals. We have gone into the possibility of having L.P.S. produced by a commercial publisher in an attempt to ensure prompt delivery to our readers. We discovered firstly that this would not in fact speed up production and that even with a commercial publisher there could be considerable delays in the printing of certain issues. (At least the present editorial board do feel guilty about the problem of lateness and are attempting to put this to rights.) Secondly, we discovered that any change in our system of publication would lead if not immediately, certainly in the

long run to considerable price increases for our readers.

In view of this we are convinced our subscribers would wish to continue with the present method despite its obvious faults.

Population Studies in Schools and Colleges of Education

It would be interesting to know how many of our readers are engaged in teaching, in schools, colleges or in adult education. We can only guess. But as an experiment, in recognition of what we belive to be a growing interest in demographic studies in schools and colleges, we hope to feature in future issues, reports of work in progress based on census and parish register source material. We are grateful to Mr. K.S. Duffy for providing in this issue the material to initiate this experiment. (K.S. Duffy, An Approach to Parish Register and Census Work, page 43).

David Avery
Colin Barham
Christopher Charlton
Roger Schofield

NEWS FROM THE CAMBRIDGE GROUP

FOR THE HISTORY OF POPULATION AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

We have now accumulated aggregative analyses of the monthly frequencies of baptisms, marriages, and burials for about 550 parishes. A large number of these have been sent to us over the past few years by some 300 local historians scattered all over the country. Digesting this enormous mass of material - some $4\frac{1}{2}$ million figures - has proved to be a lengthy process, and some local historians may well be beginning to wonder whether their labours will ever bear fruit. We therefore thought that we would use our space in this issue of L.P.S. to describe what happens to a set of aggregative analysis forms sent in to us, and to give some idea of the way in which we are approaching the analysis of this great mass of demographic information. Some readers, however, may be more interested in aggregative analysis in the context of a single parish. We therefore also describe some of the ways in which a set of aggregative returns can be exploited, based on our experience of a wide variety of parishes.

When a set of aggregative analysis forms is received in Cambridge, the first thing we do whenever possible is to check on the accuracy with which the monthly totals have been recorded on the forms. The procedure we have followed is to choose strictly at random one of the forms covering a 20-year period and to check this form against the register. The rule we have adopted is to reject the whole set of forms if the total number of events on the sample form is more than 1% away from the true figure and if 3% or more of the monthly figures have been wrongly entered. We added this second condition because a single slip on a 20-year Marriages form in a small parish can result in the total number of events on the form being more than 1% out. Checking that less than 3% of the monthly figures are erroneous usually involves selecting further 20-year forms at random and checking these. Although almost all the sets of aggregative forms returned to us contain a few slips, we are happy to be able to report that in most cases they are of negligible importance, in most cases cancelling each other out. There are very few sets of forms which we have had to reject altogether.

Next the column totals and line totals on each form are either filled in or checked, and the returns are punched on paper tape to be read in to a computer and stored in a far more compact form on magnetic

tape. A scanning program is then run down the aggregative returns on the magnetic tape to check that all is in order: that there are no 20-year forms missing, that there are 20 years on each form and 12 months in each year, and that the monthly figures tally with the line totals and the column totals. If any errors are found, and they usually are, they are corrected, and the scanning and correction cycle continues until no errors can be found.

Another program is then run on the monthly totals to test for 'under-registration'. Sometimes it is obvious that the registration is deficient, but other cases are more subtle and require statistical analysis to assess the probabilities that 'under-registration' has occurred. Registers which suffer from frequent bouts of deficient registration are abandoned at this stage, otherwise the monthly figures in short periods of deficient registration are replace by the 'most probable' figure, calculated on the basis of the surrounding monthly figures. The original register figures are however retained, and we are making two sets of tabulations, one set using the original figures, and the other set using the 'most probable' replacements.

We have collected a number of standard items of information about each parish. One of these concerns the presence of nonconformists in the parish, for the strength and nature of nonconformity can radically affect the interpretation of a set of aggregative analysis forms. Other items of information include such topics as geographical co-ordinates, soil type, dispersion of settlement, concentration of land ownership, and distance from the nearest market town. These are all matters which we believe to have been associated with different rates and patterns of population change, and we look forward to discovering how far our predictions about the nature of these associations will turn out to be correct.

The information contained in a large number of sets of aggregative forms can be used in a number of ways. Initially we shall be studying such matters as seasonal distribution, and the movement of baptisms, burials, and marriages together with the relationships between them, both on a national and regional basis. We hope to be able to discover certain basic patterns of population change which will enable us to divide the parishes into different groups and to investigate what special and economic characteristics parishes in each group have in common. We shall also be testing our initial predictions about the relationship between population change and social and economic characteristics. We fully expect to find that we have

not in fact made the right predictions, and that there are aspects of this great file of material which we have failed to appreciate. We therefore envisage the full exploitation of all this information as a long and continuing process, with a fresh set of questions occurring to us each time we look at the answers to the previous set.

One of the great advantages of using a computer is that it is relatively easy to change one's mind by making a minor change in a program, whereas if one were dependent upon hand calculation, the labour of a further attempt would be too enormous to contemplate. Another advantage of having stored all this information on magnetic tape is that it should be relatively cheap and simple to arrange for publication of the original sets of aggregative returns, possibly on a regional basis, so that they can be freely available to all. Meanwhile we might take this opportunity to remind readers of L.P.S. that it is the Group's policy that all our files of research material, such as sets of aggregative returns, are open for anyone to consult at 20 Silver Street, Cambridge.

Peter Laslett
Roger Schofield
E.A. Wrigley

Some notes on aggregative analysis in a single parish

Before embarking upon an aggregative analysis it is obviously prudent to scrutinise the register for signs of deficient registration and to discover as much as possible about the nature and strength of non-conformity in the parish. In all that follows it is assumed that the register is giving a fair picture of the vital events in the parish.

One aspect of population history to which aggregative analysis is well suited is the study of seasonality in the distribution of baptisms, burials, and marriages. Little need be said on this subject here because it is already the subject of an extended discussion in L.P.S. by Mr. Bradley (See L.P.S. No. 4, pp. 21-40, and below in this issue). I would only stress Mr. Bradley's point (L.P.S. No. 4, pp. 30-2) that where the numbers of events are small much of the apparent seasonal variation may in fact be due to chance variation.

In many of the smaller parishes it may therefore be necessary to take quite long periods to guard against this danger of small numbers. Mr. Bradley is also right to stress that, unless we are fortunate enough to have a register which gives dates of birth and death, we can only study the seasonality of the ecclesiastical ceremonies associated with vital events, not the seasonality of the vital events themselves. The discrepancy is not serious in the case of deaths and burials, for the necessity of disposing of the corpse led to almost all burials occurring within four or five days of death. In the case of baptisms, however, the immense variation in customs governing the age at which children were baptized, both as between parishes, and in the same parish over time, makes it impossible to calculate the seasonality of births or conceptions from the baptism register with any safety. Similarly widely differing customs with regard to betrothal, cohabitation, and the wedding ceremony solemnizing the marriage, make the wedding registers an uncertain guide to the seasonality of marriage.

Another topic which can readily be studied from a set of aggregative returns is what one might term 'crisis mortality', for it is a simple matter to pick out years with unusually large numbers of deaths (say over twice the average for the period) on the aggregative forms. This is a subject which has acquired an added importance with David Chamber's article in L.P.S. No. 3 in which he argues for the importance of changes in mortality in determining the course of population change in the past. It is therefore well worth while examining the number and timing of these years of 'crisis mortality'. In some parishes they may conform to what is now becoming general expectation: occurring particularly frequently in the mid-seventeenth century, and dying away in the early eighteenth century. Other parishes, however, may escape such crises altogether, or suffer them until well into the nineteenth century Some parishes may have been particularly vulnerable, or immune, because of their location, and in this respect it is useful to see whether the parish was affected by heavy mortality in some of the better known epidemic years, (for example, 1557-9, 1603, 1623, 1665, 1728-9). But a parish's vulnerability to crisis mortality may also have been determined by its social and economic arrangements, and in this way a study of 'crisis mortality' might suggest profitable lines of enquiry in these fields of local history. It often happens too that the seasonal distribution of burials in 'crisis' years is markedly different from the seasonal distribution of burials in normal years. Indeed some of the big killer diseases had characteristic seasonal profiles, for example deaths from bubonic plague often built up sharply to a peak in late

summer and fell off rapidly in October or November. Although it does not follow in this case that all seasonal patterns of this kind can be attributed to bubonic plague, an unusual seasonal distribution of burials in a 'crisis' year can often be a valuable clue in solving the cause of the 'crisis'.

Aggregative returns can also be used to give a picture of the general course of population change in the parish. This comes out most clearly if the annual frequencies of baptisms, burials, and marriages are drawn on a graph. It is helpful to use a different colour for each series, and it is often easier to fit the marriage figures on the graph if they are first multiplied by some convenient number (say 3 or 4) so that they are nearer to the totals of baptisms and burials. The graph may show considerable fluctuations each year. In a large parish this is an interesting result in its own right, but in a small parish it may merely reflect chance variation in the annual figures. If these fluctuations are so violent as to obscure the underlying trend, it is helpful to smooth the graph by replacing the original figures by moving averages. These are usually calculated by adding up the annual number of events for a fixed number of years and then dividing the result by the number of years taken; for example the annual totals of baptism for the five years from 1581-5 are added together and this total is divided by five. Conventionally this average is entered on the graph opposite the middle year, in this case 1583, which explains why moving averages are usually calculated for odd numbers of years (3,5,7,9 etc.). To find the moving average for the next year (1584) all that is necessary is to subtract the figure for 1581 from the total obtained earlier, add in the figure for 1586, and divide the new total by five again. Calculating moving averages is therefore not quite so laborious as it might appear at first sight. The longer the moving average, in the sense of the more years that are taken together in calculating it, the more short-term fluctuations are averaged out and the smoother the graph will appear. The choice of the length of a moving average therefore depends on the amount of short-term variation that one wishes to suppress or to restrain. There is one special form of moving average which is particularly successful in dampening short-term fluctuations without obliterating them altogether. This is a binomially weighted moving average which is calculated so that the figure for the central year is given most weight and the figures for the surrounding years progressively less weight in arriving at the average figures. Because the weights change as the average moves along the series, this is an impossibly laborious calculation to do by hand, and is only

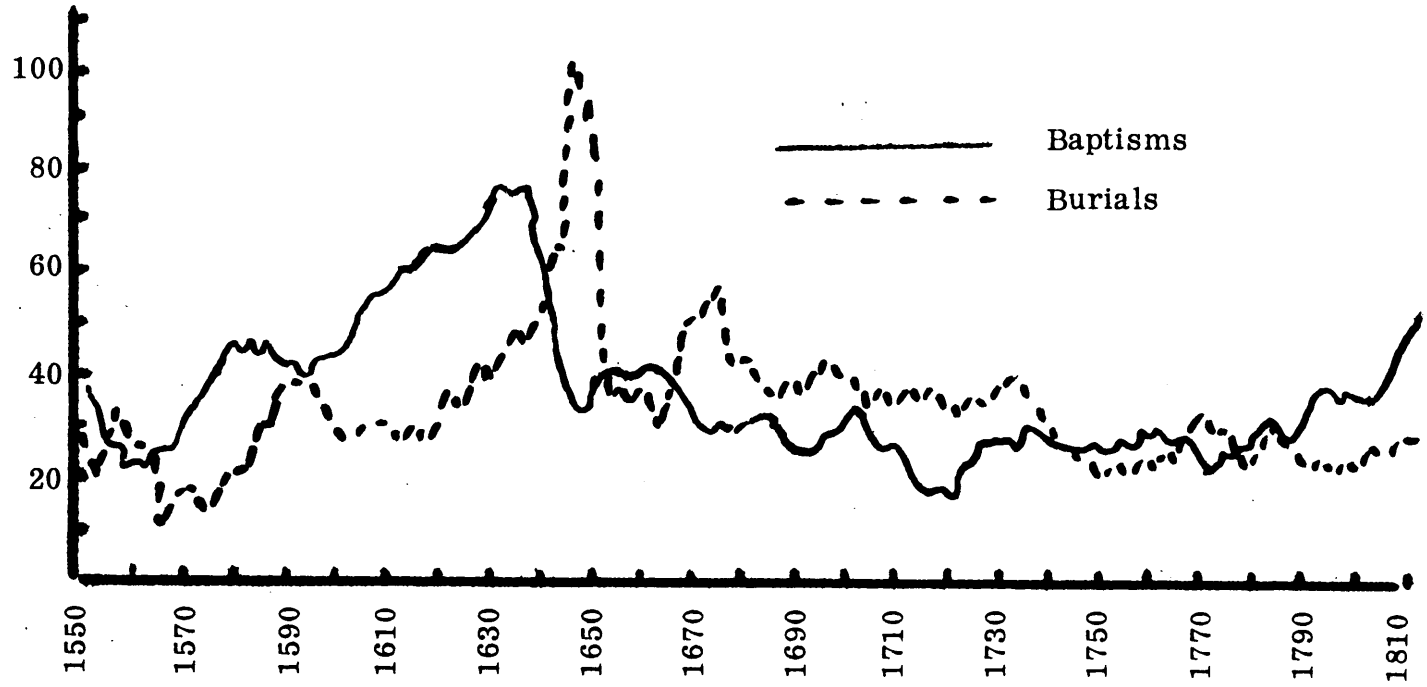
really practicable if computing facilities are available.

The graph on the next page shows a nine-year moving average of baptisms and burials in Colyton, Devon between 1550 and 1830. I have chosen to use this graph yet again because it is one in which there is plenty of variety, and which illustrates the possibilities and difficulties in interpreting graphs of this kind. If we look first of all at the trend in baptisms, there would appear to be four main periods which can be distinguished. Between 1550 and 1640 baptisms are increasing in number, between 1640 and 1720 baptisms are running at a lower level and are declining in numbers, from 1720 to about 1780 they are almost static, rising only slowly, while from about 1785 they increase rapidly up to 1810 after which they level off. The trend in burials, however, is rather different. Although, like baptisms, they increase up to 1640, after the massive plague mortality in 1645-6 the number of burials declines during the rest of the seventeenth century and during the early eighteenth century, although in the seventeenth century burials are still more numerous than they were before 1620. From the mid-eighteenth century the number of burials is almost static, showing overall only a slight tendency to rise. If we now consider the relative position of the baptism and burial lines on the graph, we find a considerable excess of baptisms over burials during almost all of the period 1550-1640, but a dramatic reversal of the position with more burials than baptisms during the period 1640-1740. From 1740 to the mid-1780's baptisms and burials are more or less in balance with slightly more baptisms than burials, while from the mid-1780's until 1810 baptisms grow steadily away from burials.

From the graph we might be tempted to conclude that the population of Colyton grew between 1550 and 1640, fell between 1640 and 1740, remained stable or grew only slightly between 1740 and 1785, and then grew more quickly between 1785 and 1810. These may be the correct inferences to make, but it is important to realize that they are not the only ones which can be drawn from the graph. Let us consider, for example, the period from 1550 to 1640 when both the number of baptisms and the number of burials are increasing, and there are usually more baptisms than burials. Our conclusion that with a surplus of baptisms over burials the population was rising seems to be confirmed by the fact that the number of both baptisms and burials was also rising. But the same pattern could be produced by a rise in both fertility and mortality with no change in the size of the population. In this case the 'surplus' population (of baptisms

COLYTON

Baptisms and Burials (9-year moving averages)



over burials) will have emigrated. The difficulty is that when we are considering number of events alone we have no means of separating the effects of changes in fertility and mortality from the effects of changes in population size.

The usual solution to this problem has been to control for the size of the population by calculating baptism and burial rates (e.g. so many baptisms per thousand population). This is a proper procedure to follow, providing the size of the population is known. Unfortunately, however, the size of a parish population is rarely known before the national Censuses in the early nineteenth century. The most that is usually available is an uncertain estimate based on the number of communicants or the number of houses recorded in the late seventeenth century. Several methods have been suggested for interpolating population sizes for intermediate dates, say for 1760, but all are based on inferences from the surpluses, or of deficits, of baptisms over burials. This way of proceeding is scarcely satisfactory because it assumes that changes in the size of the parish population only come through 'natural' increase or decrese, and that there was therefore no migration (or in some cases no changes in migration) in to, or out of, the parish. As a result most baptism, burial and marriage rates are based on estimates of population size which are almost complete guesswork. An even less satisfactory procedure, which is occasionally adopted in parish studies, is to estimate the size of the population by adopting Dr. Cox's ancient suggestion of simply multiplying the number of baptisms by 30. This assumes that the baptism rate was at all times 33 per thousand, which is, one might say, an assumption of heroic dimensions. Rates calculated using this method of estimating the size of the parish population are likely to be seriously in error. Indeed, if it has already been assumed that the baptism rate was 33 per thousand, there would seem to be little point in then going on to calculate actual baptism rates.

Unless therefore one is fortunate enough to have a number of reliable counts of a parish population spread right through the period under study, calculating the traditional baptism, burial, and marriage rates adds nothing to the rigour of one's interpretation of aggregative material, indeed it usually merely brings an unknown element of distortion into the results. The critical point at issue is the one of migration, for if we could assume that the parish comprised a closed population, then we could rule out some of the possibilities. In one example we could dispose of the possibility that the graph of baptisms and burials at Colyton between 1550 and 1640 reflects a rise in fertility and mortality coupled with emigration. Fortunately the

problem is somewhat eased when large numbers of parishes are under consideration, for if many parishes show the same pattern of baptisms and burials, it becomes progressively less likely that in every case this was caused by migration into, or out of, the parish. But when we are dealing with a single parish we clearly cannot rule out migration, and unfortunately migration is a matter which is exceedingly difficult to document in the past. However, since much migration occurred at marriage, it might in favourable circumstances be possible to get some hint of the extent of migration by studying the origins of marriage partners.

Aggregative analysis is only a summary method of procedure and there is no simple solution to resolving conflicts between a number of alternative explanations. Some possibilities, however, can occasionally be ruled out. For example in Colyton in the period 1550 to 1640, both baptisms and burials were between two and three times as numerous at the end of the period than they were at the beginning. It is most unlikely therefore that changes in fertility and mortality without any increase in the population size can have accounted for this rise, because this would have obliged the inhabitants of Colyton in the early seventeenth century to suffer outrageously high fertility and mortality rates. In this case we might reasonably conclude that the population of the parish did grow during this period, but we cannot tell whether fertility and mortality rates may not also have changed. To discover this we should have to abandon aggregative analysis for family reconstitution. Again, if we consider the period after 1785 when the graph again shows a surplus of baptisms over burials, we find ourselves in a similar difficulty. In this case the number of baptisms increases rapidly, but the number of burials remains more or less the same. We might conclude from this that following the 'natural' surplus, the population grew, but that burials remained at the same level because this growth in population was offset by a fall in the death rate. Alternatively we might say that the death rate remained constant indicating a static population, the number of baptisms rising because of increased fertility, and the population failing to rise because of emigration. Thus once more aggregative analysis takes us a certain distance, and to go further we have to adopt more powerful demographic techniques.

But studying graphs of moving averages of baptisms and burials does not exhaust the possibilities of study from a set of aggregative returns. For example, if a moving average of marriages is plotted on the graph, this may help to decide between several possible interpretations of the graph. Further, a rough indication of fertility can be gained

by dividing the total of baptisms by the total of marriages five years earlier, or an index of nuptiality can be calculated by dividing the number of marriages by the number of births 25 years earlier. (1)

Although graphs of this kind for individual parishes vary widely, there are some features which are common to a substantial proportion of parishes, and it may be helpful to list some of the point which we look out for whenever we receive a set of aggregative returns. The first point is whether there was a surplus of baptisms over burials in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and when this surplus reached its maximum. Then we look to see if there was ever a period in which burials exceeded baptisms, when this period began and ended, and how serious the deficit was. Finally in such cases we look for when the first signs of population growth are to be found, usually in the eighteenth century. This is a subject of particular interest in view of Chambers' article in L.P.S. No. 3 in which he argues, against Wrigley, that in some parts of the country, especially in the Midlands and the North, there are clear signs of population growth in the late seventeenth or very early eighteenth centuries. Often these years are marked by sharp fluctuations of baptisms and burials, with years of surplus being followed by years of deficit. One way of tackling this question comparatively between parishes is to start at an arbitrary date (say 1660), and to keep a running cumulative total of the baptism/burial surpluses and deficits. The year after which the cumulative total is never below zero can then be used as an indication of the parish's speed of recovery in this controversial period.

Finally there is a whole aspect of aggregative analysis which has not been touched upon here, namely when aggregative returns are studied in detail in conjunction with the social and economic history of the parish. Readers will probably already be familiar with the discussion of techniques and results by D.E.C. Eversley in chapters of Introduction to English Historical Demography ed. by E.A. Wrigley, and with the model studies by D.E.C. Eversley and J.D. Chambers 'The Vale of Trent' Economic History Review Supplement both reprinted in Population in History ed. by D.V. Glass and D.E.C. Eversley.

R.S. Schofield

NOTES

1. D. Turner, 'The Effective Family', L.P.S. No. 2, pp. 47-52.

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AN ENQUIRY INTO SEASONALITY IN BAPTISMS, MARRIAGES AND BURIALS

L. Bradley

Part 2. Baptism Seasonality

In the first part of this article (L.P.S. No. 4, page 21) it was suggested that a study of seasonality, that is of the fluctuations in the numbers of baptisms, marriages and burials from month to month within the year, provides useful material not only, as is obvious, for the general demographer, but also for the local historian. It was suggested, as a first hypothesis, that the factors underlying seasonal variations would be of three kinds:

(a) those which were common to the whole nation, or at any rate to large regions and which persisted over considerable periods. These would include church law (such as prohibited periods for marriage), widespread occupational factors (such as the long hours of work in harvest in rural areas) and possibly biological factors associated with the seasons.

(b) more localised factors, but still fairly persistent and not confined to single parishes, such as might be expected to produce significant local variations of a general pattern. Lambing might, for example, have a local effect in sheep-farming districts similar to the more widespread harvest effect, but at a different season. Regional customs, too, would be included here.

(c) very localised and short-term factors, often almost accidental in nature, reflecting happenings in a parish or small region. An example would be that the incumbent habitually spent certain months of the year away from his parish.

The method suggested for the investigation of seasonality in a single parish or group of parishes starts by calculating the decadal totals of baptisms (or marriages, or burials) for each month of the year and expressing the total for each month as a percentage of the total of all baptisms for the decade. These monthly percentages are then exhibited in two series of graphs:

(i) a separate graph for each decade, showing how the baptisms for that decade are distributed through the calendar months.

(ii) a separate graph for each calendar month, showing how the percentage of baptisms attributable to that month varies with the passage of the decades.

The choice of the decade as the time unit was discussed, and also the advantages and disadvantages of aggregating the figures for several neighbouring parishes (to eliminate very local effects) and of using, in addition to the decadal graphs, some graphs for 50-year periods (to eliminate further short-term effects).

The method was then applied to a study of the seasonality of marriage in six Derbyshire and six Nottinghamshire parishes. This article similarly studies baptism seasonality, and it will be followed by a final article on burial seasonality.

When the two series of graphs are drawn for the baptism distributions in the twelve parishes, they suggest a marked seasonal pattern with a peak of baptisms in spring, a summer trough and a second peak, usually smaller, in autumn. This pattern is, as would be expected, modified by local variations. Figure 1 shows how the pattern emerges for WIRKSWORTH.

Averaging parish by parish over 50-year periods, to reduce the short-term variations, the peak of baptisms almost always comes in February, March or April, with March as the most favoured month. The autumn peak comes most frequently in October or November. The summer trough is most often at its deepest in August in the Nottinghamshire parishes, taken separately, and in July in the Derbyshire parishes. Figure 2 shows the distribution in successive 50-year periods for the combined Nottinghamshire parishes.

The variations which disturb the long-term pattern rarely last, in any parish, more than two decades, but they are distinctly more pronounced than were the variations on the general marriage pattern. Figure 3, for example, shows how August, normally a very unpopular month for marriages, shows in OXTON very marked peaks in some decades. Nevertheless, the general pattern persists in the Nottinghamshire parishes throughout the period (1600-1840), and in the Derbyshire parishes until 1750.

In 1750, a striking phenomenon emerges in all the Derbyshire parishes examined - the concentration into one particular month of the year of a very high percentage of the total baptisms for the decade. Figures 4 and 5 show how, in WIRKSWORTH, a September peak of

FIGURE 1

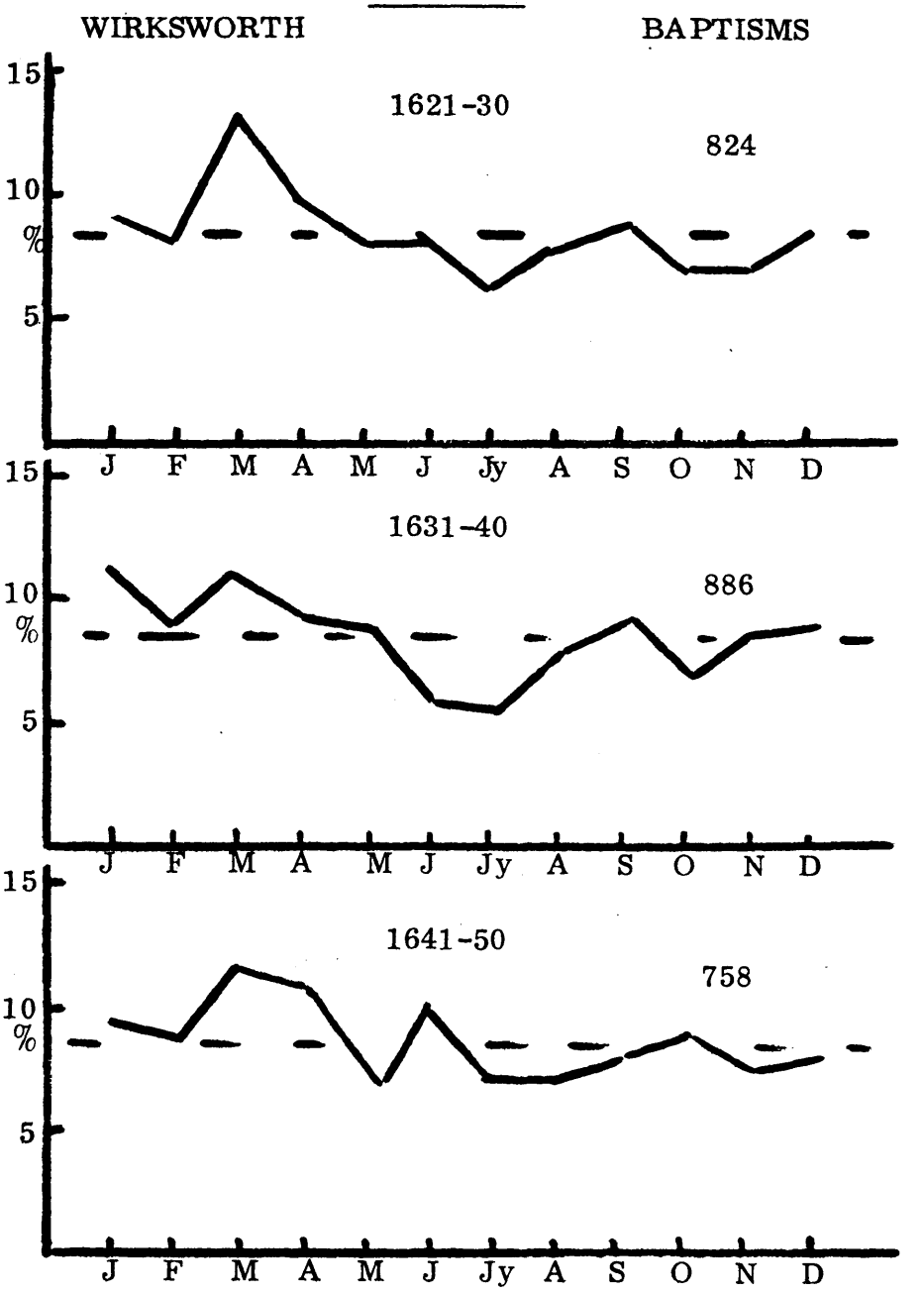

WIRKSWORTH
BAPTISMS
1621-30
824
1631-40
886
1641-50
758
15
10
%
5
J F M A M J Jy A S O N D

FIGURE 1 (continued)

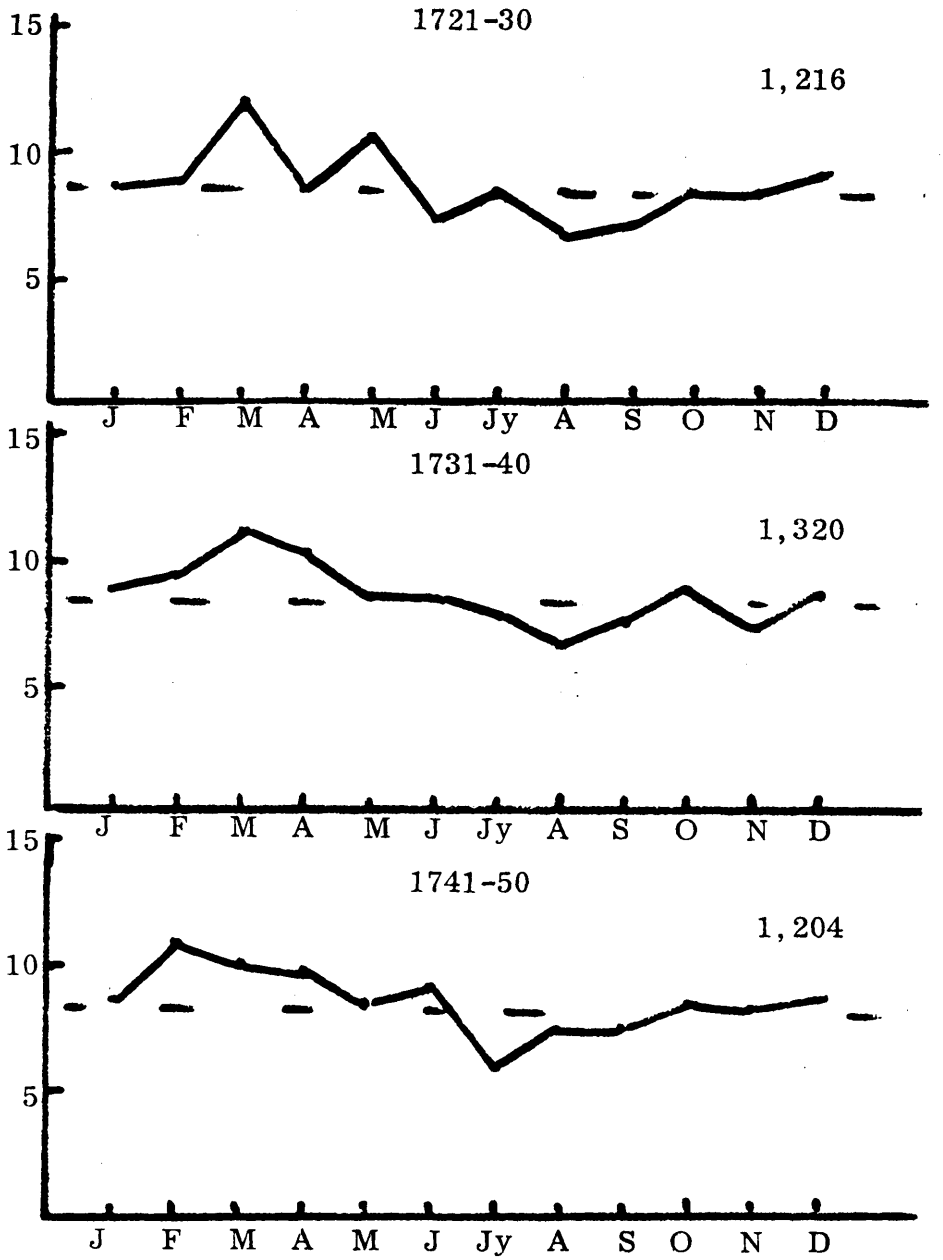


FIGURE 2

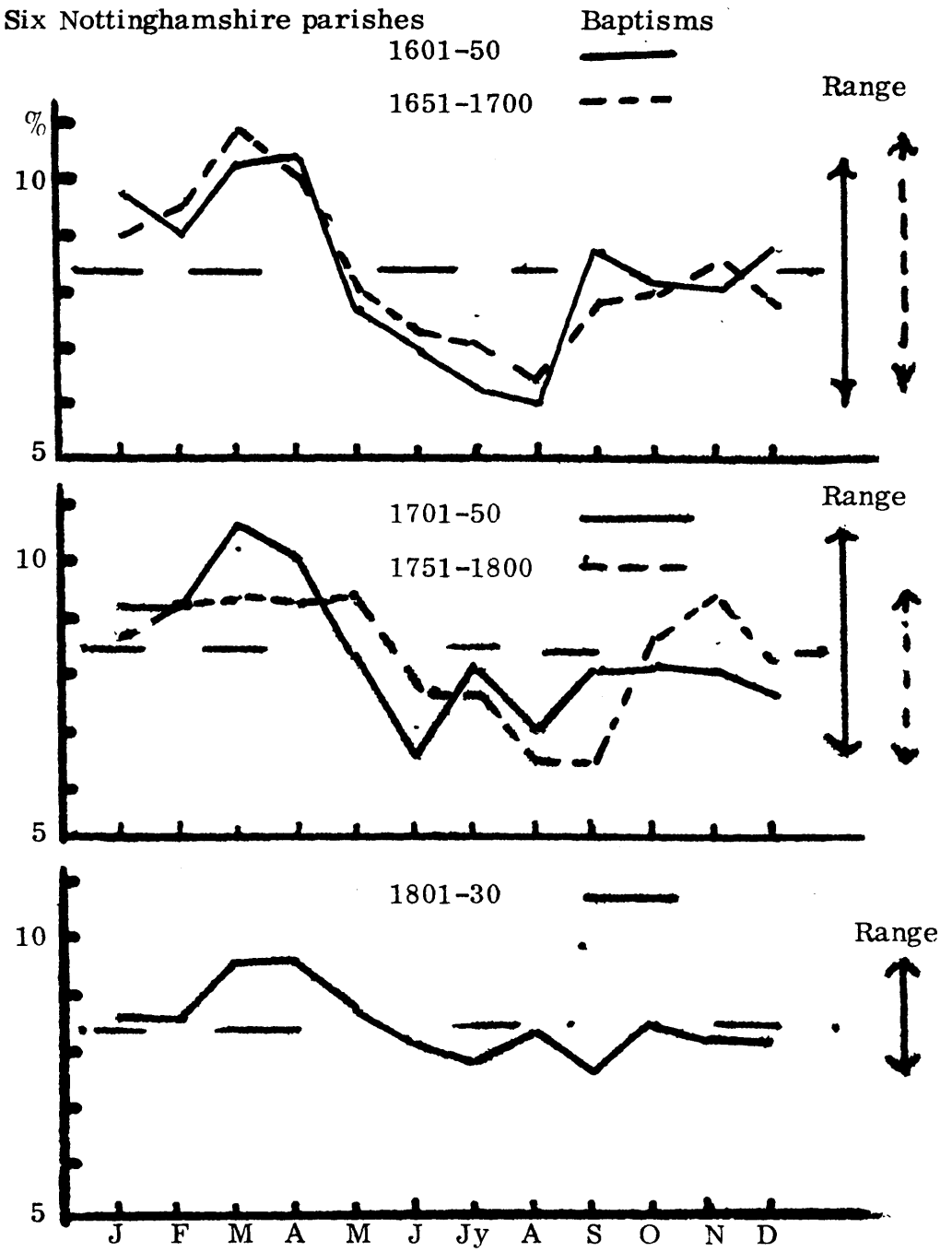

Six Nottinghamshire parishes
Baptisms
1601-50
1651-1700
Range
%
10
5
1701-50
1751-1800
Range
10
5
1801-30
Range
10
5
J F M A M J Jy A S O N D

FIGURE 3

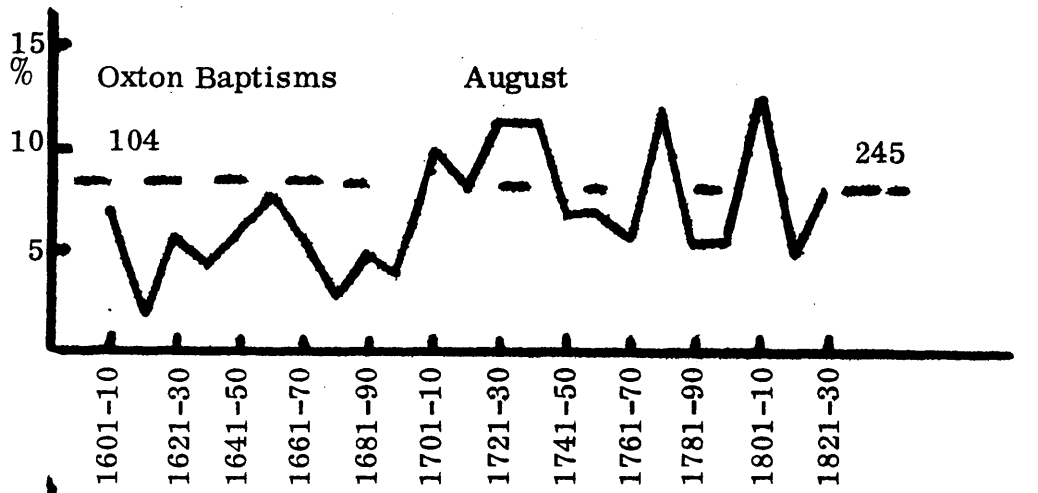
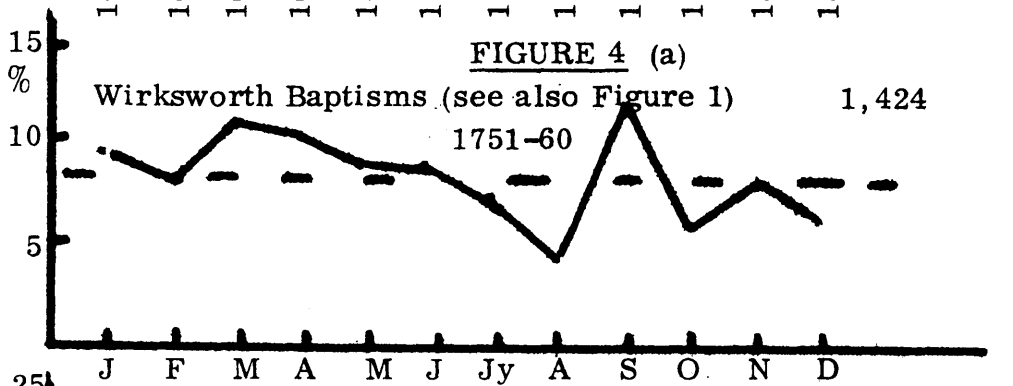


FIGURE 4 (a)



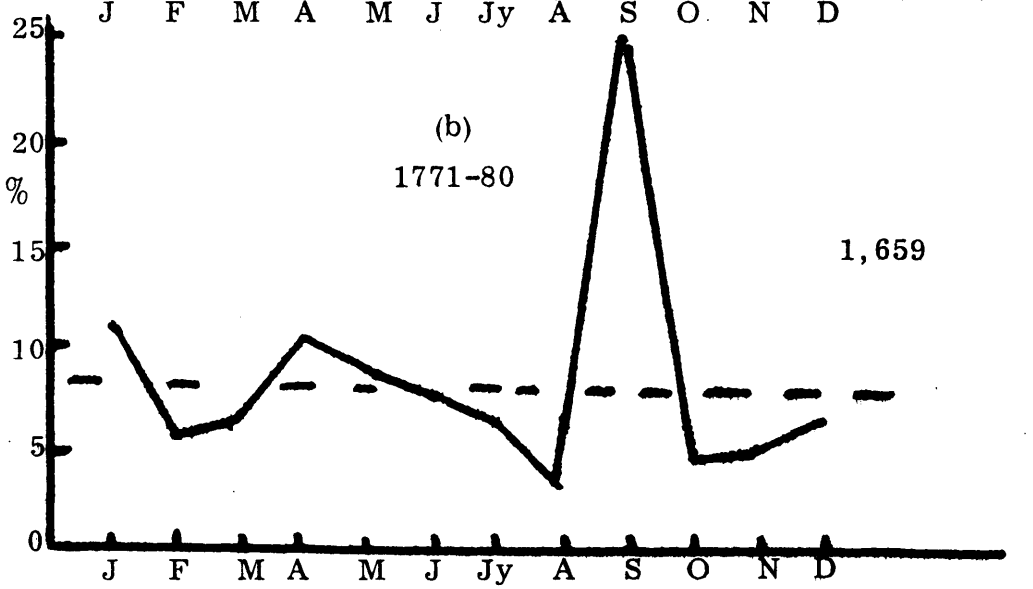


FIGURE 4 ctd. (c) (d)

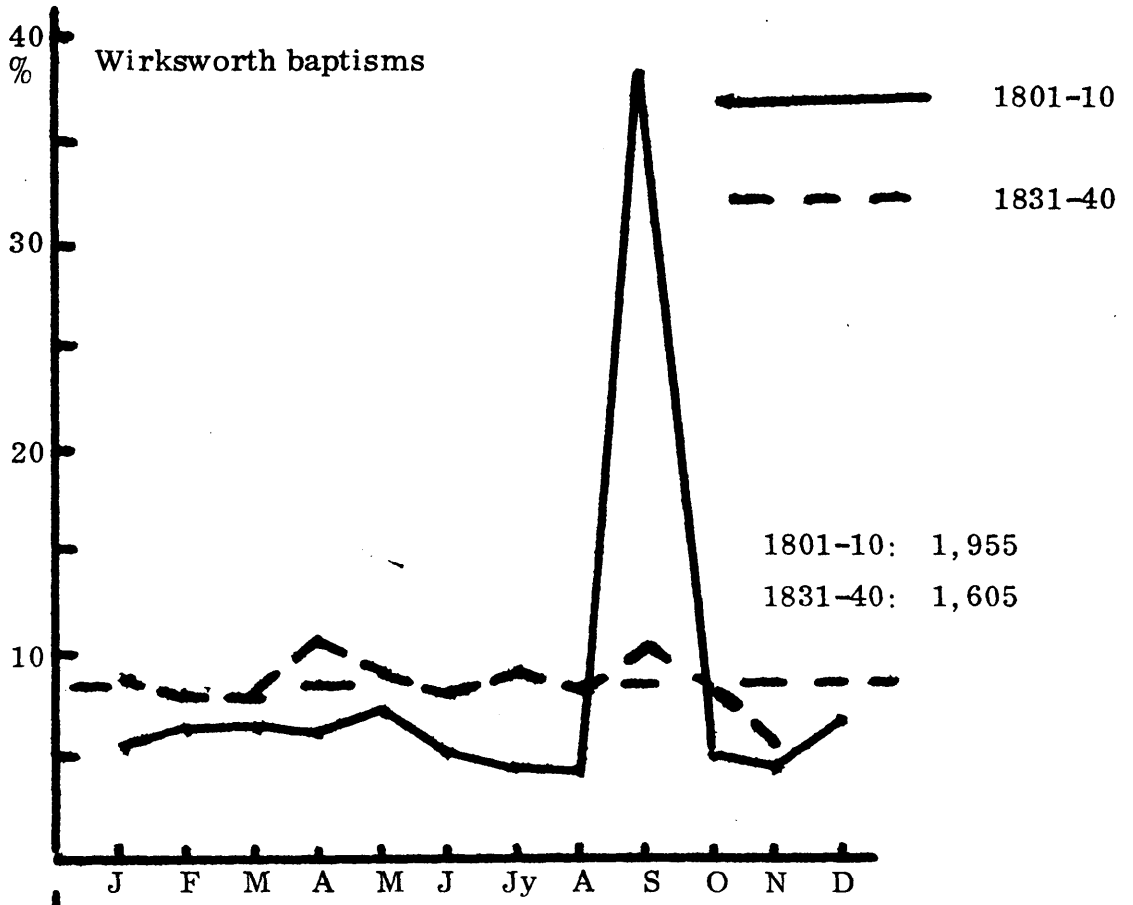
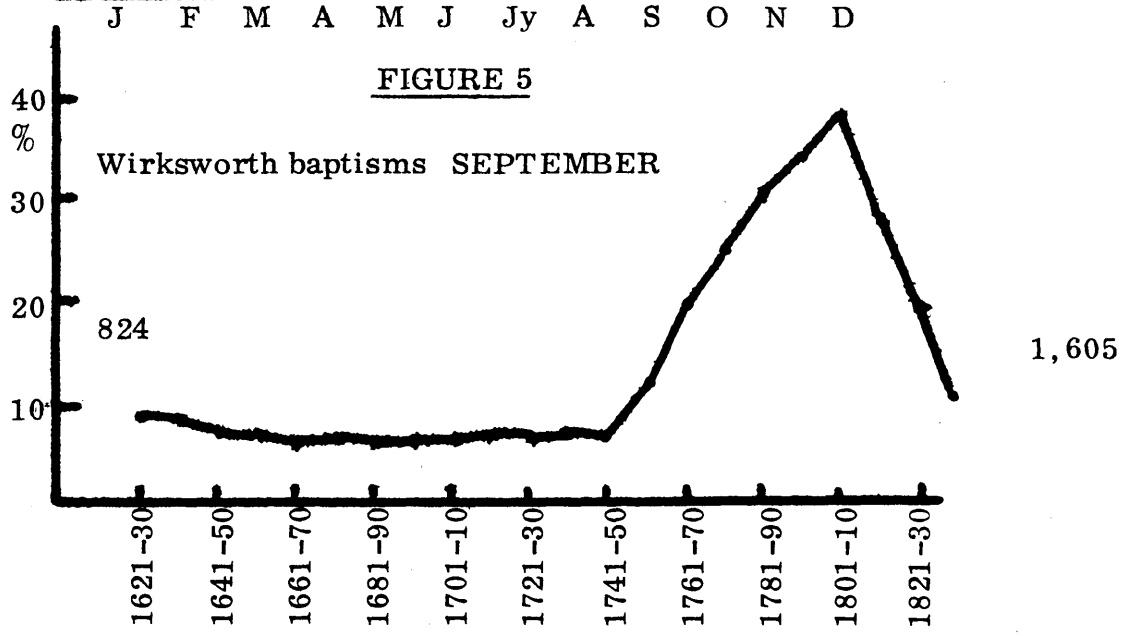


FIGURE 5



baptisms began to appear in 1751-60, rose to a maximum in 1801-10, when it comprised 38% of the decadal baptisms, and then subsided until, by 1831-40, it had amost disappeared. The other Derbyshire parishes showed a similar pattern, but with different peak months:

Parish	Peak month	Decade when phenomenon commenced	Decade when peak reached maximum	Peak percentage
Ashover	July	1751-60	1781-90	19
Bradbourne	November	*	1801-10	32
Brailsford	October	1791-1800	1801-10	23
Brassington	August	1761-70	1801-10	51**
Matlock	September	1751-60	1801-10	25
Wirksworth	September	1751-60	1801-10	38

* Baptism figures for 1751-60 are missing in Bradbourne, but the peak was well established in 1761-70.

** The exceptionally high peak of 51% in Brassington was followed by a decade in which August baptisms were 10.2%, little above average.

Amongst the Nottinghamshire parishes, EDWINSTOWE shows the phenomenon clearly, with an October peak of 21.5% in 1781-90, and Gedling a much modified November peak, barely perceptible in 1761-70, rising to 17% in 1781-90, after which it vanishes.

Finally, the graphs for every parish but one show a flattening in the early 19th century. Figure 2 shows this flattening for the combined Nottinghamshire parishes, for which the range (the difference between the highest and lowest monthly percentages for the period concerned) in the successive periods diminished thus:

Period	1601-50	1651-1700	1701-50	1751-1800	1801-40
Range	4.4%	4.2%	4.1%	3.0%	2.0%

In other words, the seasonal influences diminish as we approach the end of the period.

How can we interpret these observations? The fundamental natural events preceding baptism are conception and birth. We have to disentangle a complex of factors, some of which operate directly on the choice of the date of baptism, others of which act indirectly on baptism by determining the seasonal pattern of conception. Clearly, if conceptions follow a seasonal pattern, this will influence the baptism

pattern, but will not completely determine it, since as a rule the actual date of baptism is a matter of choice.

The factors acting directly on baptisms might include, for example, canonical law on baptism, such as we have seen operating on marriage; local customs, such as the saving up of baptisms for the patronal festival of the parish; or superstitions regarding favourable or unfavourable months for baptism. I have not been able to find any canonical law on baptism which would affect its seasonality, but possibly readers of L.P.S. may be able to enlighten me. What can explain the Derbyshire 'peak month' phenomenon described above? It is surely inconceivable that it can be due to a conception pattern; that, for example, the 51% of the total decadal baptisms (1801-10) occurring in August in BRASSINGTON could mean that 51% of conceptions occurred in November - or in any other one month. Baptisms were obviously being saved up for some special occasion. The first possibility seemed to be the patronal festival, but some parish peaks were not in the right month for this. Was the occasion religious or secular? Why did it arise at this time in this group of parishes? I hope that other readers of L.P.S. who have come across similar phenomena may help towards an explanation. Clearly any such significant local deviation from a generally established regional pattern will interest the local historian, who will wish to establish the reasons for it. It will be of importance, too, to the local population student, for, as will be shown below, it can be a source of error in reconstitution studies.

Turning now to factors which operate on conception and birth rather than directly on baptism, and which might determine a seasonal pattern, some possibilities come readily to mind. There may be a biological rhythm, as there is in plants and animals. There might be ecclesiastical influences, such as the discouragement of indulgence in intercourse during Lent. There might be occupational factors; it has been suggested that long hours of hard work in harvest time in a predominantly agricultural community left little time or energy for intercourse. It has been suggested, too, that long hours of winter darkness encouraged intercourse - it was reported that a period of power cuts in a New York winter produced a peak of births nine months later! And, of course, it might be suggested that there should be some relationship between the known seasonal pattern of marriage at any period and the pattern of conception. But one has to be very cautious in linking these possible factors to the known baptism pattern. We need to keep clear the distinction between birth and baptism. An example may help to reveal the difficulties.

U.M. Cowgill has written three articles (1) in which she discusses, amongst other issues, birth seasonality in York between 1538 and 1812, using the printed parish register transcripts. Dividing the period into five parts, 1538-1601, 1602-1651, 1652-1701, 1702-1751 and 1752-1812, she aggregates the baptisms over each of these periods and obtains baptism patterns very similar to those which I have established for my Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire parishes. She then treats these as birth patterns, counting nine months backwards, for example, to obtain conception patterns, and drawing inferences about seasonal influences on conception. The registers, of course, give the dates of baptism, but the date of birth is given in only a few years in any parish. Miss Cowgill justifies her assumption by the following statement in the Nature article: "In the limited number of cases for which data for both events are given prior to 1750, the average waiting time is about three days. After 1750, with the exception of adults who are being admitted to the Established Church, the waiting time is five days. In most cases the difference is so small that, for the purposes of this study, the baptism and the birth date can be considered to be essentially the same". Miss Cowgill is not alone, of course, in making this assumption; it is frequently made in reconstitution studies. I suggest that the evidence offered is often missing or entirely inadequate.

Under what circumstances can we establish a credible relationship between the baptism pattern and the birth pattern for a specific parish - in other words, establish a birth-baptism interval which can be taken as reasonably representative? I suggest that there are two essentials:

i. The proportion of cases in which both dates are given must be high enough to make it clear that they constitute the general rule and are not exceptions. If, for example, only one birth date were given for every twenty baptisms, there would be a strong probability that they were given for some special reason and were not representative. Such a high proportion is only likely to occur in a few years in any parish.

ii. Even if we find a period in which every baptism has its birth date recorded, this is still not enough to establish a representative birth-baptism interval. The following table shows the distribution of the birth-baptism intervals for two imaginary parishes.

Interval (days)	0-7	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-35	36-42	43-49	50-56	57-63
Distribution									
Parish A	12	36	22	2	1	0	0	1	2
Parish B	3	7	8	8	9	6	8	2	4

For Parish A we could fairly assume a birth-baptism interval of about 12 days (the median has been used as it is usually a better guide than the average). For Parish B, the spread is so wide and so even, that it seems to me to be quite unrealistic to assume any representative interval. So that not only must there be a high proportion of cases in which both dates are given, but there must be a high degree of concentration of the intervals about the chosen representative interval.

There is a further difficulty. Since there are few parishes in which birth dates are given over a long period of time it is, as a rule, only possible to establish a representative birth-baptism interval, if at all, for isolated and comparatively short periods? Can we assume that such an interval is valid for other periods in the same parish. Or for other parishes? There can undoubtedly be considerable variations in the same parish between one period and another. In the Derbyshire parish of WINSTER, for example, I have found an abrupt change in the interval within five years due, so far as one can tell, to the arrival of a new incumbent. Dr. R.S. Schofield tells me that he has found considerable variation from one parish to another, the range of the median interval for the parishes which he has surveyed varying from around 18 days in the late 17th century to 111 days in the late 18th century. It is clear, then, that one must be very cautious in transferring a known birth-baptism interval from one period to another or from one parish to another unless further evidence becomes available. It would be most useful to have a comprehensive survey of all the evidence which parish registers provide on this important matter. Until this is done, and unless a recognisable pattern emerges, much work which involves a knowledge of the birth-baptism interval in a given parish at a given time is bound to be speculative.

Let us consider how far the York figures satisfy these requirements. Printed transcripts are available for eleven parishes (2), though not all of them are complete. Analysing the baptism entries produces the following table, in which the period covered by the transcript is shown under the name of the parish, the columns headed (a) give the total numbers of baptisms in each period, and the columns headed (b) the number for which birth dates are given. Figures are, of course, approximate, owing to obscurities in a few entries.

It would seem that there is no evidence from the transcripts adequate to establish a representative birth-baptism interval for the periods 1538-1601 and 1602-1651.

	1538-1601		1602-1651		1652-1701		1702-1751		1752-1812	
	(a)	(b)	(a)	(b)	(a)	(b)	(a)	(b)	(a)	(b)
St. Michael le Belfry 1565-1778	1,311	0	2,458	0	2,330	178	2,128	44	1,085	166
St. Olave 1538-1644	852	1	923	2						
St. Martin, Coney St. 1557-1812	506	0	644	1	778	25	611	13	693	522
St. Crux 1540-1716	911	0	1,189	0	1,245	0	320	0		
All Saints, Pavement 1554-1738	517	0	914	0	1,128	0	947	1		
Holy Trinity, Goodramgate 1573-1812	261	0	1,007	0	1,037	189	1,101	39	1,374	1,358
St. Laurence 1606-1812			368	1	253	0	462	7	908	590
St. Mary Bishophill. Jnr 1602-1812			427	0	862	4	808	1	1,143	2
Holy Trinity, King's Court 1663-1812					676	1	901	3	465	224
St. Martin cum Gregory 1540-1734	388	0	528	0	608	104	404	0		
Holy Trinity Micklegate 1586-1777	313	0	949	0	793	38	912	0	446	3
TOTAL	5,059	1	9,407	4	9,710	539	8,594	108	6,114	2,865

In the period 1652-1701, five parishes, which had not previously given birth dates, began to do so in 1653, though two of them gave so few as to be of no use in determining a birth-baptism interval. The following table shows the period for which they continued to give birth dates, the period for which the proportion of birth dates given was high, and the median and mean interval calculated from these periods of concentration.

	Period for which birth dates given	Period of concentration	Number of baptisms	Number of birth dates	Median (days)	Mean (days)
St. Michael le Belfry	1653-1656	1653-1656	171*	167	6	6
St. Martin, Coney St.	1653-1654		(24)	(10)		
Holy Trinity Goodramgate	1653-1664	1653-1662	202	181	5	5
St. Martin cum Gregory	1653-1662	1653-1662	131	104	6	7
Holy Trinity Micklegate	1653 Only		(11)	(3)		

* There were a further 20 baptisms in 1653 before the giving of birth dates commenced.

There is a case for inferring a birth-baptism interval of 5 or 6 days for three parishes in the years immediately following 1653. Its extension to the other parishes would rest entirely on analogy, and there is no evidence for years subsequent to 1662. One doubt remains. The commencement in 1653 of the inclusion of birth dates would appear to be related to the transfer, by the Commonwealth Government, of legal registration to civil officials, and, in the three parishes which did change their registration style, there may have been associated circumstances promoting early baptism in these years. It would be interesting to know why only the minority of parishes changed their style and why two of them maintained it until after the Restoration. It may be worth noting that, averaging the numbers of baptisms for 1648-52 and for 1653-57, there is a drop of about 5% for the whole city, but rises of 10% and 15% for Holy Trinity, Goodramgate, and St. Martin-cum-Gregory respectively, though St. Michael-le-Belfry shows a drop of 6%.

Turning to the period 1701-1752, only one parish, Holy Trinity, Goodramgate, shows more than scattered birth dates. In this one

parish, between 1726 and 1734, out of 186 baptisms, 39 have some reference to birth, but not in the form of a birth date. In 31 of them, baptism is recorded as following one month after birth, which can hardly be intended as a precise interval. The other 8 are recorded as 1, 3, 5, 6, 6 and 11 weeks, 2 months and 3 years. In no parish, then, is there adequate evidence to establish a birth-baptism interval.

The situation between 1752 and 1812 is more complicated. Five of the seven parishes for which the transcripts extend into this period show substantial numbers of birth dates. In St. Michael-le-Belfry, there is no year in which as many as half of the birth dates are given, and they reach a quarter in only 7 out of the 27 years. It is noticeable that, of the 166 birth-baptism intervals given, all but 16 are over a month, which may mean that only those over a month are normally recorded. For the other four parishes, I have analysed the figures by decades, and I have calculated the median and the mean intervals (in days) for decades in which there is a high proportion of birth dates. The figures in brackets in the following table show the total number of baptisms, followed by the number of recorded birth dates, in the appropriate decades.

		1762-1771		1772-1781		1782-1791		1792-1801		1802-1812	
		Med	Mean	Med	Mean	Med	Mean	Med	Mean	Med	Mean
St. Martin Coney St.	1762-1812	9 (134- 92)	13	4 (136-125)	12	3 (125-111)	9	3 (90-83)	10	7 (114-107)	20
Holy Tnty Good/gate	1782-1812	(177- 1)		(246- 4)		5 (246-242)	12½	25 (207-207)	48	57 (285-285)	70
St. Laurence	1779-1812	(123- 0)		(130- 41)		8 (148-135)	15	7 (172-170)	12	7 (246-244)	11
Holy Tnty Kings Ct.		(179- 6)		(220- 53)		(193- 93)		(207- 34)		4½ (258-190)	12

The considerably greater difference between the median and the mean in this period, as compared with the years following 1653, shows that the spread of birth-baptism intervals is wider. In St. Michael-le-Belfry and Holy Trinity, Goodramgate, it is very wide indeed, so that in the former no reasonable representative birth-baptism interval can, in my opinion, be inferred, and in the latter (where the spread is clearly increasing towards the end of the period) no reasonable

interval can be inferred, at any rate after 1791. There remain, then, three parishes out of the seven for which transcripts extend into this period, for which a short birth-baptism interval of between 3 and 9 days can reasonably be inferred. Do the remaining eight parishes follow this pattern, or do they follow that of Holy Trinity, Goodramgate, or do they diverge even further? There is no evidence in the registers to determine this.

If I have discussed the York figures at, perhaps, inordinate length, it is because they provide an excellent example of the great care which must be taken in making any pronouncement about the relation between baptism and birth or baptism and conception. It is, of course, possible that Miss Cowgill is right but, in my opinion, she has failed to give the evidence needed to support her main assumption in the discussion of conception seasonality, and this reduces her discussion of seasonality factors to interesting but unsubstantiated speculation. And clearly the same care needs to be taken in some of the issues arising out of family reconstitution. Calculations of peri-natal mortality and of the time interval between successive births to the same mother, for example, will be affected of there is no representative birth-baptism interval or if it has been wrongly estimated.

It is, perhaps, of interest that these York parishes are giving such detail in their baptism entries at a time when, according to one authority, Anglican registration had "virtually collapsed". And is it a coincidence that this period coincides with the incidence of the Derbyshire baptism peak phenomenon described earlier?

There remains two further points which I would like to discuss. If a representative birth-baptism interval can be established, the actual length of the interval will obviously be crucial to any discussion of birth or conception seasonality. The following table shows the months of conception which would correspond to the months of baptism, assuming 0-, 1-, 2- and 3-month intervals

	Month of baptism											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apl	May	Jun	Jly	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Interval	Corresponding month of conception											
0 months	Apl	May	Jun	Jly	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
1 month	Mar	Apl	May	Jun	Jly	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
2 months	Feb	Mar	Apl	May	Jun	Jly	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
3 months	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apl	May	Jun	Jly	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

It will be seen that a three-month interval will produce quite a different seasonal conception pattern than if we had supposed birth and baptism to coincide. This table can be used to examine some of the suggested possible factors influencing the conception pattern, though it is not possible to do this in detail in this article.

i. Abstinence from intercoure in Lent would reduce March conceptions, and consequently December births, to a low level. The corresponding baptism trough would be in December, January or February with a 0-, 1- or 2 month interval respectively. Figure 2 would suggest that, after 1600, December baptisms in my Nottinghamshire parishes, though not high, could not be said to show a trough. Looking at all twelve Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire parishes, out of 254 December baptisms 'cells' (3), 61 or 24% showed less than 6% of the decadal baptisms, and only 34, or 13%,less than 5%. January and February have above-average baptisms throughout. It seems fair to conclude that, in these twelve parishes, there was no consistent and pronounced avoidance of intercourse in Lent after 1600, unless the birth-baptism intervals were unexpectedly long.
Miss Cowgill's graphs for York do show a marked December trough in the first period (1538-1601) and a small deficiency in her second period. If she is right in assuming a short birth-baptism interval, this would be consistent with Lent abstinence though, since other factors may be operating, it would not prove it.

ii. A reduction in intercourse at harvest would result in low baptisms in May to August, according to the length of the birth-baptism interval. May does not appear to show any marked deficiency, but June, July and August certainly do.

It has been suggested, as noted above that there might be some connection between the known seasonality pattern of marriage at a given period and the corresponding conception pattern. The attempt to trace such a relationship meets a further difficulty. Assuming that intercourse and conception follow shortly after marriage, one might expect a relationship between the marriage distribution and the distribution of <u>first</u> births. The two marked marriage troughs of the earlier periods, March and December, would then give rise to troughs in the baptism distribution of first children, and the November peak to a baptism peak, though the positions of these troughs and peak would depend on the length of the birth-baptism interval. Unfortunately, all our distributions are for <u>all</u> children, and there is no way, in an aggregative analysis, of separating out the distribution

for first children. Baptisms of other than first children would not be linked to the marriage distribution so that, for example, any peak resulting from the birth of first children would be modified by the differing pattern for subsequent children, the extent of the modification depending on the relative numbers of first and subsequent children. Miss Cowgill writes (4) "The short life-span of the adult would lead to a disproportionate number of families that bore only one child conceived at the time of marriage." This is quite inadequate. How disproportionate? Was the life-span so short (5)? Miss Cowgill's own estimate for York is that the average family size between 1538 and 1751 was 3.56 (6). Other writers have suggested, for various parishes, averages of between $3\frac{1}{2}$ and 6 (7). If only a quarter of the births were first births, the 'first-birth' effect would be very severely modified, and this modification would be increased by both extra-marital and pre-marital conceptions. My own impression is that it is hardly worth while to investigate this marriage-baptism relationship by aggregative analysis, though the more laborious family reconstitution approach may be more effective.

In this article I have given an account of the seasonal pattern of baptisms as it appears in six Derbyshire and six Nottinghamshire parishes. I have suggested that such a seasonal pattern will be due to a combination of factors of two kinds, those operating directly on the choice of the baptism date, and those operating indirectly through their effect on the seasonal pattern of conception, and I have discussed the difficulties which arise in considering the latter group of factors. The birth-baptism interval has been discussed at length because it is here that one frequently finds unproved assumptions which may seriously affect the validity of the conclusions, both in discussions of seasonality and in calculations from family reconstitution.

I hope that I have not left the impression that the investigation of baptism seasonality is unprofitable or too difficult. I am convinced that it can lead to useful results, especially by the investigation of local deviations from the general pattern, but only if the underlying assumptions are clearly stated and supported by adequate evidence. My article raises more questions than it answers, and I shall be glad to hear from other readers of L.P.S. who have experience to contribute.

The concluding article of this series will be devoted to burial seasonality.

NOTES

(1) 'Historical Study of the Season of Birth in the City of York, England', in Nature, No. 5028, March 12th, 1966.

'Life and Death in the 16th century in the City of York' in Population Studies, XXI Pt. 1, July 1967.

'The People of York 1538-1812' in The Scientific American January 1970.

(2) The first volume of the transcript for St. Mary, Castlegate, has recently been published, but would not be available to Miss Cowgill.

(3) For the definition of a 'cell', see 'An Enquiry into Seasonality in Baptisms, Marriages and Burials', Part 1, in L.P.S. No. 4, Spring 1970, p. 25.

(4) Scientific American, January 1970, page 104.

(5) "It is still quite likely that a man of 21 could have something like 30 years to live. If he married at 30 - not an unlikely age, as we have seen - he could probably expect to live 25 years with his wife" - P. Laslett in The World We Have Lost. p. 94.

(6) Scientific American, January 1970, page 112. I find it odd that Miss Cowgill should assume that the average family size would remain constant over so long a period.

(7) See The World We Have Lost - P. Laslett - Methuen, 1965, p. 102. Population in History - ed. Glass and Eversley - Edward Arnold, 1965. p. 48.

A NOTE ON THE INCIDENCE OF TUDOR SUICIDE

P.E.H. Hair

Dr. Hair is a Senior Lecturer in the School of History, University of Liverpool, and has published, in the field of British social history, articles on bridal pregnancy in Population Studies and on industrial mortality in the Economic History Review.

The publication of a Calendar of Nottinghamshire Coroners' Inquests, 1485-1558 (1969), edited by Dr. R.F. Hunnisett for the Thoroton Society, provides material for some preliminary inquiries into the incidence of suicide in Tudor times. In his most useful introduction, Dr. Hunnisett explains that he hopes to prepare a comprehensive analysis of the inquests after certain missing records have been found, and this will be eagerly awaited. However, a few general comments on one aspect of the material now available may serve to encourage local demographers to hunt out comparable or related documentation, to consider whether evidence from parish registers can be brough to bear on this problem, and to present views on the validity of possible methods of analysis.

Suicide is of course a notoriously difficult subject to investigate statistically. Durkheim's classic sociological study, for instance, is statistically unsound in parts because the author builds theories on the comparison of numbers of recorded suicides in various societies and periods not allowing for the fact that very varying proportions of suicide go unrecorded. It follows that we must not expect too much from our present enquiry.(1.)

The Nottinghamshire inquests are most complete for the years 1530-1558. Dr. Hunnisett has calendared 250 inquests for these years, 35 of which produced a verdict of death due to natural causes, and 40 a verdict of homicide, leaving 175 inquests on misadventure or suicide. (In a handful of cases the verdict is uncertain - the most likely has been chosen). A few inquests related to more than one death, and the total of deaths by misadventure or suicide is 183. Apart from the calendared inquests, Dr. Hunnisett has noted (in his introduction, p.xix) that of twelve King's Bench indictment files of the period which he could not examine because they were then missing,

seven were known to contain Nottinghamshire inquests and only one not: this suggests that ten of the missing files may contain Nottinghamshire inquests. Dr. Hunnisett has recently kindly informed the writer that he has now examined two of the missing files and finds them to contain 10 Nottinghamshire misadventures, 2 suicides and 4 homicides. These figures suggest that the total of missing deaths may be as high as (10 files x 8 deaths in each) = 80 deaths. But possibly the files examined contain an abnormally large number of Nottinghamshire inquests, and possibly more than two of the missing files contain no Nottinghamshire inquests. Cautiously, we shall adopt a lower estimate of (8 files x 6-8 deaths in each) = say, 50-60 deaths. Similarly we estimate the number of missing misadventures and suicides at 8 files x 5 deaths in each) = 40 deaths. (Thus, rather over 20% of Nottinghamshire misadventures and suicides are not calendared.) The total of misadventures and suicides brought to inquest we estimate at 183 + 40 = 223. With regard to homicide, the position is even more complicated. Dr. Hunnisett suggests that the records of inquests on as many as four homicides a year - hence, 116 in the period of 29 years - were involved in the process of gaol delivery, and are now 'irretrievably lost'. The total of homicides may therefore be as high as 40 + (8 x 2 from the recoverable files) + 116 = 172. On these estimates, the total of violent deaths in Nottinghamshire 1530-1558 may have been as high as 395.

Of the deaths calendared or since discovered, 40 were suicides. Allowing for the still missing files, the total brought to inquest in the period we estimate at 38 + (8 x 1) = 46. Thus, suicides probably accounted for about 12% of all violent deaths. Today, the comparable figures is about 25%, but of course there are now far fewer homicides, and probably rather more misadventures: with so many variables involved, the comparison is not very meaningful. It is a little more profitable to measure suicides against violent deaths other than homicide. Of the total of Nottinghamshire deaths from misadventure or suicide, suicide accounted for 46 out of 223, or if we limit ourselves to those whose records are known, for 40 out of 195 - in either case, 21%. The comparable figure today is about 25%. Before jumping to any conclusion, we should note that a century ago, in the 1860's, the comparable figure was about 10%. Obviously this sort of comparison is affected by changes in the incidence of misadventure, as much as by - and often, more than by - changes in the incidence of suicide. It is in fact likely that there were more misadventures (relative to population) in mid-Victorian Britain than either today, or in Tudor times, but we are uncertain how the modern and the Tudor incidences compare. However, while we must be cautious about any

comparison with other times, the fact that one in five of all violent deaths, other than homicide, brought to inquest in Nottinghamshire 1530-1558 was a suicide, gives fairly strong grounds for suggesting that suicide was not only not unknown, but was not uncommon in mid-Tudor England.

The sound way of ascertaining the relative commonness of any form of deaths is, of course, to measure the number of deaths against the total population at risk. This we shall now attempt to do for suicide in mid-Tudor Nottinghamshire. The snag lies inevitably in the difficulty of discovering the size of any pre-nineteenth century British population. It must be borne in mind that the incidences hereafter arrived at are subject to a degree of uncertainty deriving from the uncertainty in the population estimates. We now describe two methods of arriving at an estimate of mid-Tudor Nottinghamshire population: we would welcome from readers comments on these, or additional data which would produce a sounder or closer estimate.

(Method A). The most complete set of Elizabethan muster rolls is for 1573, when only one county return is missing: including an estimate for this county based on returns for neighbouring years, the total muster for the nation is 226,000 and the Nottinghamshire muster is 2,360.[2] Calculation for two other less complete years, 1569 and 1580, produce very similar results, and we conclude that the Nottinghamshire muster was almost exactly 1.0% of the national muster. Avoiding the controversial subject of the definition of an able-bodied or musterable man, we simply argue that this same proportion applied to the total national population will give the total population of Nottinghamshire. We take national population c.1600 at the conventional figure of 4-4½ million, and hence estimate the population of Nottinghamshire in the 1570s to have been around 40,000. The course of mid-Tudor population is somewhat uncertain, and therefore, without further adjustment, we take the estimate of around 40,000 to be the figure for average population 1530-1558.

(Method B). The ecclesiastical census of 1676 counted 37,000 communicants and dissenters in Nottinghamshire:[3] assuming that these were all the population over 16 years of age, and that they represented 60% of the total population, then the total was about 62,000. (Figures in the 60,000s are also arrived at if the number of hearth-tax 'houses' in the county in 1689 is multiplied by either of Gregory King's extra-London house: person ratios.[4] For neighbouring Leicestershire, it has been estimated that population increased between the ecclesiastical census of 1563 and that of 1676 in the proportion 100:159.[5] Applying the Leicestershire ratio to the figure for Nottinghamshire population in 1676 gives a figure for

Nottinghamshire population in 1563 of about 40,000. It is perhaps a little less than wholly coincidental that by either method we arrive at the same figure, and therefore fairly satisfactory; and 40,000 is a helpfully round number. The true figure for Nottinghamshire population 1530-1558 was, we suspect, rather smaller, but if so, the error is on the right side in the context of the argument of this note, since the incidences produced on an estimate of 40,000 will probably be minimising, not exaggerating, the amount of suicide.

On an estimate of 40,000 persons at risk, the incidence of recorded misadventure and suicide in 1530-1558 was 168 deaths per million living p.a. (hereafter abbreviated as pMa), and the incidence of estimated misadventure and suicide was 192 pMa. In the 1860s, the incidence of misadventure and suicide (as recorded by civil registration in England and Wales) was over 600 pMa: today it is 350 pMa.[6] The comparison at least serves to show that the estimated total of Nottinghamshire misadventures and suicides produces an incidence of the right order. For misadventure alone, the incidences compare as follows: Nottinghamshire 1530-1558, 134 pMa (recorded) and 152 pMa (estimated); England and Wales, 1860s, around 540 pMa; Britain today, around 230 pMa. It is possible that there were in fact less misadventures in Tudor Nottinghamshire than there are today. But it must be assumed that Tudor coroners overlooked a certain number of violent deaths, and that misadventures, particularly the less dramatic kind such as children or old people dying from domestic falls or burns, were especially likely to be overlooked. The relative lowness of the misadventure incidence may be misleading.

The incidence of suicide brought to inquest in Nottinghamshire 1530-1558 was 34 pMa (recorded) and 40 pMa (estimated). Very fortunately, these figures can be compared with others derived from the findings of another scholar. In 1966, Dr. Alan Macfarlane listed all the suicides in the county of Essex for the period 1560-1603 (from the King's Bench records). His valuable detailed analysis remains unpublished, but with his permission we quote the total of suicides for the period, 139. The population of Essex most probably averaged about 85,000 during these years, and on this figure the incidence of suicide was 37 pMa.[7] If we assume that in the case of Essex, as in the case of Nottinghamshire, a few of the records have been mislaid, then the full Essex rate must be considered in very close agreement with the higher, estimated rate for Nottinghamshire. The agreement goes some way towards proving what we shall henceforth assume, that suicide in Nottinghamshire 1530-1558 was typical of suicide in mid- and late-Tudor England.

The incidence of suicide in mid- and late-Tudor England has just been estimated at 40 pMa. The incidence of suicide in the 1860s was about 65 pMa. Today, the incidence is 120 pMa. Probably all of these figures under-estimate the true incidences. Today, the Scottish Registrar General includes in his annual report a warning that 'instances have come to notice where the clinical history and circumstances of death suggest suicide but where the certificate accepted for statistical purposes did not attribute the death to this cause.' In the 1860s, it was believed that very many suicides were included among the large number of deaths returned as 'found drowned'; today, there are few deaths in this category and it seems likely, for this and other reasons, that fewer suicides are concealed today than ever were before. It is not the purpose of the present paper to investigate Tudor attitudes to suicide - other scholars are known to be engaged on this - but it is common knowledge that in earlier centuries there were legislative and social penalties designed to discourage suicide. The sterner these penalties, directed mainly against the family of a suicide, the more likely would it be for suicides to be concealed. It is possible therefore that more suicides were concealed in Tudor than in Victorian times. It is perhaps significant that of the 38 calendared Nottinghamshire suicides, 19 or half were women. In the nineteenth century, only one fifth of suicides were women, and even today the proportion is only one third. The Nottinghamshire proportion might be explained by excess concealment of male suicide. As Dr. Hunnisett has pointed out (in correspondence), the confiscation of property which was one of the penalties of suicide was generally more serious in the case of a male suicide than in the case of a female suicide, and families would therefore be more inclined to conceal suicides of men. Now if more suicides were concealed in Victorian times than today, and more still in Tudor times, the apparent simple progression shown in the figures at the beginning of the paragraph, the trebling of suicide rates since the sixteenth century cannot be accepted. What the true incidence of suicide in mid-Tudor Nottinghamshire was we shall never know, but it was almost certainly above 40 pMa, and possibly well above. We are inclined to think that it was well below the modern incidence but fairly close to the true mid-Victorian incidence.

But more important than this uncertain comparison with later times is the comparison with earlier times. It is conventionally supposed that suicide was very uncommon in the Middle Ages. This general supposition is supported by a study of the coroners' inquests for Bedfordshire in various years between 1265 and 1317: of 121 misadventures and suicides, only three were suicides.[8] The

incidence (on an extremely rough calculation) cannot have been more than 6 pMa. In view of the contemporary pressure on families to conceal what was then considered a heinous deed, no doubt the true incidence was higher, perhaps a good deal higher. But if the very low figure testifies to the extreme disapproval of suicide at the time, we must also suppose that the disapproval worked, and that there were in fact relatively few suicides. Between the incidence at inquest of 6 pMa for Bedforshire c.1280 and the incidence at inquest of 40 pMa (or even 34 pMa, the actually recorded incidence) for Nottinghamshire 1530-1558, there is a striking difference, a difference much greater in degree that the difference between the recorded rate for mid-Tudor Nottinghamshire and the rate for today. While part of the difference between the thirteenth century and the sixteenth century incidences may be accounted for by less concealment at the later date, the remainder must be accounted for by a considerable increase in suicide.

It is impossible to say how much suicide was concealed in Tudor times,[9] but it is surely significant that a substantial amount of suicide not only occurred but was recorded. While the language of the Tudor inquests condemns suicide, it does so in terms which seem to be formal, conventional and perhaps less than whole-hearted. How extensively other measures (e.g. refusal of church burial) were taken against suicides the writer has no idea, and local historians might care to attempt to find out. But the impression given by the Nottinghamshire inquests is that suicide at the time was fairly common and fairly commonplace. (In the same way, suicide appears almost commonplace in Elizabethan drama.) It was certainly not so lightly regarded as today, but the full-blown medieval horror of suicide seems to have evaporated. The period of the Nottinghamshire inquests, be it noted, is 1530-1558, at the very end of medieval-Catholic England, and most of the persons involved had grown up in a pre-Reformation society. In respect of the calendared inquests, the incidence remains constant from decade to decade, with one third of the suicides in the 1530s. It would appear therefore that a changing attitude to suicide had developed in England before the advent of Protestantism. We hazard a guess that it was the product rather of the 'Christian humanism' of the later Middle Ages. And we suggest that the brief history of suicide in Britain may be a sharp increase in the later Middle Ages, a relatively constant rate since, in the form of a slow increase.

To conclude on a less speculative note. The forms of suicide in mid-Tudor Nottinghamshire were: by drowning 17 (including 11 women), by hanging 14 (5 women), by wounding 6 (3 women), by other means 1. Drowning remained a popular form of suicide up to recent decades,

and as it was also a very common form of accidental death, no doubt many suicides by drowning were not correctly recorded. Of the Nottinghamshire suicides by drowning, 7 died in the family well (the scene also of many deaths recorded as accidental), and of these, 4 were women. For the worn-out and sickly Tudor housewife, the well appears to have been the equivalent of the twentieth-century gas-oven - the domestic chore whose lethal misuse offers release.

NOTES

1. In S.E. Sprott, The English debate on suicide, La Salle (Ill.), 1961, pp. 159-60, the number of suicides recorded in the London bills of mortality is compared at various periods with the number of all recorded deaths, and conclusions are drawn from these calculations about the changing incidence of suicide - erroneously, since the changing incidence of disease is ignored.

2. E.E. Rich, 'The population of Elizabethan England', Economic History Review, 1949-50, pp. 247-65, on p.253.

3. E.C. Guilford, 'Nottinghamshire in 1676', Transactions of the Thoroton Society, 28, 1924, pp. 106-113.

4. D.V. Glass and D.E.C. Eversley, Population in history, 1965, p. 203, n.51; p.218, Table 12.

5. C.T. Smith, V.C.H. Leicestershire, III, pp. 138-9.

6. For 1860s statistics of violence hereafter, see the convenient summary of the Registrar General's reports in C. Walford, 'On the number of deaths from accident, negligence, violence and misadventure in the United Kingdom and some other countries', Journal of the Statistical Society, 44, 1881, pp. 444-527. For today's statistics, see Registrar General's Statistical Review, 1967, Part 1 Tables Medical, Table 8.

7. The figure for Essex has been kindly supplied by Dr. B.W. Quintrell. Dr. Macfarlane also listed all the suicides in England in one year 1584, and the general incidence obtained is lower than the county incidences cited in the text, being only about 20 pMa. This may have been 'a good year' for suicide: alternatively, several counties recorded no inquests on suicides, which in the case of more populous counties might well indicate a policy on the part of the local coroners of overlooking suicides.

8. R.F. Hunnisett, Bedfordshire coroners' rolls, Bedfordshire Historical Record Society vol. XLI, 1961, p. xxiii.

9. For what appears to have been one successful concealment, see J. Miller and K.H.Rogers, 'The strange death of Edward Longford', Wiltshire Archeological and Natural History Magazine, 62, 1967, pp. 103-9.

Pre-1841 Census Enumerators Schedules

In L.P.S. 2 we appealed for information about pre 1841 Census Schedules. The response to this appeal is set out below. We would like to thank those readers who have supplied information and waited so patiently for it to be published.

County	Date	Parish	Whereabouts of Original
Essex	1821	Braintree	C.R.O.
Kent	1801	Borden	C.R.O.
Kent	1811	Borden	C.R.O.
London	1801	Chelsea	Chelsea Ref. Library
London	1831	St.John at Hackney	Shoreditch Central Lib.
Norfolk	1831	Diss	C.R.O.(Temporary deposit)
Suffolk	1801&1831	Ipswich, St. Peter	C.R.O.
Suffolk	1831	Ipswich, St. Margaret	C.R.O.
Surrey	1811	Croydon	Croydon Public Library
Sussex	1811	Kirdford	C.R.O.
Worcestershire	1831	Wolverley	C.R.O.
Yorkshire	(W.R.)1811	Carleton near Skipton	Leeds City Library

AN APPROACH TO PARISH REGISTER AND CENSUS WORK

K.S. Duffy

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The purpose of this article is to demonstrate a method of analysing parish registers in a group while exploiting the abilities of that group to the full. In my case that group happened to be 32 children aged 12, with a verbal reasoning quotient ranging from 94 to 110 and receiving a secondary modern education. It obviously presented its own special problems, and was undertaken for a particular teaching situation. Though the motives prompting the work were probably quite different from those that would prompt a Local History group to undertake parish register work, the method adopted might prove of interest to local historians as well as to teachers.

The children forming the group had previous experience of archival work from having undertaken transcriptions and analysis of a sample of eighteenth-century apprenticeship indentures the previous year. They were also familiar with transcriptions of archive material. The parish register selected for analysis was that of Preston-next-Faversham, Kent, for the years 1663-1735. Practical considerations determined this choice. There were forty-two pages covering these years which meant that the average child would have to tackle only just over twenty entries, and normally transcribe not more than one page. At the same time there was an entity to the work. It meant that the whole register, deposited in the Kent Archives Office, Maidstone, could be photostated at the education rate for less than 10/-. It was reasonable to expect that handwriting of this period was capable of being understood by the group, though this was checked before the choice was finally made. There was also the added interest that the school was on the border of the parish in question. In this sort of work such a fact is of secondary importance: however local the parish might have been, it would have been pointless to tackle work beyond the capabilities of the group. It was for this reason that the Faversham parish registers were ignored, although they might have presented more local interest.

Despite careful selection, transcribing the photo-copies still proved the most difficult task. It was essential at all stages of this work to note carefully the code number on the back of the archive under transcription. (This was a simple extension of the Archives Office code by the addition of a numeral and a letter.) Without such care it would have become increasingly difficult to ensure that each member of the group was able to maintain continuity in succeeding sessions. The register was transcribed in two work periods, each lasting one hour ten minutes. Because of the nature of the group, this pencilled transcription had to be checked for rudimentary errors, such as "Epistopher for "Christopher", though most difficulty was encountered with abbreviations outside the group's experience. A private work period was required for producing the final 'neat' copy.

Analysis of the register by individuals would have been not only impracticable in these circumstances, but also time-consuming. To overcome this problem duplicated slips were provided (see fig. 1). Since all three types (baptism, burial and marriage) could be cut on the one stencil, they proved cheap and easy to produce. The details of each register entry could be transferred to the appropriate slip, and at the same time re-arranged for ease of reference into baptisms, burials and marriages when necessary. In the end, after discounting illegible entries, inevitable duplicates (amongst the group) and those entries which gave insufficient information for the purposes of the work to be undertaken (for instance lack of surname or date), over six hundred slips were assembled. The time taken for the transfer of information was under one hour. The result was an immediately more flexible register to work with. It could be sorted and handed out in a variety of forms, depending upon what factor was being investigated.

At the fourth work session these slips were arranged first of all into rough alphabetical order, according to the first letter of the surname. (In marriage slips the bridegroom's name was taken). This meant that either an individual child, or two children working together as a team, collected a cross-section, in both date and type of entry, of the parish register, but with all entries having a common first letter to their surname. Each pupil, or team of two pupils, then arranged their collection of slips, never numbering more than fifty or so, into baptisms, burials and marriages, finally placing each of these sub-groups into chronological order. Dealing with such a small section of the register this could be done with speed and accuracy.

FIG. 1

Transference Slips

Parish — Christenings

Date				Sex	Parent's Name	Parent's Trade	Comments
Year	Month	Day	Surname		Father		
			Christian		Mother		

Parish — Burials

Date			Name	Sex	Trade, etc.	Parent's Name	Trade	State	Comments
Year	Month	Day	Surname			Father			
				Adult					
			Christian			Mother			
				Child					

Parish — Marriages

			Name Male	Parish	Trade	Name Female	Parish	State	Comments
Year	Month	Day	Surname			Surname			
			Christian			Christian			

FIGURE 2

Table showing Baptisms, Burials and Marriages between 1650-1730

1650	- - -	60	2 2 -	70	4 - -	80	3 5 9	90	6 3 1	1700	1 3 -	10	1 - 8	20	- 3 2	30	- 3 4
1	- - 2	1	3 - 3	1	3 3 1	1	4 3 6	1	2 3 4	1	2 1 -	1	2 - -	1	9 2 6	1	5 4 -
2	1 3 -	2	2 2 1	2	- 1 3	2	5 3 3	2	5 2 2	2	1 4 4	2	2 1 -	2	10 - -	2	11 3 5
3	- 2 -	3	2 2 4	3	- 1 3	3	1 3 4	3	2 1 2	3	2 2 -	3	2 1 -	3	5 - 5	3	2 3 7
4	- - -	4	- 2 2	4	5 - -	4	- 7 6	4	7 - 2	4	4 2 4	4	3 2 -	4	4 1 1	4	5 5 -
5	- - 2	5	4 8 6	5	2 - 2	5	1 2 -	5	- 1 5	5	6 5 3	5	4 3 -	5	2 2 -	5	5 7 3
6	- - -	6	2 1 2	6	- - 1	6	2 1 -	6	- 2 1	6	3 2 -	6	1 3 3	6	5 1 -	6	2 2 1
7	- 1 2	7	4 1 5	7	- - 4	7	2 1 -	7	1 5 7	7	1 4 -	7	2 1 -	7	3 1 -	7	-
8	- - 1	8	- 3 2	8	3 - 6	8	1 2 -	8	2 5 1	8	1 6 4	8	1 2 4	8	4 1 2	8	-
9	- - -	9	5 - 8	9	2 1 3	9	2 - -	9	1 2 3	9	7 - 3	9	6 - 4	9	- 2 -	9	1
	1 6 7		24 33		19 6		21 28		26 34		28 18		24 19		42 16		30 21
			19		23		26		24		30		13		13		27

Table taken from childs working sheet

First Column	Baptisms
Second Column	Marriages
Third Column	Burials

Using the blackboard as a unifying agent, a table was drawn up (see fig. 2). Baptisms were selected for simple analysis and the group leader (in this case the teacher) went through each year in turn. Whenever a team had a baptismal entry for that year they said so, and the number for each year was chalked alongside the relevant date. As can be seen in the table, it was rare for more than two or three teams to signal a baptism in one year, and as a result the whole of the baptisms were covered in twenty minutes. The table was copied down by the whole group. The following week the same system was used for burials and marriages, thus equipping each child with a table of figures, easily converted into ten-year totals, from which to prepare crude population graphs.

The parishes of origin of bachelors marrying at Preston were ascertained and were plotted on an ordnance survey map of Kent. During the whole of the period 1663-1735 it emerged that there were only two men who were not local to Kent, (London 1, Warwick 1) and virtually all parishes of origin were found to be along established lines of communication. These parishes came to forty, though only five had five or more bachelors marrying in Preston. By far the largest number came from the neighbouring parish of Faversham (57), but an interesting fact which came to light was that Lynsted had the third highest number (25), though it was neither a large parish nor especially near.

Perhaps of most immediate relevance to the group was a comparison of names found in the register with the school list. Each individual had already prepared an alphabetical list from his slips, and it was an easy matter to make a rough comparison. It was found that a high proportion of present-day school names were equally common in the latter half of the seventeenth century; not, perhaps, a surprising fact given the area.

The total time taken for this work was 7 hours 10 minutes. (Any longer would have been difficult from a syllabus and an interest point of view.) Every member of the group was fully involved in every stage from transcription to evaluation. The time taken included all graph work in population growth and movement. The end result was a considerable amount of work done, and though it neither dealt in depth nor fully extracted all information available, it added another section to a combined study of a local parish. In addition, it provided an opportunity for pupils, which is normally all too rare, to work from primary sources, and thus see for themselves how an

historian must weigh and balance his evidence, how he must consider, in this case for example, why figures fluctuated throughout the period, or why there should have been heavy mortality in the 1690's. A class discussion based on points such as these has a more obviously immediate relevance to children than does so much of the textbook generalisation which too often passes for history in schools.

Adaptation of the technique to census returns

Applying the same criteria of practicality of material and full utilisation of labour under classroom conditions to census returns can have rapid results.

The same group of children was used, though one year older. Results indicate that children considerably younger, or even less able, could undertake the mechanics of census work, although of course the significance to the younger child must decline appreciably.

The first requirement in selecting a particular area for census work was based on the desirability of maintaining a sense of continuity and familiarity. Therefore the parish of Preston-next-Faversham was inspected in the hope of discovering census returns of manageable proportions. The 1851 Census was selected since its clarity made for easy transcription. The returns were divided into two districts: North Preston, covering twenty-eight pages, and South Preston, covering thirty pages. The total cost for xerox prints came to £4 1s 6d. The number of pages was almost ideal for the size of the group and, with the clarity of the archive assured, transcription was completed, at two pages per child, in just over one hour. The ease with which this census document can be read made transcription a little pointless in some ways, but the reason for undertaking it was to preserve the xerox copies for future use in as perfect a condition as possible.

A further hour was spent in transferring each family group onto the appropriate slips (see fig. 3). I have already indicated the advantage of breaking up the available information by the use of slips in the section above on parish register work, which is, put briefly, that slips enable greater flexibility in the handling of the material for analysis. By the term 'family grouping' is meant all those persons who are shown at one address, which includes servants, visitors, etc. It was decided to arrange the entries in this way for the sake of ease in identification, rather than for ease in analysis. It was found,

FIGURE 3

Census Slip. Taken, very largely, from actual census returns

CENSUS: TAKEN ON THE NIGHT OF 30th MARCH, 1851
PARISH OF PRESTON NEXT FAVERSHAM. FAMILY UNIT

PAGE: AREA

House No.	Name of Street, Road or House	Name & Surname of each person in house	Relation to Head of Family	Condition	Age of Male	Age of Female	Rank, Profession or Occupation	Where Born	Blind Deaf Dumb

in the same work period, that there were 238 family groupings, and this number indicates the small amount of work that had to be undertaken. Bearing in mind that our study was begun as an exercise in archive material, inserted into a nineteenth century topic study rather than a serious examination of the 1851 census returns for Faversham, the neatness of such a sample and the resulting speed in getting results, was an over-riding factor in its being used in a school setting.

On this occasion it was felt that greater efficiency in work could be achieved by breaking up the class into several teams, each being allotted a distinct task. Four major teams were decided upon, each was sub-divided into two, though a certain amount of duplicated material was the price paid for the smaller and more efficient teams. Population statistics provided a major task, involving the working out of the number of families in the area (as opposed to the family groupings), with the constitution of families, and the average age of males, females and children under the age of sixteen as additional items. Occupations and a straightforward analysis of trades was another obvious task, while servants, their numbers, and the number of families that employed servants together with appropriate ratios, provided a third major task. In the case of Preston-next-Faversham the division of the parish into north and south of the town of Faversham offered useful possibilities for comparison. In fact the differences proved to be quite clear in almost every instance. South Preston comprised several very large farms, with the attendant labourers and a large number of servants. North Preston, abutting Faversham Creek, had a large percentage of fishermen, dredgers and people in allied trades, together with a proportionally smaller number of servants.

There were two alternative methods available of enabling each team to extract its particular information. Each child had an average of less than ten slips each. He could make brief notes on pieces of paper, under the different headings of population, number of families, constitution of families, number of males, females, children, age, servants and occupations, and then distribute these pieces to the designated teams. On the other hand each census slip could be circulated, and the relevant information appropriated by individual teams. As it was, the former method was chosen, each team being given a folder for its material until it could be sorted out, brought together and presented.

Each team was given mounting paper, 20" x 25", for presentation and told that presentation could take any form it thought suitable, though it was stressed that clarity in presentation was essential. Full use

was made of additional material, such as silhouttes of Victorian dress circa 1851 (the group found that a Victorian of 1840 was a very different looking person from one of 1860), information from printed sources about servants and the tasks they performed and the agricultural implements of farm labourers. This enabled the study to be something more than the production of bare population statistics, graphs and percentages. A tithe map provided the most useful background information for presenting population figures, and underlined the differences between North and South Preston.

Using census returns as a basis, a considerable amount of other and (for the child) more exciting materials can be introduced which will add depth and significance to local history studies in school. One cannot expect profound analysis and understanding from a school child, but the use of archive materials (which has until recently been considered outside the scope of schoolwork) provides at the very least a starting point for widening the child's horizons and a lead-in to other and more general fields of learning.

OCCUPATIONS, MIGRATION AND LITERACY IN EAST LONDON, 1580-1640

David Cressey

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The depositions of witnesses in ecclesiastical court cases are among the most valuable but least exploited sources for social history. They illustrate the activities of the church courts and illuminate such matters as probate disputes, tything customs, vestry affairs, and questions of moral behaviour and attitudes. Local historians could profit from the study of the depositions in specific cases. Statements of witnesses are often recorded verbatim and the details they include are often unobtainable elsewhere.

The immediate value lies in the biographical particulars of deponents accompanying their statements. At best the court recorded the name, sex, marital status, occupation or social status, age, place and duration of residence, place of birth, and parishes and lengths of intervening residences, of each witness. Having given his testimony the witness was required to sign his name or make a mark. This is a formidable range of information. It can be used for a study of literacy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and literacy can be correlated with status and occupation, age, area and mobility. The information from the depositions can be used to supplement other information about the occupational structure of a region or community. Studies can be made of migration, showing the areas of origin and distance travelled and the ages of the migrants. (1)

The survival and quality of these records is erratic. The depositions in bishop's consistory courts are often better preserved than those of archdeaconries. This article uses the depositions of the consistory and commissary courts of the Diocese of London between 1580 and 1640 to illustrate the kind of information this source can yield.

Particular attention is paid to deponents dwelling in the East London parishes of Stepney and Whitechapel for comparison with the analysis of the Stepney parish registers reported on in L.P.S. 3.(2).

The information in the London depositions is less full in the later

seventeenth century than it had been before the civil war. Details of previous residence and place of birth are much less common in the later records. For most of the Elizabethan and early Jacobean periods the depositions of the consistory court of London, while surviving in bulk, are classified by their keepers, the Greater London Record Office, as unfit for production. They will eventually be repaired but for present purposes they must be regarded as unavailable. The deposition books and similar examination books of the commissary court of London are in the Guildhall Library and can be easily consulted. The consistory depositions used in this study run from 1578-80, 1613-17, and 1620-39. (3) The commissary books at Guildhall library run from 1581-1603 and 1609-39. (4) It will be seen that the most serious lacunae are in the very period of the Stepney aggregative analysis, 1606-10. Nevertheless it is possible to describe some of the characteristics of the witnesses from the east London suburbs between 1580 and 1640.

The diocese of London included Essex and parts of Hertfordshire as well as Middlesex and the City of London. But by far the bulk of cases coming before the consistory and commissary courts concerned offenders and witnesses from the city and its suburbs. In the period 1580 to 1639 the available books contain the statements of some 7,000 witnesses, 37% of whom were women. A systematic sample was drawn of 1,563 men. (5) 231 or 14%, were of the gentle, clerical and professional classes. These men were invariably literate and since my initial interest was in literacy I noted the minimum amount of information about them. However, the depositions themselves are as generous in their information about the upper classes as they are about the working people with whom I am mainly concerned. Of the remaining 1,332 men 108, or 8%, were inhabitants of the adjacent parishes of Whitechapel and Stepney, 68 were from Stepney and 40 from Whitechapel.

This study is therefore based on a sample of 108 working men living in Stepney and Whitechapel between 1580 and 1639 who were called as witnesses before the church courts. Up to 1609 I have examined all of the available depositions. Between 1609 and 1639 I sampled between 1:2 and 1:6 of the depositions, depending on the quantity available in each period. This was to ensure an approximately equal distribution over the sixty years.

Men called as witnesses were not necessarily a random sample of the community. In a riverside community such as Stepney a sizeable proportion of the working population might not be available or

qualified to testify in cases concerning tything customs or other inland affairs. In his study of Sussex depositions Cornwall suggested that the evidence of 'persons of substance was preferred' but the depositions of the Diocese of London are not so heavily biased towards the upper classes. (6)

The depositions gave the occupations of all the men in the sample. They are classified in table 1 using the categories devised by the East London Population Study Group for their discussion of occupations in the baptism register. The upper class of gentlemen, clergy and professionals, called 'middle class' by the East London Group is not covered in this study. The percentage analysis of occupations from the register has accordingly been adjusted to allow a direct comparison to be made.

Agricultural occupations include 4 yeoman and 3 husbandmen, all from Stepney where there was perhaps more space for farming. River and sea trades, the dominant group in the parish register analysis, make only 18% of the total. A similar figure is obtained if the inland parish of Whitechapel is excluded. Land crafts dominate the occupational structure as indicated by the depositions. Tailors alone make 15% of the total, and appear as often as sailors and mariners. The evidence of the parish registers as regards occupation is probably more reliable than that of the depositions. A mariner does not have to be present for his occupation to be recorded in the register of baptisms. The element of randomness is more likely when selection is by involvement in a vital event than by suitability as a witness. When occupations are recorded in the parish registers they provide a check on the information from the depositions. Depositions are not sensitive or comprehensive enough to make an occupational census, but they do give a rough indication of the distribution of trades and status in an area. Apart from the reversed positions of the land and water trades, affected by the time the latter group would have to spend away from the parish, the analyses of depositions and the baptism register agree on the proportions in different occupations.

The depositions are more valuable for a study of migration. The evidence of those sampled contradicts the frail evidence regarding migration that can be extracted from the parish register. The analysis by the East London Group appears to confuse immigrants with strangers. Only 84 of the 2,620 burial entries, 3.2%, give the geographical origins of the deceased. 51% of these are from London and its suburbs, 20% from the Home counties, 11% from distant counties and 17% aliens. These are clearly strangers or very recent

TABLE 1

Occupations of deponents in Whitechapel and Stepney, 1580-1639

	Whitechapel and Stepney Deponents		Stepney only Deponents	Stepney Baptism[1] Register
Occupational Category	No.	%	%	%
Agricultural	7	6	10	4
River and Sea	19	18	19	47
Shipbuilding	4	4	4	10
Land crafts	55	51	44	21
Provisioners	10	9	7	9
Miscellaneous	13	12	15	9
TOTAL	108	100	99	100

Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent

1. These percentages have been adjusted to exclude the "middle-class" occupations which were omitted from the study of the depositions.

arrivals who happened to die in Stepney. A true immigrant would be described as an inhabitant of the parish, not an inhabitant of his place of origin.(7) 71% are described as originating in London or the home counties. The contention that 'the majority of immigrants did not move far from their original home to settle in Stepney' is seemingly confirmed by the nearness of the Stepney marriage horizons. 93% of the strangers marrying came from the capital and home counties. (8)

A distinction has first to be drawn between place of origin i.e. place of birth, and place of previous residence. A London man retiring to Stepney to die, or coming to marry a Stepney girl, may himself be an immigrant to London from a distant county. The depositions give the place of birth of 104 of the 108 men sampled and intervening residences for 19. Thirteen of these had lived for a while in London, for an average duration of 7.6 years, before moving on to Stepney or Whitechapel. Only nine of the men sampled were still living in their parish of birth. If long residence and local standing were qualities sought for in deponents, as Cornwall suggests, a higher proportion of men born and bred locally might be expected. The phenomena of high mortality and massive immigration might in fact leave little parish memory to draw on in London and the suburbs. 89% of the deponents in the sample had been born in other parishes and parts of the country.

Table 2 shows the places of origin of the 104 inhabitants of Stepney and Whitechapel sampled 1580-1639. Only 14, including the 9 still in their birthplace, were born in London, the suburbs and other parts of Middlesex. The others came from all parts of the country, surprisingly few from the home counties. London and its eastern suburbs evidently attracted immigrants from a wide area and long distances. Only Devonshire stands out as a county of frequent emigration, possibly a result of its maritime connections with the Thames. The analysis of the burial registers suggested that only 11% came from the counties more than 50 miles from London. The pattern of migration revealed in the depositions shows 69% to come from those counties.

The information with the depositions includes the age and length of residence of the deponents. Their ages ranged from 19 to 87 but the median age was 41.4 and the inter quartile range from 30.8 to 52.7. Most were therefore mature men. Nearly all were immigrants and many only recently established in Stepney or Whitechapel. Of those who were immigrants, 30% had lived in the parish for less than 5 years and 48% for less than 10 years. The median length of residence of the immigrants in the sample was 11.4 years, and their median age of arrival in Stepney or Whitechapel was 26.9.

My original interest in the depositions was as a source for the study of literacy. This sample of 108 men is not large enough to show the movement of literacy over the period. It does make possible an estimate of the proportion of working men in the east London suburbs in the period 1580 to 1639 who were incapable of signing their own name.[9] 53% of the men in the sample made marks instead of

TABLE 2

Place of birth of deponents in Stepney and Whitechapel 1580-1639

	No.	%		No.	%
London & home counties		26%	West central counties		18%
Stepney and Whitechapel	9		Gloucestershire	2	
other Middlesex	2		Oxfordshire	2	
City of London	3		Buckinghamshire	-	
Surrey	1		Herefordshire	1	
Kent	3		Worcestershire	1	
Essex	5		Warwickshire	6	
Hertfordshire	4		Shropshire	3	
			Staffordshire	1	
South & Southwest counties		22%	Cheshire	2	
Cornwall	1		Derbyshire	1	
Devon	10				
Dorset	4		Northern counties		10%
Somerset	3		Yorkshire	2	
Wiltshire	-		Lancashire	3	
Berkshire	1		Westmorland	-	
Hampshire	2		Cumberland	2	
Sussex	2		Durham	1	
			Northumberland	2	
East central counties		19%			
Norfolk	3		Other places		5%
Suffolk	3		Wales	1	
Cabridgeshire	4		Ireland	2	
Huntingdonshire	-		Germany	1	
Bedfordshire	3		'abroad'	1	
Northamptonshire	1				
Rutland	-		TOTAL 104		
Leicestershire	1				
Lincolnshire	4				
Nottinghamshire	1				

signatures at the end of their depositions. If the few yeoman and husbandmen and servants and labourers are removed there remain 94 traders and artisans whose literacy can be compared to that of similar groups in the same period in other parts of the country. I have found 50% of the traders and artisans of Middlesex and the suburbs, including Stepney and Whitechapel, to be illiterate. This compares closely with 52% in the two parishes under consideration and 51% in Norfolk and Suffolk. This last figure is obtained by analysis of the deposition books of the Diocese of Norwich.

The great contrast is with the literacy of tradesmen and artisans in the city of London. Only 24% from a sample of 590 men made marks instead of signatures. The superior literacy of theCity, which should be the subject for much discussion, probably reflects the preponderance there of trading and craft activities which required literacy.

I have tried to illustrate some of the problems and possibilities in using the depositions in social history. They are a relatively untapped source yet not difficult to use. The light they throw on the character of east London in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is only hinted at in the above account. It is fortunate that the parish register of Stepney gives the occupations of fathers in baptisms. For most parishes this information is not readily obtainable and the depositions may provide a stage towards its reconstruction. The information about geographical mobility corrects the misleading impressions given by the registers. Immigration is seen to be on a large scale and over long distances. No Protestation Return for 1641, or similar signed declaration, is known to survive for Stepney or Whitechapel so the impression from the depositions that half the men possessed some basic literacy cannot be checked. The possession of this level of literacy, the remarkable experience of geographical mobility, and the stimulating proximity of London and the river suggest that Stepney and Whitechapel may have been exceptionally open-minded communities by the beginning of the civil war.

NOTES

1. see Julian Cornwall, 'Evidence of Population Mobility in the Seventeenth Century', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, 1967, vol. 40, p. 143-152. He uses a printed edition of Sussex archdeaconry depositions, 1580-1640.

2. The East London Population Study Group, 'The Population of Stepney in the Early Seventeenth Century', Local Population Studies No. 3, Autumn 1969, pp. 39-52.

3. GLRO DL/C/222, 223, 224, 227-235, Acc. 69.88.

4. Guildhall Library Ms.9585, 9065A, 9189.

5. Sampling technique was employed to reduce the mass of documents to manageable proportions. Safeguards were taken to ensure that as near as possible every deposition had an equal chance of being selected.

6. Cornwall, Bull. Inst. Hist. Res., p.143.

7. Unless the parish clerk were unusually mindful of poor law considerations and recorded the deceased's place of settlement, which might be elsewhere, rather than place of residence.

8. East London Group, Local Population Studies, No. 3, pp. 47, 49.

9. For the interpretation of signatures and marks and the sources which can be used see R.S. Schofield, 'The Measurement of Literacy in Pre-Industrial England' in Literacy in Traditional Societies, Jack Goody (ed.). (Cambridge, 1968).

10. For a discussion of mobility and the proximity of London in shaping attitudes, see E.A. Wrigley 'A simple model of London's importance in changing English society and economy 1650-1750', Past and Present No. 37 (July, 1967), pp. 44-70.

MISCELLANY

compiled by Adrian and Valerie Henstock

DISEASE IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

(1590) Since the beginning of Julie untill this day August 26 their hath beene sick in Rolston aboove fortie (59 ' later added) persons youngue & ould, no house free but one or moe sick.

Deus misereatur nostri.

(7 Sept) The sickness still doth last, godes rod is not yet past.
(Oct) The ague still continuinge from Midsommer till now, hath scarce lefte one in aine house , not forst to him to bow.

From the parish register of Rolleston with Fiskerton, Nottinghamshire.

CHURCH VERSUS STATE

1653. By the Act ... in the year 1653 marriages were not to be performed by the Minister , but by the Justices of the Peace, yet none in this parish were bedded before they were solemnly wedded, in the Church, and that according to the orders of the Church of England'.

From the parish register of Maids Moreton, Buckinghamshire.

A THANKSGIVING PRAYER

In a thousand five hundred ninety and three
The Lord preserved my house and me
When of the pestilence theare died
Full maine a thousand els beeside.

From the parish register of St. Peter's, Cornhill, London.

A YOUTHFUL PARISH CLERK?

Amongst the burial entries in the parish register of Betley Staffordshire, for the year 1657 is written in a large and childish hand: 'Robert Stud and Tobey Dean born in nuting time - Sara dean is born in coucumber time. Joseph Dean his a very sober young man and mind the larming Bisnis. So that his father dotes him more thin all his Ribbis and sayes he will buy him a litel horse and he shall ride , and up on doben tooe'.

THE CHURCH MILITANT

One Thomas Kerby, carpenter and Parish Clark (a proud, self conceited and fool hardy wretch, ... a treacherous Pimp and Sacrilegious Conspirator - - with other damned God robbers, oppressors and persecutors- to get my Church Key , Bellropes, Bell clapper and Bell, that I shou'd neither Pray nor Preach ...) was Buryed, they say, at Hallaton, March 17, 1717! Worth more dead than alive!

From the parish register of Blaston , Leicestershire.

CURES FOR THE KING'S EVIL

The journal of Leonard Wheatcroft, parish clerk of Ashover, Derbyshire records the efforts made by his son, David , to be cured of the King's Evil (scrofula). On 24 th February 1686/7 he travelled to London " where he stayed waiting on King James the 2 , to be touched by him for his infirmity called the Kings Evill. There was he touched twice by him, but was never the better at his retourne. And when David was com hom, he and I went to see my sister Sarah at Shottle where she dwelt; and by the way a woman tould us how shee was cured of that disease: and after she was cured she was wed, and had 4 children , and never a one of them ever had that distemper. I saw the great scars that was upon her neck and throte. Her receit was as foloweth:
That aman might go to a dead woman or a dead man (as shee did) and with their dead hand touch all their affected or sore places , saying these words " He that send thee , I pray God mend thee". That mustbe done and said 9 times over -which he (David) did Dec. 26 1687. But he being so far gone that distemper continued till Oct 15th, 1688, then dyed. But severall since have been cured by doing and saying as aforesaid."

A CAUTIONARY TALE

The curate of Keyham, Leicestershire, noted in the parish register for 1776 that 'the venerable patriarch and divine, Mr. Thomas Sampson , being minister in the year 1563 ... and buried 4th Aug. 1655 was then at least 114 if not more, and had been minister of Keam 92 years".

This somewhat unlikely statement was erroneously deduced from the fact that in 1598 Mr. Sampson, following archiepiscopal direction, copied up all the entries from the previous register from 1563 onwards in his own hand.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Access to General Register Office Records and Census Enumerators Schedules L.P.S. 3

Dear Sir,

I note with interest the remarks on pages 4-5 of Local Population Studies No. 3 about the restrictions on access to the more recent civil registration and census records.

I have at different times had a good deal of correspondence with the Registrar General's department about this, both because of the wider historical interest and because the present arrangements are often, though not always, quite unsatisfactory for genealogical purposes.

In my earlier days, it was quite often possible by private arrangements with the custodians to get access unofficially to these records, and it was surprising how often small points came to light which would not otherwise have been discoverable.

It seems to me that the real object of the Registrar General's department in making difficulties about this is the very natural one of avoiding a commitment for which they have neither the staff, the money nor the space, but instead of honestly saying this, they take refuge behind arguments of confidentiality, which have never seemed to me to hold water. In a correspondence two or three years ago they made great play with the fact that it was proposed in future census returns to ask for particulars of income and the like, which the public would never agree to unless they had perfect confidence in the confidentiality of the procedure, and the continuance of that confidentiality. I pointed out that nobody believed in it now, and that they were right not to believe in it, and I told them the story about which I subsequently wrote to a newspaper, of my experience at the 1951 census when I was living in the Ladies' Annexe of the Athenaeum Club, and coming in at the end of the day had brought to me not only the form for my own completion, but the completed forms of everyone in the building! I added that it would have been much more interesting if they had all had to give their incomes.

Now I see that the proposal to ask particulars of income has been dropped.

A.R. Wagner, Garter King of Arms, College of Arms,
Queen Victoria St., London, E.C.4.

Correspondence between Sir Anthony Wagner and the Registrar General

20th February, 1970

Dear Registrar General,

I am sure your attention has been drawn to the editorial remarks on 'Access to General Register Office Records' and 'Census Enumerators' Schedules' in the Autumn 1969 No. 3 of Local Population Studies Magazine and Newsletter.

The Editor here laments the difficulties made for historians and students by the limitation on access to the originals of civil registration records, and to the more recent census records.

Knowing that I have had correspondence with your office over many years past and made representations in the same sense from our own special angle here, the Editor has asked me to add my voice to the representations he tells me others are making to you on this question.

I write in the first place as spokesman for the genealogists, members of a growth industry which at the present time brings much foreign exchange into the country. It will perhaps shock you to learn that when I first came to the College not quite forty years ago, certain people who worked for us had private arrangements with members of the Registrar General's staff through which when desired original civil registration records and later census records could be and were consulted and reported on to us, and this used not infrequently to make it possible to solve genealogical problems which could not be solved in any other way. Now we cannot do this, with the result that certain problems which might otherwise be solved cannot be solved.

Quite apart from this, I am, as an exponent of the value of genealogy to social historians, conscious of the work which could be done if only these records could be got at, but which is impossible without them, especially without the later census records.

I know that your public objection to concessions in this matter has been based on considerations of confidentiality, but I imagine that a deeper objection is that you have neither the staff nor the space to cope with the demands likely to result, if you were to concede what is asked for here.

I do not take the confidentiality point seriously because (a) it appears impossible that data gathered on the scale of a census should remain completely confidential, at the time, and (b) I had a personal experience of the 1951 census which proved this. Furthermore, I should have thought that the information hitherto asked for at the census was of a well known and factual kind, which few people would expect to be treated as confidential. If particulars of income were to be asked for, it would be another matter, but that has been dropped.

Accordingly, I would beg to urge you to reconsider if not the immediate practice, then at least the principle, since if you will concede that considerations of staff and space are the root of the trouble, representations that these should be forthcoming can and will be made.

Yours sincerely,

Garter King of Arms

Sir Anthony received a reply to this letter in the middle of April from the Head of the Census Division of the General Register Office. This suggested that a final decision on the possibility of increased access to Census documents should await further deliberations taking place in connection with the 1971 Census but offered little hope of any concessions being made. Sir Anthony's reply is printed below. (Editor's Note).

17th April 1970

Dear Mr. Russell,

Thank you for your letter, reference CEN/4, of the 16th April, on confidentiality and the question of access to Census records.

I wonder what the contemplated questions on fertility can be to which on the one hand people would expect their answers to be confidential, and on the other would be likely to give truthful ones.

I am afraid moreover that after my experience in 1951 I shall never, whatever assurances are given, believe that there can be any real guarantee of the confidentiality of information given in Census returns, and I find that others have the same impression. I fear, therefore, that policies built on the belief that there will be true and complete confidentiality may be doomed to disappointment.

Yours sincerely,

Garter King of Arms

The Scottish Example

Dear Sir,

It was with interest that I read the editorial examining the accessibility of General Register Office records, a subject which concerns both genealogists and demographers. The situation in England is often compared to that in Scotland, with interesting results. Since the size of the English records is so vaster and space therefore so limited that the Scottish authorities are not faced with the same practical problems, the comparison is not entirely just, but it is nevertheless illuminating.

At Register House, Edinburgh, a general search fee covers searches of both the indices (which were compiled by whole years) and the original registers. The advantages of this system are obvious: the necessity of purchasing certified copies is precluded, and the checking of many entries is considerably facilitated.

As mentioned in the editorial, census records also are more accessible in Scotland: although a small search fee is payable they are open up to and including 1891. Furthermore, parochial registers are centralised and also easily accessible. The practical problems in England should not be forgotten, but one cannot help wishing that the English authorities could profit from Scottish example; this would be to the benefit of both genealogical and demographic research.

It is true that, since October 1968, fees have not been payable for searches in the Somerset House indices, but at the same time as this change, the fees for certified copies were raised considerably and the situation still leaves much to be desired. Under the heading 'Unhappy Splendour', Londoner's Diary, in the Evening Standard dated 24 Jan. 1970, carried an item referring to the bad conditions existing in Somerset House as a whole, and mentioning that "the Government has begun spending about £1,500,000 on the building in an attempt to modernise it." If only some of this could be used to improve the facilities and procedure in the General Register Office!

The other conclusion to be drawn from the Scottish comparison is that demographers could make great use of the better facilities for research in Scotland and that the possibility of utilising the better situation there should be investigated.

Yours faithfully,

Patric Dickinson
Exeter College, Oxford

Scottish Book buyers

Dear Sir,

I think that I may possibly be able to clarify some of the terms in Mr. Laslett's list of Scottish weavers, etc. buying books in the 1750's (L.P.S. 3).

Those items which I feel may be obscure and for which I can supply details are as follows:-

1. Portioner: occupier of part of a property divided at some time among co-heirs: usually this would mean that it would be quite a small piece of land.
2. Coalgrieve: coal-overseer. A 'grieve' was, in general, an overseer, whether on a farm or elsewhere; and the term is still used on farms.

3. Hillman: this is rather interesting. It may simply mean a man living in the hills, or it may be applied as meaning a Covenanter or Cameronian. It would be illuminating to know where this "hillman" lived: if he were listed as belonging to Ayrshire or the more rural areas of Lanarkshire or to Wigtownshire, this might tend to support the probability of his being a Cameronian.

4. Deacon: the chairman of a trade-guild.

5. Inkle (inkleweaver): inkle was a kind of coarse tape. Paisley was a place where inkle was woven (among other textiles). There are still two streets, at least, in Paisley whose names refer to an early localizing of textile trades there, viz. Inkle Street and Gauze Street.

6. Treed twiner: this, I think, will be a 'mis-spelling' for 'threid', which is how thread would be spelt in broad Scots: hence a thread-spinner.

7. Hammerman: a worker in iron, tin, etc. (i.e. a blacksmith). Hammerman's Incorporations were found among trade-guilds in the Borders, and no doubt elsewhere.

8. A wright is a carpenter.

9. A square-wright: is a joiner working on more skilled furniture-making: roughly a cabinet maker.

10. Turner: this may mean a man who uses a hand-machine to twist straw rope. On the other hand, it may be used in the more customary sense of a craftsman who turns wooden staves for furniture.

11. Dytter: I suggest that this is, indeed, a misprint for Dyster, i.e. dyer. This was a normal term in Scotland.

I think it may be the case that, in Glasgow, the textile industry was, even at this stage, becoming rather more fragmented as between masters and men, than was the case, for example, in the Border woollen towns, if Galashiels in Selkirkshire is anything to go by. Whereas Dr. Laslett's lists refer to 'Merchant Weavers'' and to the 'Deacon of the North Quarter Journeyman Weavers', the woollen trade in Galashiels only a couple of decades or so after this was served by a Manufacturers' Corporation which included apprentices, journeymen and masters; the point being that, at this time, and for a fair time after it, the masters were simply weavers with a little more than the average initiative. While they took the risk of building mills, buying machines and employing labour, they remained

very much 'primi inter pares'. They could also, if their small businesses failed financially, revert without much sense of discomfort into being 'men' again. The first masters vs. men strike did not happen until the 1830's in the Borders, and on that occasion the masters actually helped the men to find out from other employees elsewhere what the current rates for various jobs were.

If any of this makes a useful contribution to Dr. Laslett's investigations, I shall be very happy. If there is anything else in these lists where any knowledge of Scottish conditions might be of use, please let me know.

Yours faithfully,

Karen McKechnie (Mrs.)
Hughenden,
Marguerite Avenue,
LENZIE,
by Glasgow

An Unusual Nineteenth-Century Census

Dear Sir,

Amongst the parish records of Caunton, near Newark, now deposited in the Notts. Record Office, is a volume entitled "An Alphabetical List of the Parishioners of Caunton in the County of Nottingham, with particulars chiefly bearing on their Religious Condition" compiled in 1846 by Richard Brett, the village schoolmaster and parish clerk. The volume consists of a complete list of all the members of each family in the village, including both the current inhabitants and also those who had left, providing details of each person's name, marital condition, occupation, address, and also whether he or she attended public worship or communion, owned a bible or prayer book, performed family prayers, attended school, or was a member of either of the village's two branches of the Odd Fellows Club. In addition are occasional comments under the heading of 'Remarks'.

The volume lists 1403 names as well as 56 more in the appendix reserved for "future alterations", which does not seem to

have been kept up after 1848. As the official census figure for Caunton was 539 persons in 1841 and 611 in 1851, the 1846 list must contain a considerable number of persons who had left the parish, which could be useful evidence of local mobility. If linked with the details of ages, relationships, and places of birth from the 1841 and 1851 Census returns the volume would provide a useful source of social and demographic information.

Many of the 'Remarks' shed an illuminating light on the religious and social habits of the villagers. Persons of illegitimate birth and also lunatics are all apparently categorized, and it seems to be with some satisfaction that the volume's compiler records that a close relationship of the dissenting minister has two illegitimate children, neither of them baptized. All the other nonconformists are named, designated either as Wesleyan, Primitive, or 'Ranting', and the village blacksmith is damned for all time as a 'Disciple of Atheism'. The list of occupations covers the usual gambit of village crafts, although three members of one family - a widower and his son and daughter - are each described as "generally a beggar"; another son was an inmate of the Southwell Union Workhouse. A somewhat unusual vocation to be followed in a rural community was that of a young batchelor artist, living with another family, who the compiler dismisses as possessing "a vain notion to think by further study he shall be clever in the Mesmeric science and Astronomy".

How far Caunton society was typical of similar villages of its size is difficult to establish without comparison, but amongst the persons listed are the wives or mothers of a man hanged for murder, another transported for forgery, a third imprisoned for ill treating his wife, and a fourth who deserted from the army.

Yours sincerely,

Adrian Henstock,
Nottinghamshire County
Record Office,
Shire Hall,
Nottingham

Parish Registers; Access and Preservation L.P.S. 4.

Dear Sir,

May I make these observations on the sensible editorial on the above in the Spring 1970 issue, as an incumbent.

First, the parson is busy and cannot supervise for long. He cannot trust such precious and unique records (for transcripts - Bishop's- are seldom more than for some years only) out of his sight and care.

Secondly, it would be a great help all round if these registers could be deposited with the local record office, and a copy given by the record office to the incumbent. This would ensure that in case of fire at the record office a copy would survive; and also give the parish and incumbent their own records easily available.

If such a policy were followed the interests of all would be satisfied and the registers given an insurance for survival.

Yours sincerely,

John H. Bishop, (Rector of Singleton)
Singleton Rectory,
Chichester

Dear Sir,

My experiences with the Devon Record Office lead me to different conclusions to yours as the best place for the Parish Records.

The Devon Record Office shuts at 5.15 p.m. and is open two Saturday mornings a month. It is never open in the evening. I do Adult Extra Mural Classes for Exeter University in many parts of Devon necessarily in the evening. Where Parish Records are available in the Parish we can do demographic and other work with them with the parson's consent. Once in the Record Office they are almost totally unavailable unless one can persuade the parson to ask for them back. Even then the Record Office make things difficult. Having them copied on any kind of scale is too expensive. In short quite useful work is made impossible. Now, if asked, with some regret I advise against depositing them.

Yours sincerely,
Robin Stanes
Culver House, Payhembury, Honiton, Devon

Coroners Inquests (L.P.S. 4).

Dear Sir,

I was interested to read the recent article in Local Population Studies on accidental deaths in Hawkshead, 1620-1700.

You may be interested to know that at Cockermouth Castle there is a series of coroners inquests for the liberties of Cockermouth and Egremont 1693-1875 (with some copies from 1610). A full calendar of these records is available here together with an index of names. There is a parallel series of inquest returns on Cumberland Quarter Sessions Rolls from about the mid 18th century to 1875 or thereabouts. These are not calendared but are reasonably easy to make available to any student who may wish to use them. Thus from the mid 18th century the whole of the administrative county of Cumberland is covered by coroners' inquests, but for the early period there are unlikely to be many except for those which survive in the series at Cockermouth.

The value of the records to genealogists is obvious, but they are of equal interest to the social historian and archaeologist. Home conditions are illustrated by the number of house fires and by many infants scalded or overlaid in bed, and light is thrown on mental sickness by the details of suicides. Descriptions of industrial accidents and machinery are particularly revealing.

Yours sincerely,

B.C. Jones
Record Office,
The Castle,
Carlisle CA3 8UR

LOCAL RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

The following lists (continued from our last issue) contain information about work on local population history that is known to the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure. We publish it here in the hope that it will be of interest to subscribers. We should be grateful to receive information of any other research in progress.

* Denotes analysis completed.

COUNTY	PARISH	NAME	ADDRESSES
LINCOLNSHIRE			
Aggregative			
	Belton*	W. Couth	Kesteven College of Education, Stoke Rochford, Grantham, Lincs.
	Brocklesby*	T.H.Storey	67 First Avenue, Grimsby, Lincs.
	Clee & Irby upon Humber*	M.A.Watkinson	10 Charles Avenue, Scartho, Grimsby, Lincs.
	Gainsborough*	W. Couth	
	Grantham*	J.M.Rhodes	Kesteven College of Education, Stoke Rochford, Grantham, Lincs.
	Great Grimsby St. Mary with St. James	T.H. Storey	
	Haxey*	Miss S.Ogley	21 Colwick Rd., W. Bridgford, Nottm.
	Horncastle*	P.J.Motley	3 Station Cottages, Tunby Woodwide, Marsham-le-Fen, Boston, Lincs.
	Leasingham*	Mrs.E. McLaughlin	15 Clifden Road, Twickenham, Middx.
	Quarrington & Old Sleaford*	Mrs. E. McLaughlin	

Scartho*	M.A.Watkinson	
Wrangle*	F. West	9 Green Lane, Coventry
Wyberton*	Mrs.M.Woods	32 Tytton Lane East, Wyberton, Boston, Lincs.

Literacy

Boston, St. Botolph*	Mrs. M. Woods	
Cherry Willingham*	Mrs. M. Woods	
Covenham, St. Bartholomew*	K.Oosterveen & R. Wall	Cambridge Group, 20 Silver St.Cambridge
Clee*	M.A.Watkinson	
Deeping St.James*	W. Couth	
Gainsborough*	W. Couth	
Grantham*	W. Couth	
Great Gonerby*	W. Couth	
Halton Holgate*	K.Oosterveen & R. Wall	
Haydor*	W. Couth	
Humberstone*	K. Oosterveen & R. Wall	
Ludford*	K. Oosterveen & R. Wall	
Markby*	K. Oosterveen & R. Wall	
Messingham*	K. Oosterveen & R. Wall	
Normanby*	K. Oosterveen & R. Wall	
North Witham*	W. Couth	
Reepham*	Mrs. M. Woods	
Rowston*	K. Oosterveen & R. Wall	
Scartho*	M.A. Watkinson	

Stamford, St. Michael	B.C.Morgan	Uppingham School, Rutland
Thurlby (near Bourne)*	Mrs. M.Woods	
Thurlby (near Newark)*	K. Oosterveen & R. Wall	
Wyberton*	Mrs.M.Woods	

Listings

Leverton 1762*

Reconstitution

(To be continued)