

Review of Recent Periodical Literature

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Unless otherwise stated, all articles reviewed in this issue were published in 2021. The review is in five sections: ‘general’, dealing with essentially methodological pieces; ‘ancient and medieval’, covering the period before about 1540; ‘early modern’ relating approximately to the years 1540–1800; ‘nineteenth century’; and ‘twentieth century’. Some articles straddle more than one period: these are generally reviewed in the section covering the earliest period with which they deal. Within each period, articles are listed in alphabetical order of the first author’s name, except where two or more articles on closely related themes are reviewed together.

General

D. Gray, ‘History and community: who do we think we are, and why does it matter?’, *Northamptonshire Past and Present* 74, pp. 60-5.

This short article is written by the head of the History Department at the University of Northampton. It discusses the role of local history in the twenty-first century and argues that professional history in many universities is only likely to survive by building links with the many non-professional historians in local communities. Gray discusses some of the ways this can be achieved, for example by ‘history workshops ... or conferences on aspects of local and national histories, ... [o]r, indeed, the provision of short-courses, career development training and support for research’ (p. 64).

S. Horrell, J. Humphries and J. Weisdorf, ‘Family standards of living over the long run: England 1280-1850’, *Past and Present* 250, pp. 87-134.

The prevailing narrative of the emergence of prosperity in Britain and some other north-western European countries argues that the improved economic position of workers after the Black Death became ‘locked in’ because ‘women’s relative social and cultural autonomy and their comparative advantage and high wages in pastoral

production ... led to deferred marriage, and restrained fertility' (pp. 87-8). In this careful and detailed analysis, the authors examine how the real incomes of families changed over the long run, by assessing the purchasing power of a hypothetical family of two adults and three children, assuming the family was working the normal hours and earning the average wages that obtained at each point in time. They try to assess the position of such a family relative to the cost of a basket of goods that would furnish a 'respectable standard' of living (p. 91) as defined by Robert Allen (see, for example, R.C. Allen, 'The high wage economy and the industrial revolution: a restatement', *Economic History Review* 68 (2015), pp. 1-22). The results show that living standards did improve rapidly after the Black Death but declined in the second half of the sixteenth century. For families with working women and children, however, this decline was mitigated and, as time wore on, the importance of the earnings of women and children grew. Indeed, without their earnings—and this seems to this reviewer [AH] the most important result of the paper—the family would have struggled in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to regain the living standards it enjoyed during the late-medieval period.

A. Reid, 'Why a long-term perspective is beneficial for demographers', *Population Studies* 75, pp. S157-77.

This article forms part of a special supplement to the journal *Population Studies* to mark 75 years since its first issue was published. The bulk of the article consists of a description of historical demography as revealed by papers published in *Population Studies*. In the introduction, however, she discusses the difference between historical and contemporary demography (wondering where the boundary lies) and attempts a working definition of historical demography as research which mainly deals with a period 50 years or more before publication. The article also discusses whether historical demography has qualitatively different features from the rest of demography (for example in the kinds of sources and methods used), and concludes that, if there are such differences, they are much less important than the common features that historical demography shares with other sub-disciplines of demography. The paper concludes by elucidating three challenges for historical demography: the implications of new forms of data, especially those in massive 'cleaned and harmonized data sets' (p. S169); the tendency for research to be characterised by fashionable but ephemeral approaches (disciplinary 'turns'); and the fact that the historical demography of the global south is grossly under-represented in the literature and, when research into the historical demography of, say, Africa, is published, it is often written by Europeans. One issue which the article does not address is the difference (if any) between *historical demography* and *population history*. Of course, this is a paper written for demographers not historians but there is a tendency here to represent historical demography as a subject that

deals with the demography of the past, rather than a subject which tells the story of how and why human populations changed over time. This tension between social scientific and historical approaches to explanation was raised many years ago in John Gillis, Louise Tilly and David Levine's edited volume *The European Experience of Declining Fertility 1850-1970: the Quiet Revolution* (Oxford, 1992)). Reid's summary of work published in *Population Studies* suggests that the United Kingdom's flagship demographic journal has not really engaged with it.

Ancient and medieval

C. Briggs, A. Forward and B. Jervis, 'Living standards and material culture in English rural households 1300-1600', *Internet Archaeology* 56.

This paper describes the data collected by a recent Leverhulme funded project looking into the possessions of English medieval households (see Archaeology Data Service *Living Standards and Material Culture in English Rural Households 1300-1600: Digital Archive* [2021] <https://doi.org/10.5284/1085022> [accessed 10 March 2023]). The project is designed to answer two questions: first, did living standards rise following the Black Death; second, did English households in the period have a richer material culture than previously thought? This was an interdisciplinary project combining both archaeological and historical evidence, although these have been published as separate, but related, datasets. Both datasets provide evidence about objects in lower-status households in 15 counties, focusing mainly on rural settlements and small towns. The archeological data were compiled from Historic Environment Record reports on excavations of lower-status sites, focusing on small finds. The historical data sets were created from records of moveable property being forfeited by felons, fugitives and outlaws to the Crown. Objects seized and their valuations were extracted from the records. Both the created data set and the digital images of the documents are available to view and use. Objects in the archaeological data generally formed smaller parts of a bigger whole, for example nails which have survived from buildings. By contrast, most of the historical data refer to complete objects such as furniture. The difficulty of dating both kinds of evidence is discussed. There are suggestions for future work and re-use of the data: integrating the data; studying rural settlements and non-demesne agriculture; and understanding long-trends in valuation and use. The paper ends with a critical commentary by Chris Dyer. This publication, and the ones by Adam Crymble and Emma Azid reviewed below, would be good examples for anyone considering writing a data paper.

J.L. Carson, 'Viking settlement in north east England in the ninth and tenth centuries', *Archaeologia Aeliana* 50, pp. 153-81.

Carson examines the evidence from archaeology, sculpture, and coinage for Viking settlement in the area of England known as Northumbria, north of the Humber and east of the Pennines, during the ninth and tenth centuries. He finds relatively little evidence supporting Viking settlement in this area, which is curious given that it is widely believed that the Vikings settled surrounding areas such as Yorkshire and Cumbria and that Viking raids on sites in north-east England such as Lindisfarne are well documented. He suggests that opposition to the Vikings may have prevented their actual settlement, or that the Vikings may have operated as 'overlords', ruling without a major physical presence.

C. Kennan, 'Pandemics in the parish', *History Today* 21, 6, pp. 78-83.

This short article is about the consequences of the Black Death for the Church in England and its parishioners. Kennan notes that both the Church as an institution, and the parishioners in individual parishes, were proactive in responding to the epidemic. The laity were, in many cases, forced to step in as the mortality of priests was so high. Another consequence of the Black Death was that churches prospered through 'lay gifts either given during life or after death through bequests in wills' (p. 83).

Early modern

C. Brown, 'Sound faith: religion and the aural environment of towns in northern England, ca. 1740-1830', *Cultural and Social History* 18, pp. 463-80.

The growth of towns in northern England is often associated with a decline in religious adherence, particularly to the established Church. In this paper, Brown looks at how the sounds of the city could promote or hinder religious belief and observance. She considers, first, the extent to which the hustle and bustle of urban life made it hard to generate quiet space to focus on the numinous. Second, she notes that, where churches were located in the city, the sounds of (for example) church bells were heard by many more people than they would be in the countryside. Third, urban life presented opportunities for attempts at evangelisation in the form of outdoor preaching and hymn singing.

A. Crymble, 'The decline and fall of an early modern slum: London's St Giles "rookery", c. 1550–1850', *Urban History* 49, pp. 310–34.

Crymble examines how the St Giles area of London became a slum. He examines three factors: landownership, local government and Irish migration. For much of its history St Giles stood on the edge of London at a place where three major roads met: the Great Northern Road and two roads coming from the west via Oxford and Bristol. St Giles, therefore, became an arrival point for many people who came to London by road, rather than travelling on the River Thames. These included Irish people who had walked or travelled by stage coach from Bristol, Holyhead or Liverpool. It became an area with cheap lodging houses for recent arrivals or temporary visitors. Many lodging houses were owned by Roman Catholics and over half of the Catholics in the area rented from other Catholics. The structure of landownership and property development also encouraged the expansion of cheap lodgings. The Bainbridge family that owned much of the land were classic absentee landlords content to collect ground rents from developers. Selling leases and subletting became common business practices. There were few conditions attached to these leases, which were relatively long. Lodging houses expanded, often through subdivision and in-filling of the existing estate. Local government had few powers to interfere with the conduct of leaseholders and, in any case, the Bainbridge family had place-men in the Select Vestry to protect their interests. This article could provide a useful model for others to follow in investigating slum areas in early modern cities and towns.

A. Crymble and E. Azid. 'Black lives, British justice: black people in London criminal justice records, 1720-1841', *Journal of Slavery and Data Preservation* 2, 1-11.

This is the second 'data' paper reviewed in this issue. The paper describes a new dataset of 698 references to black people, or people of black African heritage, in three record series of London's criminal justice system c. 1720-1841 (see Zenodo, *Black Lives, British Justice: Black People in London Criminal Justice Records 1720-1841* [2021] <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5304501> [accessed 10 March 2023]). These are the Old Bailey Proceedings, the Ordinary's Accounts and the Criminal Registers of Prisoners in Middlesex and the City. Mentions of black people were collected by keyword searching, browsing and citation searching. The list of keywords is reproduced; and a quality checking and de-duplication process is described. Trial witnesses, victims, prosecutors, defendants and people mentioned in passing are all represented. A confidence level has been assigned by the authors to every entry, with their reasoning in each case. Marginal cases have been deliberately included to help future researchers. Some further record linkage with the data in Digital Panopticon (*Digital Panopticon, Tracing London Convicts in Britain*

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and Australia, 1780-1925 [n.d.] <https://www.digitalpanopticon.org> [accessed 10 March 2023]) was carried out. There are brief, but good, descriptions of all three records series. There are some rather general suggestions for re-use of the data, possibly reflecting the fact that this was not a project designed to answer specific research questions. The approach detailed here may be useful for anyone wanting to carry out similar work identifying ethnic minority people in Britain before the Census.

C.J. Griffin, 'Rural workers and the role of the rural in eighteenth-century English food rioting', *Historical Journal* 64, pp. 1,230-56.

During the eighteenth century, periodic food riots occurred across England. Although agricultural workers produced the food which was the subject of these riots, historians have agreed that they were largely bystanders, with the urban poor and those working in the industrial or proto-industrial sectors taking the leading role. In this paper Griffin seeks to correct this view and to argue that farm workers often participated actively in the riots. One reason that historians have tended to write out the rural sector from the history of the riots is that they have underestimated the complexity of the links and entanglements between rural and urban economy and society. Once this is appreciated, it becomes easier to document and to understand how rural workers became involved.

J. Harley, 'Domestic production and consumption in English pauper households, 1670-1840', *Agricultural History Review* 69, pp. 25-49.

This paper is a study of several hundred inventories of the possessions of pauper households in Norfolk and Essex between 1670 and the 1830s. The range of consumer goods possessed by these households increased rather rapidly in the 1770s, and there is evidence of a similar increase in the proportion of households possessing livestock or agricultural tools. The pauper households in Essex generally had a greater range of possessions than households in Norfolk. Harley wants to use these changes as evidence to bring to bear on the 'industrious revolution' hypothesis, suggesting that there is little support in his data for the idea that working-class families started working harder during the industrial revolution. If we assume everything else constant, then this seems reasonable. However, Harley does not really consider the possibility that changes over time in poor law practice may have produced changes in the composition of the group of pauper households, and hence in the range of consumer and work-related goods they possessed; and differences in the application of the poor laws between Norfolk and Essex may also explain the greater range of goods that the latter reported.

J.G. Harrison, ‘“The drifty days”: a climate crisis of 1673-1674’, *Local Historian* 51, pp. 274-83.

Using archival sources, especially records of the Church of Scotland, Harrison charts the history of the severe weather in the summer of 1673 and the winter of 1673-1674. Although all of Scotland seems to have suffered, the border regions were especially badly affected. The article also describes some of the strategies and measures that were taken to mitigate the effects of the climate crisis.

H. Jaadla, L. Shaw-Taylor and R. Davenport, ‘Height and health in late eighteenth century England’, *Population Studies* 75, pp. 381-401.

In the absence of direct data on health for historical populations, adult height has been used as a proxy. Adult height reflects the quantity and quality of nutrition during infancy, childhood and youth; it also reflects the extent to which the depredations of disease reduced human well-being over the same age range. Most available data on height, however, are difficult to analyse and interpret because they are not drawn from representative samples of the population. Typically, they are from military records (which exclude those who failed the minimum height requirement) or from prison records (which may over-represent marginalised groups). In this paper, however, Jaadla and her colleagues claim to have an unbiased source: the Militia Ballot Lists for Dorset. These were apparently complete lists of males in the age range 18-45 years compiled annually, being those potentially liable to serve in the militia. Importantly, they include all men, even though some would later be given exemptions, and they also provide ancillary information about occupation. The authors use a set of these lists from the period 1798-1799 to examine variations in the height of Dorset men by occupation. Overall, the average height of Dorset men confirms the previous results that men in England were relatively tall compared with those in most other countries. Jaadla and her colleagues find that those in better-paid occupations were, on average, taller than those in lower-paid work, but that the differentials were quite small (smaller than those in more recent times). They suggest that this might have been because diseases which led to diminished adult height affected both rich and poor alike, or because there were universal deficiencies in the *quality* of diets so that, even though the rich ate more than the poor, the quality of their diets was still below what was required to attain potential adult height. It is interesting to consider this finding in the context of recent work suggesting that social and economic mortality differentials in England before the nineteenth century were modest (see, for example, the paper by Razzell and Spence reviewed in *Local Population Studies* 79 (2007), p. 121).

S. Ottoway, ‘“A very bad presidente in the house”: workhouse masters, care and discipline in the eighteenth-century workhouse’, *Journal of Social History* 54, pp. 1,091-119.

Using surviving records for Leeds workhouse in the eighteenth century (mainly relating to the period 1746-1750), Ottoway examines the role of the workhouse master. At Leeds, masters found themselves subject to very close supervision, bordering on micro-management, by the governing committee. They were responsible for providing food and clothing for the inmates, as well as for maintaining discipline and for keeping accurate records. Yet the Committee seems to have interfered constantly in the day-to-day running of the workhouse. Ottoway also engages with the debate about agency among the inmates. Her reading of the evidence suggests that the treatment of adult inmates was not unduly harsh and that inmates regularly challenged workhouse rules. There was discipline, but only in rare cases was it severe. With the treatment of children, the workhouse masters had more autonomy. The most common offences that were subject to disciplinary proceedings related to the mobility of the poor, such as leaving the workhouse without permission, or ‘loitering’ on the way back from church.

L.K. Riddell, ‘Shetland’s population in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries’, *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* 41, pp. 105-33

This is a classical local population study which begins with an evaluation of the sources available for population totals in Shetland between 1722 and the 1790s and then compares these with data from the early nineteenth century censuses. Riddell is sceptical of all her sources, echoing the caution with which Michael Anderson recommended historians approach the best-known of these, the 1755 survey of Rev. Alexander Webster (see Anderson’s article reviewed in *Local Population Studies* 89 (2012), p. 100). The second half of the paper looks at the population dynamics of the islands over this period. Riddell concludes that the population tended to grow through natural increase during this period, the more so as smallpox was gradually conquered by immunisation and the potato brought a more reliable source of food. The impact of early marriage on population growth is less certain, but there is evidence that landowners did not discourage early marriage, and were happy to allow landholdings to be subdivided as the number of households grew. Emigration and immigration, on the other hand, probably made only a limited contribution to population change. The population of Shetland continued to increase to reach a peak in 1861.

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S. Szreter and K. Siena, 'The pox in Boswell's London: an estimate of syphilis infection in the metropolis in the 1770s', *Economic History Review* 74, pp. 372-99.

Using hospital admissions registers and records from workhouse infirmaries, supplemented by data drawn from a previous study of Chester by Szreter, this article provides an estimate of the 'cumulative incidence of ever having been treated for the pox by the age of 35'. Szreter and Siena's analysis is intricate and careful, and they emphasise that where they are uncertain they tend to use conservative estimates. This is partly because their results suggest a very high rate of infection, such that a person living in the capital throughout the age range of, say, 15-35 years would have a one in five chance of being infected. This would, of course, not include those infected with other sexually transmitted diseases. The implications of this are startling, and range from reduced fecundity (contributing to the low or negative rate of natural increase in London), to increased foetal death and neonatal mortality.

B. Waddell, 'The rise of the parish welfare state in England, c.1600-1800', *Past and Present* 253, pp.151-194.

Waddell's article is an important new analysis of expenditure on the Old Poor Law. The author has compiled a new data set of annual expenditure on welfare from a sample of 184 parish and towns from 1600 to 1812, including at least one place for every English county. Most evidence comes from local records, with the remainder from historians and printed primary sources. The significant methodological issues of discontinuous chronological coverage, the geographical unevenness of the surviving records and survival bias are discussed. The author has constructed an index by calculating year-on-year change in expenditure for parishes that have data. This annual growth rate is then indexed to nominal national totals to estimate expenditure for every year. The robustness of the new index is checked against national estimates for relief expenditure produced for Parliament in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It correlates reasonably well with these reported figures. When checked against estimates by contemporaries and historians for the seventeenth century significantly more variation is found. The new data show a long-term upward trajectory in expenditure over the two centuries with an average growth rate of 3.5 per cent per year. This growth was uneven: the first half of the seventeenth century was a period of rapid growth in expenditure, the second half was more 'bumpy'. The early eighteenth century was a time of moderation, but from the 1740s growth returned, reaching a peak at the end of the period. Calculations of real expenditure suggest that welfare spending grew faster than population, consumer prices, agricultural wages and national taxation. The author argues from this that monocausal explanations of the rise of expenditure under the

Old Poor Law—seeing it simply as a function of population growth or inflation—are likely to be flawed. The data also suggest that punitive attempts to restrict the generosity of the system had little effect in the long run. Instead, Waddell supports the ‘pressure from below’ perspective developed by Hindle, Hitchcock and Shoemaker and others: that is, the changing needs and demands of the poor forced welfare spending to rise and services to expand. The article has two appendices: one listing the parishes in the sample and a second providing figures of annual disbursements from 1600 and 1834.

Nineteenth century

N. Carter and S. King, ‘“I think we ought not to acknowledge them [paupers] as that encourages them to write”: the administrative state, power and the Victorian pauper’, *Social History* 46, pp. 117-44.

It is well known that paupers regularly wrote letters to local poor law officials to promote their cases for relief, or to request particular forms of assistance. Less well known, though, is the fact that after 1834 individual paupers wrote letters to the central Poor Law Commission (PLC) and Poor Law Board (PLB). These letters were treated by the PLC and PLB in the same manner as the much larger number of letters they received from local Boards of Guardians and union officials. Most of those from paupers living in the community received a reply. The PLC and PLB were at pains to point out that they had no power to intervene in specific cases, but they were happy to draw the attention of the local poor law authorities to the letters. Only a minority of letters were from paupers living in workhouses, and these were only rarely replied to directly. Instead, the issue was brought to the attention of the workhouse authorities and inspectors of workhouses. Often the complaints being made were unfounded or vexatious but, occasionally, inspectors of workhouses found them justified and action was taken. The letters used in this paper come from seven poor law unions in the Midlands: Basford and Mansfield in Nottinghamshire, Uppingham in Rutland, Bromsgrove and Kidderminster in Worcestershire, and Newcastle-under-Lyme and Wolstanton and Burslem in Staffordshire.

C. Creighton, ‘The Ten Hours Movement and the working-class family in mid-nineteenth century Britain’, *International Labor and Working-Class History* 100, pp. 136-57.

The Ten Hours Movement (THM) brought together a diverse range of activists, from traditionalist Tories who were suspicious of the development of liberal capitalism, to radical social reformers. The aim of the movement was mainly to alleviate the long working hours and appalling condition of work of children in

factories which damaged family life and the social and psychological development of the children concerned. The THM claimed that ‘there was a fundamental contradiction between two core ... beliefs, ... the importance of laissez-faire for economic prosperity and ... the centrality of family life for the inculcation of civic virtue and the preservation of social order’ (p. 152). The article describes the THM’s critique of the effects of factory work: working long hours in mills damaged the relationship between parents and children, crowded out opportunities for children’s education, inhibited moral guidance and led to deteriorating health. Creighton points out that many scholars of the THM have tended to view its aims through lenses ground out of their own personal agendas. So feminists study its impact on relations between men and women; and others look at it in the context of the rise of the breadwinner family. But, he argues, these are really side-effects: the key aim of the movement, and what kept its disparate protagonists together, was no more and no less than to reduce the working hours and improve the working conditions of children and thereby to strengthen and enrich family life.

N. Cummins and C. Ó Gráda, ‘On the structure of wealth-holding in pre-Famine Ireland’, *Irish Economic and Social History* 48, pp. 108-34.

This paper is an analysis of 8,000 testators who appear in the British Inland Revenue Board death duty registers and indexes for Ireland the period 1828 to 1839. These registers list the value of each estate excluding land. The picture the article paints is of a highly unequal society, much more unequal than any present-day European population. Ireland was much poorer than Great Britain. Compared with the richest sector of British society, Irish society had a lower representation of manufacturers but a higher representation of those in public administration. A minority of the richest individuals were Roman Catholics, but these were fewer than one tenth of the total, so the processes leading to the growth of the Irish Catholic commercial class were still in their infancy. As expected, Leinster province had the most wealth, and Connacht the least. The article includes a list of the names and occupations and the values of the estates of the testators assessed at £15,000 or more.

P. Gao and E.B. Schneider, ‘The growth pattern of British children, 1850-1975’, *Economic History Review* 74, pp. 341-71.

Adult height has increased in Britain throughout the twentieth century, largely through better nutrition and reduced disease in infancy and childhood. The relative contributions of these two effects, however, have been difficult to evaluate. In this article, Gao and Schneider use a long series of data from HMS Indefatigable, which trained young boys for careers in the Royal Navy or merchant marine. Their main

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conclusion is that the growth spurt at puberty, which had become pronounced by the 1960s, was much less obvious among children before World War I. This tends to rule out improved nutrition as the reason for the change since ‘most studies analysing change in British nutrition over time find that food was plentiful and of relatively high quality by the beginning of the twentieth century’ (p. 367). The one nutritional change that might have played a role is the increased reach of the school meals and the provision of school milk. Reduced morbidity is, perhaps, a more likely factor as child morbidity tends to move in parallel with child mortality, and child mortality fell rapidly between 1900 and 1950.

L. Gray, ‘Addingham, Cumbria, and the workhouse in Penrith: its use by unmarried mothers, 1820-1939’, *Local Historian* 51, pp. 231-43.

This is a study of the illegitimate births in the parish of Addingham, Cumbria, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, focusing on the extent to which the mothers of these children made use of the Penrith workhouse. Gray finds, as expected, that more than nine out of every ten babies born in the workhouse were illegitimate but that—at least for the parish of Addingham—most illegitimate children were, nevertheless, born in the community. The evidence from this parish, therefore, suggests that single mothers did not routinely make use of the lying-in facilities of the local workhouse. The article includes several case studies of individual women who gave birth in the workhouse, or who were admitted to the workhouse with their children.

R. Jones, ‘Darlaston: growth of a Staffordshire industrial town during the nineteenth century’, *Family and Community History* 24, pp. 43-65.

Darlaston was a small village near Wolverhampton which grew during the industrial revolution to be a town of some 15,000 inhabitants by 1900. Coal mining, metal working and the manufacture of small metal items were the main activities responsible for this increase. Jones’s paper describes the physical expansion of the settlement from 1841 to 1901 using data from the population censuses supplemented by a wide range of surviving documentary evidence. In-migration was responsible for some of the growth and the paper stresses the proportion of the population engaged in various occupations that had been born outside the parish, and outside the county of Staffordshire. Attention is paid to overcrowding, and the physical character of different housing developments.

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S. King, 'Women, migration and textile work in West Yorkshire, 1800-1851', *Family and Community History* 24, pp. 4-23.

The textile villages of the West Riding of Yorkshire in the early nineteenth century were often regarded as insular and pervaded by a culture of localism. However, paradoxically they were also the setting for a 'vibrant and rapidly growing woollen industry that ... was crucially dependent on recruitment and circulation of migrant labour' (p. 7). How did the migrants manage to penetrate and assimilate such communities? King's answer is that the women in migrant households were critical. They might foster integration and assimilation by guiding the marriage choices of their children. In addition, they could actively seek co-operation with native households by acquiring equipment necessary for domestic production which was not owned by all households, and lending such equipment to their neighbours (King cites the example of the implements needed for brewing). There is evidence from the population censuses that migrant households often included members who were not from the immediate (or even extended) family of the head of household—so called 'fictive kin', who might also provide links to the native population. These Yorkshire villages were also strongly nonconformist and, as is increasingly being recognised, nonconformism was about much more than religious worship: it was 'central to the leisure and personal lives of a significant cohort of people' (p. 17), who included not only workers but industrialists and employers. Active participation in nonconformist groups provided migrants with another opportunity for assimilation.

C. Middleton, 'The census records of Leicester 1851-1911: class and society', *Family and Community History* 24, pp. 247-69.

This article is an examination of the populations of two streets in Leicester using the censuses from 1851 to 1911. One street is predominantly middle class and the other is working class. The article examines the numbers of children in the households, the occupations and the extent of overcrowding in the houses, and compares the situation in the two streets to the national picture. Middleton concludes, for example, that the working classes in Leicester were generally better housed and less affected by industrial decline than those elsewhere in the country, whereas the Leicester middle classes were similar to those elsewhere.

A.J. Scott, 'Work and life in the early industrial city: social economy of cotton production, Carlisle, 1838-1861', *Northern History* 48, pp. 282-303.

Scott describes the history of the cotton industry in Carlisle in the mid nineteenth century. Cotton was central to the town's economy after the opening of Peter

Dixon and Sons' mill in 1836, which became for a time the largest cotton mill in England. Although most of the cotton manufacture process took place in the mills, two elements—weaving and bleaching/dyeing/printing/finishing—were sub-contracted to smaller enterprises, in the case of weaving to domestic handloom weavers working in their own homes. Much of Scott's article focuses on the declining fortunes of the latter during the period. Payments made to the handloom weavers gradually diminished and their terms of engagement were made more onerous. This led to chronic poverty, which was only partly alleviated by other members of handloom weavers' households being drafted in to help maintain the household income by keeping the handlooms operating for longer. The plight of the handloom weavers also fostered social protest movements and a heightened sense of community. Self-help initiatives also thrived for a period. Eventually, as we know, handloom weaving died out, but in Carlisle its final extinction did not come until the 1860s.

S. Szreter and G. Mooney, 'Scarlet fever and nineteenth-century mortality trends: a reply to Romola Davenport', *Economic History Review* 74, pp. 1,087-95.

R. Davenport, 'Nineteenth-century mortality trends: a reply to Szreter and Mooney', *Economic History Review* 74, pp. 1,096-110.

In *Local Population Studies* 107 (2020), p. 114, we reviewed a paper by Romola Davenport in which she argued that a rise in mortality in Great Britain in the 1830s and 1840s was to a considerable extent the consequence of the emergence of a new, virulent, strain of scarlet fever which increased early childhood mortality. This rise occurred in both urban and rural areas, and in urban areas it contributed greatly to the apparent rise in urban mortality. This is a challenge to the argument made in S. Szreter and G. Mooney, 'Urbanisation, mortality and the standard of living debate: new estimates of the expectation of life at birth in nineteenth-century British cities', *Economic History Review* 51 (1998), pp. 84-112, that the rise in urban mortality was mainly the result of the urban infrastructure being overwhelmed by in-migration. In their reply, Szreter and Mooney argue that the chronology of the rise and fall of scarlet fever mortality is not consistent with its being responsible for the rise (the increased mortality from scarlet fever was too late). Davenport's rejoinder presents new evidence that scarlet fever mortality was high among young children in the 1830s. She also reiterates a point previously made by Robert Woods that Szreter and Mooney's evidence for very high urban mortality in the 1830s rests on data for a single city, Glasgow, and that, overall, the evidence supports the view that mortality in urban areas in the first half of the nineteenth century was roughly constant rather than the view that it deteriorated.

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A. Tomkins, 'Poor Law institutions through working-class eyes: autobiography, emotion and family context, 1834-1914', *Journal of British Studies* 60, pp. 285-309.

The study of how the poor interacted with poor law institutions, and how the poor felt about their treatment by these institutions, has become more popular recently. It has already been established that the poor were by no means always passive recipients of whatever charity the poor law authorities saw fit to disburse. More recent historiography has started to question the Dickensian stereotype most famously described in *Oliver Twist*. This study of a relatively small number of autobiographical descriptions of experiences of life in workhouses and poor law schools, and what the writers felt about them, contributes to this literature. Its main conclusion is that, despite the New Poor Law attempting to standardise and systematize poor relief, there were actually 'multiple Poor Laws in operation ... Guardians, workhouse staff, and paupers all brought their preconceptions and personal mores to their specific institutions, with drastic consequences for the uniformity of practice and reception of the Poor Law' (p. 309).

W. Troesken, N. Ryman and Y.A. Yang, 'What are the health benefits of a constant water supply? Evidence from London, 1860-1910', *Explorations in Economic History* 81, 101402.

W. Walker Hanlon, C.W. Hansen and J. Kantor, 'Temperature, disease and death in London: analyzing weekly data for the century from 1866 to 1965', *Journal of Economic History* 81, pp. 40-80.

These two papers both deal with mortality decline in London. The first paper looks at the impact of improvements to the water supply. Between 1871 and 1910, the proportion of London's houses receiving a constant high-pressure water supply rose from 20 per cent to almost 100 per cent. Previously, the supply of piped water had been intermittent, so that water was stored by households in cisterns. It was also at a lower pressure, which meant a higher risk of contamination before it reached houses. In this paper, Troesken and his colleagues use a standard impact evaluation method (difference-in-differences) to measure the effect of the change on mortality rates from waterborne and food-borne diseases: mainly typhoid, dysentery and diarrhoea. They conclude that the transition from an intermittent to a continuous water supply was responsible for around one fifth of the decline in mortality from such causes.

The second paper addresses the topical issue of the short-run impact of spells of hot and cold weather in mortality. Walker Hanlon and his colleagues analyse weekly deaths in London by cause over a period of 100 years and relate these to weekly changes in the temperature. They conclude that, before World War I,

heatwaves increased mortality principally through diarrhoea and other food-borne and waterborne diseases, and particularly among young children. In later periods this impact of hot weather was largely ameliorated because sanitary developments changed the disease environment in such a way that digestive diseases were unable to wreak such havoc, even in hot weather. The impact of periods of abnormal weather is therefore contingent on the disease environment, which itself depends on both natural and human factors. Walker Hanlon and his colleagues estimate that, had the disease environment not changed, deaths in the twentieth century would have been about 1-1.5 per cent more than they actually were.

C. van Lieshout, R.J. Bennett and H. Smith, 'The British business census of entrepreneurs and firm-size, 1851-1881: new data for economic and business historians', *Historical Methods* 54, pp. 129-50.

H. Smith, R.J. Bennett, C. van Lieshout and P. Montebruno, 'Entrepreneurship in Scotland, 1851-1911', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* 41, pp. 38-64.

H. Smith, R.J. Bennett, C. van Lieshout and P. Montebruno, 'Households and entrepreneurship in England and Wales, 1851-1911', *History of the Family* 26, pp. 100-22.

In an article published in this journal in 2015, Robert Bennett and Gill Newton 'demonstrated the feasibility of extracting the data contained in the digital records [for the 1881 census] of the occupational descriptor strings to give parsed variables containing the workforce types, numbers of workers and farm acres for each individual business proprietor (p. 130) (R.J. Bennett and G. Newton, 'Employers and the 1881 population census of England and Wales', *Local Population Studies* 94 (2015), pp. 29-49). In the first paper being reviewed here they extend this approach to the censuses from 1851 to 1881. Their method is made possible by the creation of the Integrated Census Microdata (I-CeM) database, which contains digitised individual-level data from all the censuses from 1851 to 1911. The authors compare the results of their analysis of the entire data set with the limited aggregate analysis produced at the time by the General Register Office. They go on to describe the creation of a British business census of entrepreneurs (BBCE). This is a major undertaking, as the data transcriptions for the occupation columns in the I-CeM are frequently deficient or truncated, with crucial information about the numbers of persons employed by farmers and owners of businesses being missing.

It is important to note that by an 'entrepreneur' in this context the authors simply mean the owner of a business or farm, even if that business was a one-person operation. 'Entrepreneurs' are not required to be employers; neither are they required to be innovative or successful. Having described the construction of the

BBCE, the authors go on to compare the distributions of several derived variables for the 1851, 1861, 1871 and 1881 censuses with those published by the General Register Office. They highlight various gaps in the BBCE, for example coverage of London and the North-Western Division is incomplete in 1851. Overall, the BBCE for the 1881 census is considered the best 'benchmark' because 'the transcription was undertaken by the G[enealogical] S[ociety of] U[tah] by individuals with a commitment and interest in the accuracy of records for genealogy' rather than by 'commercial transcribers' used by the companies that transcribed the other censuses (p. 148).

The second article uses the BBCE for Scotland, extended to include the 1891 and 1901 censuses, to examine entrepreneurship in Scotland between 1851 and 1911 (the comparison with 1911 is based on published census material). The article looks at the evolution of entrepreneurship by industrial sector, compares the history of male and female entrepreneurship and examines its geographical distribution. The authors emphasise the fact that entrepreneurship is a measure of the economic structure of a place and time, rather than its economic performance. Thus, for example, entrepreneurship was most intense in the Highlands and Islands throughout the period. This simply reflected the fact that the remoteness of these places meant that large firms tended not to operate there; instead, numerous small local businesses dominated the economy (as they still do). The authors compare the Scottish experience with that of England and Wales. Scotland was 'more entrepreneurial' (though this might reflect its lower population density) but female entrepreneurship was definitely lower in Scotland than in England and Wales. Moreover, female entrepreneurs were less likely to be employers, and more likely to be working as self-employed individuals.

The third paper examines three kinds of entrepreneurial households: those where a business owner employed co-resident family members; those containing two or more partners working in the same business; and those containing two or more individuals working in different businesses. The paper is mainly descriptive, and the main conclusions are unsurprising, for example that the employment of family labour was common in farming, and more common in remote, marginal areas. However, the paper provides sufficient evidence to support the authors' contention that the context within which these entrepreneurs lived influenced the nature and practice of the businesses they conducted: 'the needs of the household shaped the structure of the business as much as the other way around' (p. 118). This is important, because there is a trope in the literature that family businesses acted as a drag on the economy of England and Wales during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The implications of this paper is that family firms of this kind could, in certain contexts, be both a sensible and an efficient way of carrying on a business. For other published work emerging from the same project, see the three papers reviewed in *Local Population Studies* 105 (2020), pp. 153-4.

Twentieth century

D.S. Connor, 'In the name of the Father? Fertility, religion and child naming in the demographic transition', *Demography* 58, pp. 1,793-815.

This article is about the fertility decline in Ireland. It is well known that fertility in Ireland declined later than in many other parts of western Europe, and later than it did in any other part of the British Isles. Some commentators have argued that this was because of the pervasiveness of Roman Catholicism and Catholic teaching in Ireland. Others have emphasised social and economic factors, such as the slow urbanisation in the country, and the large proportion occupied in agriculture until well into the twentieth century, and argued that, as a result of this, large parts of Ireland continued to have a traditional rural culture well into the twentieth century, that need not have been directly related to Catholic teaching. In this paper, Connor uses an ingenious approach to try to disentangle these two explanations. Basing his analysis on the 1911 Census, in which special questions were asked about fertility, he distinguishes those couples who had given their children 'traditional' names (that is, names that were popular in Ireland throughout the nineteenth century) from those who had given their children 'Catholic' names (that is, names popular among Catholics but not among the rest of the population). Because these two sets of names were not highly correlated, the method allows Connor to assess the impact on fertility of traditionalism (the tendency to give 'traditional' names) and Catholicism (the tendency to give 'Catholic' names). The results show that the apparent impact of Catholicism on fertility largely arose because Catholicism was associated with living in poor rural areas. When social and economic factors were controlled, the impact of traditionalism was actually greater than that of Catholicism, although both traditionalism and Catholicism still had a positive impact on fertility.

N. Cummins, 'Where is the middle class? Evidence from 60 million English death and probate records, 1892-1992', *Journal of Economic History* 81, pp. 359-404.

Historical demographers have become accustomed to the creation of massive databases by modern computing technology (for example, the Integrated Census Microdata). This article describes the construction of a similarly enormous database consisting of all the probate records of England for the period 1892-1992. The description of the data manipulations that this involved is full and provides an insight into the various elements of the process. Cummins then uses his database to examine changes in the distribution of wealth in England over the twentieth century. The main conclusions to emerge are, first, that the proportion of wealth owned by the poorest 60 per cent of the population has changed very little; and,

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second, that the most important trend was the transfer of wealth away from the richest 1 per cent and to a lesser extent the richest 10 per cent in favour of those lower down the distribution, but still in the richest 30 per cent. Those in the top 30 per cent but not in the top 10 per cent were the main 'winners' from this change. There is some evidence that this trend has gone into reverse since 1980, but changes to the way the data were reported mean that this observation can only be tentative.

K. Gardner, 'Decision-making amongst the community in Coventry during the 1918-19 Spanish Flu pandemic', *Midland History* 46, pp. 101-18.

K. McCrossan, 'Spanish 'flu in Scotland: a Lanarkshire case study', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* 41, pp. 65-86.

In the first of these two articles on the influenza pandemic of 1918-1919, Gardner focuses on the decisions made by ordinary members of the public living in Coventry during the second wave of the 1918-1919 influenza pandemic, which caused the death of more than 500 people in the city. She shows how families monitored the condition of their sick members, and decided on courses of action based on the severity of, and their familiarity with, the symptoms. Medical attention was sought, but mainly when symptoms were severe, unusual, or the patient's condition suddenly took a turn for the worse. It would be interesting to compare the results of this study with those of a similar study of the recent pandemic, when such are available.

McCrossan's article examines the influenza epidemic of 1918-1919 in Lanarkshire, focusing on the course of the epidemic as reflected in the statistics of mortality, and on the response of the authorities. So far as the course of the epidemic is concerned, Lanarkshire experienced a pattern similar to other parts of Great Britain. There were three waves, of which the second was the most severe. Mortality was especially heavy among those aged 20-40 years, probably because their stronger immune systems were more likely to trigger a catastrophic immune response. There were only small differentials by social class or ethnicity. The response of the authorities was uncertain, tardy and ineffective. One problem was that the responsibility for public health measures formally lay with local government authorities, who wished to retain their powers but actually did rather little, instead preferring to delegate the response to local medical services. That said, it is not clear that a more co-ordinated response would have made much difference to the mortality rates, given the virulence of the virus and the fact that neither treatment nor vaccine were available.

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C. Torp, 'The pension crisis and the "demographic time bomb": perceptions and misperceptions in Great Britain and Germany at the turn of the millennium', *English Historical Review* 136 (583) pp. 1,542-73.

Around the year 2000, pensions systems in Great Britain and Germany both encountered serious situations, according to Torp. In Great Britain, occupational pension schemes were struggling against improved mortality among those aged over 65 years in the 1980s and 1990s (though they had not helped themselves by taking contribution 'holidays' when the stock market was booming during the same period). In Germany, the problem was with the funding of public pensions, much of it deriving from the costs associated with reunification. The situations necessitated major policy decisions and changes to the structure of both state and private pension schemes. In both countries, though, governments and pension funds chose to present the situations as the consequence of secular changes to the population structure (population ageing), thereby diverting any possible blame for inadequate policy decisions. They also cited arguments about intergenerational equity to disarm criticism from pensioners whose benefits were being made less generous.