
The Living Arrangements of Older people in the 1851 and 1891 Census Enumerators' Books for Hertfordshire

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Abstract

This article examines the living arrangements of older people through digitised transcripts of the 1851 and 1891 census enumerators' books for eight Hertfordshire communities. The percentages of older people living with their offspring were higher than expected, especially in rural parishes. However, relationships between older people and their offspring were recorded in urban society through family business and strong ties to local industry. By 1891, co-residence between older people and their offspring generally declined when the older people migrated inwards to suburban and urban parishes and the offspring left parishes suffering from agricultural depression. The argument that familial support was more directed towards older women in the nineteenth century is not confirmed. The proportions of older men and women co-residing with offspring were found in 1851 and 1891 to be roughly in equal measure, and the proportions of older men co-residing with offspring increased by 1891. Even when adjustments were made to exclude almshouse residence and incorporate those living with extended kin only, a bias of familial support towards women was not universally reflected across each parish. The differences in living arrangements by geography and by gender can be explained by occupational structure, almshouse accommodation, social welfare changes, widowhood, and migratory habits, which reinforce the importance of familial support for older people in nineteenth century society.

Introduction

Over the last three decades, historical studies of older people have gone from strength to strength. The Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure (CAMPOP) was the first to bring older people to the forefront in historical research, investigating various topics such as welfare provision in nineteenth century England.¹ Since then, old age has been at the centre of many monographs and articles, such as Pat Thane's seminal 2000 publication, *Old Age in English History: Past Experiences, Present Issues*, covering a study which examines older people across the second millennium.² There are further contributions in *Local Population Studies* by Clive Leivers, and Mark Freeman and Louise Wannell, covering nineteenth century Derbyshire and post-war York respectively.³

1 The influence of CAMPOP on historical studies of the aged is documented in K. Boehm, A. Farkas and A.J. Zwierlein, 'Introduction', in K. Boehm, A. Farkas and A.J. Zwierlein (eds), *Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Aging in Nineteenth Century Culture* (New York, 2013), pp. 1–20.

2 P. Thane, *Old Age in English History: Past Experiences, Present Issues* (Oxford, 2000).

3 C. Leivers, 'Housing the elderly in nineteenth-century Derbyshire: a comparison of almshouse and workhouse provision', *Local Population Studies*, 83 (2009), pp. 56–65; M. Freeman and L. Wannell, 'The family and community lives of older people after the Second World War: new Evidence from York', *Local Population Studies*, 82 (2009), pp. 12–29.

Recently, scholarship has examined older people through their relationship with welfare systems, such as entitlement to poor relief and accommodation in workhouses and almshouses.⁴ However, the role of older people in domestic households, as opposed to institutions, has received relatively little attention of late, despite the influential literature on the housing arrangements of the older people conducted by Michael Anderson and Marguerite Dupree, which stressed the importance of familial support in old age.⁵ Recent studies have examined older people's care by state institutions and private philanthropy, with growing interest in the 'medicalisation' of the aged in workhouses.⁶ Acknowledging Susannah Ottaway's point that 'most older people in England continued to live in their own households throughout later life', a study of domestic households, alongside a comparative assessment with institutions, is overdue.⁷ The historiography of the living arrangements of older people in mid-Victorian England, the period analysed in this study, is presented below.

Historiography

A study of the nineteenth century census enumerators' books (CEBs) for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Middlesex and Devonshire concluded that co-residential patterns between older people and their adult offspring were minimal. Familial assistance to older people was limited by a predominantly nuclear household structure, as individuals left the parental household to form independent households. Consequently, older people were in the care of the Poor Law and other non-familial sources of assistance, resulting in what Peter Laslett has termed 'nuclear hardship'.⁸ However, David Thomson's conclusion that fewer than 40 per cent of older people lived with one of their children has not gone unchallenged.⁹ Dupree's study of the industrialised borough of Stoke-on-Trent in the 1861 CEBs found a co-residence level of 57 per cent, complementing Anderson's similarly industrial Preston, where 68 per cent of older people co-resided with offspring.¹⁰ Furthermore, 56 per cent of those aged 50–59 years in the 1851 CEBs were co-residing in

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- 4 For example, A. Ritch, 'English Poor Law institutional care for older people: identifying the "aged and infirm" and the "sick" in Birmingham workhouse, 1852–1912', *Social History of Medicine*, 27 (2014) pp. 64–85; G.R. Boyer and T.P. Schmidle, 'Poverty among the elderly in late Victorian England', *Economic History Review*, 62 (2009), pp. 249–78; N. Goose, 'Poverty, old age and gender in nineteenth century England: the case of Hertfordshire', *Continuity and Change*, 20 (2005), pp. 351–84; N. Goose, 'Accommodating the elderly poor: almshouses and the mixed economy of welfare in the second millennium', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 62 (2014), pp. 35–57.
 - 5 M.W. Dupree, *Family Structure in the Staffordshire Potteries* (Oxford, 1995); M. Anderson, *Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1971).
 - 6 S. Ottaway, 'The elderly in the eighteenth-century workhouse', in J. Reinartz and L. Schwarz (eds), *Medicine and the Workhouse* (Martlesham, Suffolk, 2013), pp. 40–57.
 - 7 Ottaway, 'Elderly in the eighteenth-century workhouse', p. 41.
 - 8 D. Thomson, 'Welfare and the historians', in L. Bonfield, R.M. Smith and K. Wrightson (eds), *The World We Have Gained: Essays Presented to Peter Laslett* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 355–78; P. Laslett, 'Family, kinship and collectivity as systems of support in pre-industrial Europe: a consideration of the "nuclear-hardship" hypothesis', *Continuity and Change*, 3 (1988), pp. 153–75; Dupree, *Family Structure*, p. 272.
 - 9 Thomson, 'Welfare and the historians', p. 364.
 - 10 Dupree, *Family Structure*, p. 328; Anderson, *Family Structure*, p. 139.

1871 in Colyton, Devonshire.¹¹ Barry Reay noted that, for three Kentish parishes, 45 to 56 per cent of older people lived with offspring and extended kin in 1851 and 1881, with similar rates being found by Richard Wall for a sample of 13 English and Welsh communities from 1891 to 1921.¹² A study by Nigel Goose of Hertfordshire shows that the numbers of extended kin were heavily skewed towards older women compared to older men, as women's contribution towards the family budget in the straw plait and hat trades would prove a financial asset. The domestic skills of older women also made them more attractive as co-residents to the domestic household than older men.¹³

Another issue arises over the rise in familial care towards the end of the nineteenth century. When Anderson's 1851 national sample was compared with Wall's 13 communities in 1891, the latter identified an increase in co-residence, as did Dupree when she compared Stoke-on-Trent in 1881 and 1861.¹⁴ Sonya Rose also noted that more older people were living in what she terms nuclear households from 1851 to 1881 in the Nottinghamshire communities of Bulwell and Brinsley.¹⁵ It is presumed, although not fully tested, that increasing co-residence may have coincided with the changing implementation of the Poor Law from the 1870s, whereby government expenditure towards the relief of the older people was cut by half, placing the care of the older people at what Thomson terms 'the familial pole' of welfare responsibilities.¹⁶

Methodology

The past literature on the living arrangements of older people in mid Victorian England has prioritised industrial communities, such as Anderson's Preston, Dupree's Stoke-on-Trent and Rose's Nottinghamshire, in order to investigate the impact of industrialisation on familial support. There is relatively little comparative analysis which assesses agrarian and small town communities along the lines of research by Thomson. Consequently, Dupree argues that '[in] northern, urban, industrial areas [...] family and kin appear to have taken responsibility for the elderly, while the collectivity, particularly the Poor Law, which played such a central role in rural areas and small towns, was relatively less important'.¹⁷ This article will examine the changing living arrangements of older people in Hertfordshire, a county which, in 1851, ranked 40th out of 44 registration counties in terms of the

11 J. Robin, 'Family care of the elderly in a nineteenth-century Devonshire parish', *Ageing and Society*, 4 (1984), pp. 505–16.

12 B. Reay, *Microhistories: Demography, Society and Culture in Rural England, 1800–1930* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 170; R. Wall, 'Elderly persons and members of their households in England and Wales from preindustrial times to the present', in D.I. Kertzer and P. Laslett (eds), *Aging in the Past: Demography, Society and Old Age* (London, 1995), pp. 81–106.

13 Goose, 'Poverty, old age and gender', pp. 368–71.

14 Wall, 'Elderly persons', p. 92; Dupree, *Family Structure*, p. 330.

15 S.O. Rose, 'The varying household arrangements of the elderly in three English villages: Nottinghamshire, 1851–1881', *Continuity and Change*, 3 (1988), pp. 101–22.

16 Thomson, 'Welfare and the historians', p. 374.

17 Dupree, *Family Structure*, p. 328.

proportion of the population living in urban areas.¹⁸ Hertfordshire's small towns had a 'high degree of integration' with the countryside, with markets and fairs selling agricultural products and agricultural raw materials being used in the process of urban manufactures.¹⁹ While the county was not highly industrialised, particular Hertfordshire industries included silk production and paper-making in the south, the malting and brewery industries of the east and the thriving cottage industry of the straw plait and hat trades. Accompanied by the predominantly agrarian regions in the north-east, much economic diversity existed in Hertfordshire, effectively providing an opportunity to study the association between the living arrangements of the older people and local geography, agriculture, town and industry.²⁰

The digitised 1851 and 1891 census returns, transcribed by staff at the University of Hertfordshire and volunteers at what was then the Hertfordshire Central Record Office (now Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies), will be used comparatively to analyse changes in older people's living arrangements in eight Hertfordshire communities (Figure 1).²¹ Two communities were selected from each of four main economic groups.²² One group concerns the straw plaiting cottage industry that engaged many child and female workers in southern England, but collapsed by the 1890s owing to rising cheap imports from Asia.²³ The two 'straw-intensive' communities analysed are Lilley in the Hitchin region and Great Gaddesden in the Hemel Hempstead region; one third of Lilley's population, occupied or not, worked in straw plait, one of the highest proportions among all Hertfordshire parishes.²⁴ The second group focuses on the agrarian communities of Barley and Therfield in the Royston region, where, in 1851, 59 per cent and 75 per cent of the employed populations respectively worked in agriculture. By 1891, bad weather on heavy clay soils and rising wheat imports depressed the Royston region's economy. From 1851 to 1901, there was a 26 per cent decline in the region's population due to out-migration to areas with access to the railway and London markets. Barley and Therfield experienced population declines of 42 and 36 per cent respectively in the same period.²⁵

18 N. Goose, *Population, Economy and Family Structure in Hertfordshire in 1851, Vol. 2: St Albans and its Region* (Hatfield, 2000), p. 33.

19 Goose, *Population, Economy and Family Structure ... St Albans*, p. 51.

20 Goose, 'Poverty, old age and gender', pp. 352–3.

21 A more detailed account of the project behind the transcription of the 1851 and 1891 CEBs for Hertfordshire is in N. Goose, *Population, Economy and Family Structure in Hertfordshire in 1851, Vol. 1: The Berkhamsted Region* (Hatfield, 1996), pp. 12–15 and Goose, *Population, Economy and Family Structure ... St Albans*, pp. 14–18.

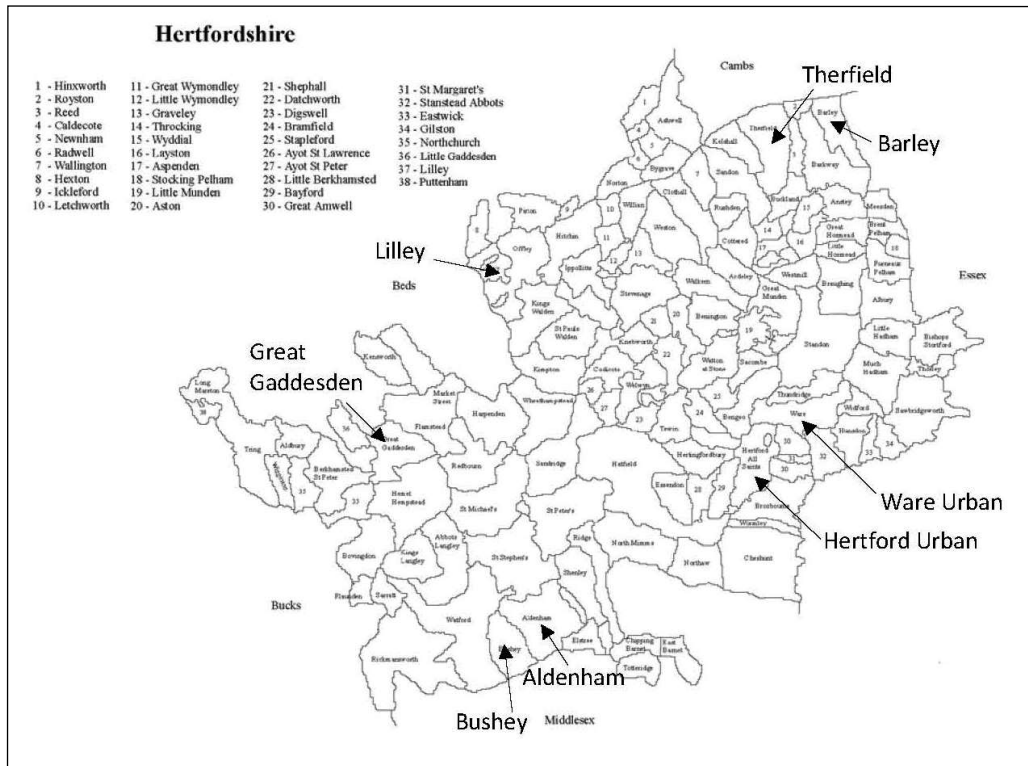
22 For more information on the choice of communities, see T. Heritage, 'A Comparative Perspective on Changing Household and Family Structure in Mid-Victorian Hertfordshire' (Univ. of Hertfordshire M. A. thesis, 2014), pp. 16–18.

23 J. Moore, 'The Impact of Agricultural Depression and Land Ownership Change on the County of Hertfordshire, c. 1870–1914' (Univ. of Hertfordshire Ph. D. thesis, 2010), p. 61.

24 N. Goose, 'The straw-plait and hat trades in nineteenth century Hertfordshire', in N. Goose (ed.), *Women's Work in Industrial England: Regional and Local Perspectives* (Hatfield, 2007), pp. 97–137, gives details of the proportion of straw-plait workers by parish in Hertfordshire in 1851 on pp. 125–37.

25 Moore, 'Impact of Agricultural Depression', pp. 16, 50–62, 263, from data in Nigel Goose, 'Population, 1801–1901', in D. Short (ed.), *An Historical Atlas of Hertfordshire* (Hatfield, 2011), pp. 56–7.

Figure 1 Map of Hertfordshire and its parish boundaries, with study parishes highlighted



Source: <http://joine marriageindex.co.uk/pjoine r/genuki/HRT/hrt map.html> (accessed 31 October 2016).

Hertfordshire began experiencing suburbanisation in its southern regions through railway development and population growth. In 1864, Henry Evershed commented how ‘villa residences, occupied by families from London, have largely encroached on [Watford’s] grass farms’.²⁶ Middle-class social groups resided in areas closer to London, comprising of clerks, engineers and barristers.²⁷ The parishes of Aldenham and Bushey in the Watford region will represent these ‘suburban’ communities. Bushey was noted as having ‘excessive building work’ in the village based on having its own station on the main line of the London and North Western Railway.²⁸ The final group of communities comprise the towns of Ware and Hertford, specifically the urban part of Ware parish, and the three small parishes of All Saints, St John and St Andrew, which have been amalgamated into Hertford Urban, a population roughly similar in size to Ware

26 H. Evershed, ‘Agriculture of Hertfordshire’, *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society*, 25 (1864), pp. 269–302, on p. 283.
 27 Moore, ‘Impact of Agricultural Depression’, pp. 54–55.
 28 Bushey Museum Trust, *Bushey Then and Now: Introduction* (Bushey, 1986), pp. 11–13; *Kelly’s Directory of Hertfordshire, 1890* (London, 1890), p. 732; Moore, ‘Impact of Agricultural Depression’, p. 54.

Urban.²⁹ Hertford was a political borough and assize town comprising of two MPs, whereas Ware was mainly centred on malt-making and barging, the latter relating to coastal trade on the River Lea navigable canal.³⁰ Hertford and Ware enjoyed an increase in population through in-migration: an increase from 1851 to 1901 of 20 per cent in Ware and 54 per cent in the most urbanised part of Hertford Urban, St John parish.³¹

Each household that contained a person aged 65 years and over was included in an Excel spreadsheet for each of the eight communities. Next to the person's age on the spreadsheet a residence code was recorded. Seven of these codes were 'LWOFF' (living with offspring only, or with a son, daughter and/or stepchildren only); 'LWKIN' (living with extended kin only, or with grandchildren, siblings, aunts/uncles and so forth); 'LWOK' (living with both offspring *and* extended kin in the same household); 'NOKIN' (living with no offspring and kin); 'LAL' (living as a boarder or lodger); 'LAS' (living as a servant) and 'LAV' (living as a visitor).³² The categories 'LAL', 'LAS' and 'LAV' were grouped together for analysis, but the other categories were analysed separately based on the percentages of older people in the community, both overall and by gender. The 'LAL' group was then analysed on its own to chart the percentages of lodgers and boarders by gender. Finally, older people in the 'LWOFF' and 'LWOK' categories were combined to analyse all those living with offspring. The analysis was carried out by individual parish and using two further groups: a 'rural' group (Lilley, Great Gaddesden, Barley and Therfield); and an 'urban' group (Aldenham, Bushey, Hertford Urban, Ware Urban. Further analysis focused exclusively on domestic households as opposed to the inclusion of almshouse residents.

Contemporaries and historians have different criteria for defining 'older people'. The Poor Law Commission proposed a threshold of 60 years, Rose used 55 years, Anderson and Wall 65 years.³³ In this study a threshold of 65 years was used. Finally, different living arrangements can be blurred. Some older people in households with offspring and kin were recorded as 'lodger' or 'visitor' by the census enumerator rather than being described as

29 According to the digitally transcribed CEBs for 1851, All Saints had a population of 1,273, St. Andrew 2,149 and St. John 2,281, equating to 5,703 in the borough of Hertford compared with 4,429 in the urban part of Ware (including workhouses). In 1891, All Saints contained 963 people; St Andrew 2,117 and St John 2,935, equating to 6,015 compared with 5,699 for Ware parish (again including workhouse populations). Since the 1891 transcription was partially completed, there was no indication of which Ware districts were distinctly urban or rural. The rural part of Ware, which I have defined as covering the last two enumeration districts, only represented about a tenth of the overall non-workhouse population. The older people over 65 in the last two districts only represented 13 per cent of the non-workhouse population over 65. Co-residential rates between older people and offspring were similar in the first six districts compared with the eight districts (47.0 per cent against 47.3 per cent).

30 *Post Office Directory of Essex, Herts, Kent, Middlesex, Surrey and Sussex* (London, 1855), pp. 208 and 241; F.M. Page, *History of Hertford* (Hertford, 1959), pp. 136–45.

31 Moore, 'Impact of Agricultural Depression', pp. 261, 264.

32 The decision to recognise stepchildren as sons and daughters, or offspring, rather than as extended kin was based the census enumerators often blurring the two distinct categories of stepchildren and offspring-in-laws, as reported in Goose, *Population, Economy and Family Structure ... St Albans*, p. 25.

33 On the Poor Law Commission, see P. Thane, *Old Age in English History: Past Experiences, Present Issues* (Oxford, 2000), p. 167; Rose, 'Varying household arrangements', p. 103; Anderson, *Family Structure*, pp. 139–40; Wall, 'Elderly persons', pp. 88–99.

extended kin. Those described as ‘lodgers’ but living with offspring were tallied as living with offspring, but those described as ‘visitors’ in a similar situation were treated as visitors as they were not in their own household on census night and their personal living arrangements could not be deduced.³⁴

Analysis

To test Thomson’s argument regarding the co-residence of older people with offspring, Table 1 examines the numbers of those aged 65 years and over in Hertfordshire’s eight communities in 1851 and 1891 and the percentages that lived with at least one offspring. The numbers of older people living with offspring only (coded as LWOFF) and living with both offspring and extended kin in the same household (coded as LWOK) are combined. The results from the eight communities are also combined into an ‘urban’ and a ‘rural’ total, alongside an overall result. First, the overall co-residence rates are slightly higher in Hertfordshire in 1851 and 1891 than Thomson’s upper limit of 40 per cent. In 1851, co-residential rates by parish reached a high of 62.3 per cent in rural Therfield, between the 57 per cent noted in the Staffordshire Potteries in 1861 by Dupree and the 68 per cent found in Preston in 1851 by Anderson.³⁵ Rural parishes generally had higher co-residential rates than in urban areas, although wide variation was identified among parishes that shared the same rural and urban characteristics. For example, in 1891, 24.6 per cent of older people in suburban Aldenham co-resided compared with 47.3 per cent in the town of Ware.

Most interestingly, the co-residence of offspring does not appear to be heavily biased towards older women. While Goose argues that preferential treatment was given to older women, Table 1 shows that older men are at least as likely as women to co-reside with their offspring.³⁶ In 1851, 55.7 per cent of older men in Hertford Urban co-resided whereas for women it was 41.6 per cent. Overall, equal proportions of older men and women in the four urban parishes co-resided in 1851, at close to 42 per cent. Co-residence did favour older women in the four rural parishes in 1851. By 1891, however, co-residence was skewed towards older men in the rural areas by one percentage point. A greater disparity in 1891 was noted in the urban communities where 44.9 per cent of older men co-resided compared with 37.6 per cent of older women. In fact, there was a gradual fall in the percentage of older females co-residing with offspring between 1851 and 1891, especially in Aldenham (39.5 per cent in 1851 to 21.3 per cent in 1891). As Table 1 shows, this fall is a feature of both urban and rural parishes. The gradual fall for older women was offset by an increase of two percentage points in the proportions of older men co-residing. Similarly,

34 This article uses a method slightly revised from that in Heritage, ‘Comparative Perspective’, pp. 58–67. In particular, almshouse residents have been incorporated into Table 1 and Appendix 1 of this article. The revisions involve changes to the recorded living arrangements of 2.3 per cent of the original 1851 sample and 1.5 per cent of the 1891 sample.

35 Dupree, *Family Structure*, p. 328; Anderson, *Family Structure*, p. 139.

36 Goose, ‘Poverty, old age and gender,’ pp. 368–71.

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Table 1 Numbers of persons aged 65 years and over and percentages living with offspring only or with both offspring and kin, various Hertfordshire populations, 1851 and 1891

Population	1851						1891					
	Total		Male		Female		Total		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
TOTAL	832	43.6	375	43.2	457	44.0	1,263	41.3	565	44.8	698	38.4
URBAN	685	41.9	310	41.9	375	41.9	1,054	40.8	459	44.9	595	37.6
Aldenham	92	34.8	49	30.6	43	39.5	114	24.6	53	28.3	61	21.3
Bushey	173	41.0	76	34.2	97	46.4	295	41.0	131	46.6	164	36.6
Hertford	222	47.7	97	55.7	125	41.6	330	40.0	138	41.3	192	39.1
Ware	198	39.4	88	39.8	110	39.1	315	47.3	137	53.3	178	42.7
RURAL	147	51.7	65	49.2	82	53.7	209	43.5	106	44.3	103	42.7
Lilley	17	52.9	5	60.0	12	50.0	28	42.9	12	50.0	16	37.5
Gaddesden	36	36.1	15	33.3	21	38.1	66	40.9	34	38.2	32	43.8
Barley	41	51.2	19	47.4	22	54.5	50	44.0	29	44.8	21	42.9
Therfield	53	62.3	26	57.7	27	66.7	65	46.2	31	48.4	34	44.1

Notes: Data taken from the following codes: LWOFF – living with offspring only (or with sons, daughters and/or stepchildren) and LWOK – living with both offspring and extended kin (for example, grandchildren, siblings, aunts/uncles) in the same household. RURAL combines rates from Lilley, Great Gaddesden, Barley and Therfield; URBAN combines rates from Aldenham, Bushey, Hertford Urban and Ware Urban.

Source: Digitized Census Enumerators' Books, 1851 and 1891, Centre for Regional and Local History, University of Hertfordshire.

Wall noted an increase from 45 per cent to 48 per cent in the percentage of older men co-residing with offspring in 1891 compared with Anderson's 1851 sample, greater than Hertfordshire's increase from 43.2 per cent to 44.8 per cent over the same period.³⁷

These results contradict the received wisdom that familial assistance was preferentially given to women. Even when those living with offspring are combined with the numbers living with extended kin only and no offspring (coded in Appendix 1 as LWKIN), older men are still favoured as co-residents in urban areas in 1851 and 1891, with a higher disparity for the latter period.³⁸ In urban areas in 1891, 54.9 per cent of older men co-resided with offspring, extended kin, or both, while the figure for older women was 51.9 per cent. These results contrast with Wall's findings, where, in 13 communities across England and Wales, 59 per cent of older women co-resided compared with 54 per cent of older men.³⁹ Similar

³⁷ Wall, 'Elderly persons', pp. 91–92.

³⁸ Full details of the numbers of older men and women classed by living arrangement in each parish and rural and urban collective totals are found in Appendix 1.

³⁹ Wall, 'Elderly persons', p. 91. I have combined the rates from Wall's categories, 'Child with or without other persons' and 'Other relatives (no spouse or child)'. It is unclear, however, what 'others' in Wall's category 'Spouse and others (no child)' means, so I did not include this category.

results are found for urban areas in 1851, where 54.5 per cent of older men and 53.6 per cent of older women co-resided.

The results for Hertfordshire are interesting considering the disproportionate numbers of old men in its workhouses.⁴⁰ However, this gender disparity in workhouse populations of older people may have influenced the idea among historians that old women were more accepted by their families as co-residents than were old men on the grounds that old women could more successfully pursue domestic tasks.⁴¹ Table 1 introduces an alternative viewpoint. If old men were seen as less capable of looking after themselves, they might have required extra assistance from relatives. Also, in line with Thomson, from the 1870s families may have reacted to the decline of outdoor relief as a source of assistance for old men. The co-residential bond was thus strengthened so that older men could avoid indoor relief inside the workhouse.⁴²

Generally, the co-residence of offspring declined in 1891 from 1851, which does not conform to previous findings.⁴³ However, there were contrasting trends by parish. Aldenham experienced a decrease in co-residence, while the converse was found in Ware Urban. Similarly, Great Gaddesden deviated from the remaining rural communities in experiencing a rise in co-residence by 1891 of 8 percentage points, whereas a fall of 16 percentage points was found in Therfield. In rural parishes, there was a convergence in residence patterns: in 1851, co-residence ranged from 36.1 per cent in Great Gaddesden to 62.3 per cent in Therfield; the range by 1891 was dramatically smaller, from 40.9 per cent in Great Gaddesden to 46.2 per cent in Therfield. As will be explained in more detail later, the variation in co-residential patterns in rural and urban parishes is explained by out-migration from the rural parishes and in-migration to urban communities, which determined the likelihood of offspring and kin being available for older people to live with.

The district of Hertford Urban had a co-residence rate of 48 per cent and a bias in favour of older men. Why was there such a high disparity between the sexes in this district? Several specific examples of households point to some ideas. In Hertford Urban, 90-year-old Peter Young, the household head at 16 Maidenhead Street, is described as a '[c]onfectioner (emp 1 man)', living with his wife, his daughter, a granddaughter and a male assistant, George Jackson. The latter three are all enumerated as '[c]onfectioner'. Additionally, Thomas Ginn, aged 66 years, and his 33-year-old son Richard both worked as plumbers. The 1855 trade directory records Thomas Ginn and Son, 'plumbers and agents to Lancashire fire & life insurance company'.⁴⁴ Exactly 20 per cent of older married men saw their offspring share the same occupation: two in labouring, two in food and drink and two in building. This shows that trade and craft occupations could easily be shared between older people and offspring, partly explaining the high co-residential rates for older men in

40 Goose, 'Poverty, old age and gender,' pp. 359–62.

41 Ibid., p. 371.

42 Thomson, 'Welfare and the historians', p. 374.

43 Wall, 'Elderly persons', p. 92.

44 *Post Office Directory*, p. 210.

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Hertford Urban. The urban economy, therefore, reinforced co-residence through the family business. Older men lived with their offspring as productive members of society, conforming to Thane's argument that relationships were as much 'of reciprocity as of dependency'.⁴⁵

The sex ratio (males per 100 females) for the older people in towns favoured women, at 78 and 80 for Hertford and Ware respectively. These figures, combined with the high migratory patterns among older women, meant that it was less likely for older women to co-reside with offspring than it was for older men. Only 29 out of 125 older women (23.2 per cent) living in Hertford Urban in 1851 had been born there, compared with 28 out of 97 older men (28.9 per cent). Goose notes similar circumstances among widows in the St Albans region, arguing that 'women of independent means were more likely to gravitate townwards to enjoy the culture and society that urban life could offer'.⁴⁶ The situation for aged widows in Hertford Urban was more complex; the majority were identified in poverty. Similarly in Ware Urban, more widows received parish relief or were living in almshouses than were of independent means. As the majority of almshouse residents were women, this may have affected the numbers living without any kin because almshouse inmates primarily lived alone.

In Ware, 34.5 per cent of older women lived without any kin and 15 lived in almshouses (Appendix 1). Surprisingly for a market town, Hertford Urban hosted only six almshouses and 32.8 per cent of women lived without kin (Appendix 1). Jennifer Ayto found that Hertford town invested less in almshouses and more in the distribution of parish relief and schooling for the poor.⁴⁷ Between the schedules of 134 and 141 Butcherley Green in Hertford St John parish, ten widows received poor relief. Of these, eight lived without any kin. Since Butcherley Green was included in an 1850 report of areas in Hertford borough with epidemic, endemic and contagious diseases, this may have affected the number living into old age and perhaps the number of offspring residing in the district.⁴⁸ Consequently, older women became widowed and relied on the parish rather than family.

Overall, Table 1 shows 43.2 per cent of older men co-resided against 44 per cent for women, rates slightly lower than the 1851 National Sample where 44.6 per cent of men lived with offspring against 46 per cent for women.⁴⁹ Table 2 has the same format as Table 1, but excludes those that lived in almshouse accommodation. Results are only presented for the four urban parishes, where almshouses were entirely based. The presence of almshouses evidently affects co-residential patterns in urban areas, as they produced a high turnout of older people living without offspring or kin. When almshouses are excluded the numbers of older women co-residing in Hertfordshire are a percentage point higher than

45 Thane, *Old Age in English History*, p. 297.

46 Goose, *Population, Economy and Family Structure ... St Albans*, p. 35.

47 J. Ayto, 'The Contribution by Women to the Social and Economic Development of the Victorian Town in Hertfordshire', (Univ. of Hertfordshire Ph. D. thesis, 2013), p. 107.

48 *Ibid.*, pp. 22–3.

49 M. Anderson, 'Households, families and individuals: some preliminary results from the national sample from the 1851 Census of Great Britain', *Continuity and Change*, 3 (1988), pp. 421–38, esp. p. 436.

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Table 2 Numbers of persons aged 65 years and over and percentages living with offspring only or with both offspring and kin, excluding almshouse residents, various Hertfordshire populations, 1851 and 1891

Population	1851						1891					
	Total		Male		Female		Total		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
TOTAL	796	45.5	370	43.8	426	46.9	1,213	42.8	558	45.0	655	40.9
URBAN	649	44.1	305	42.6	344	45.3	1,004	42.6	452	45.1	552	40.6
Aldenham	81	39.5	44	34.1	37	45.9	103	26.2	48	29.2	55	23.6
Bushey	173	41.0	76	34.2	97	46.4	286	42.0	129	46.5	157	38.2
Hertford	216	49.1	97	55.7	119	43.7	324	40.7	138	41.3	186	40.3
Ware	179	43.0	88	39.8	91	46.2	291	51.2	137	53.3	154	49.4

Notes: Data taken from the following codes: LWOFF – living with offspring only (or with sons, daughters and/or stepchildren) and LWOK – living with both offspring and extended kin (for example, grandchildren, siblings, aunts/uncles) in the same household. URBAN combines rates from Aldenham, Bushey, Hertford Urban and Ware Urban. Those living in almshouses have been excluded.

Source: Digitized Census Enumerators' Books, 1851 and 1891, Centre for Regional and Local History, University of Hertfordshire.

in the National Sample, at nearly 47 per cent (Table 2). Also, while 37.6 per cent of older females co-resided in the four urban parishes in 1891 including almshouses, the proportion increased to 40.6 per cent excluding them. Therefore, the female percentages co-residing with offspring in collective urban parishes in 1851 and 1891 are higher in Table 2 than in Table 1.

Nevertheless, the trends seen in Table 1 are generally maintained when almshouse populations are excluded. The gradual fall over time in the proportion of female co-residence with offspring, along with the increase in male co-residence, is still evident. Incorporating the numbers of older men and women living with extended kin only alongside those living with at least one of their offspring in Table 2 means that differences do arise by gender. The data in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 show that women were highly favoured in households where they co-resided with extended kin and no offspring (coded as LWKIN).⁵⁰ In 1891, 54.4 per cent of older women in that category were widows, with 15.3 per cent noted as single or unmarried. The arrangement of living with grandchildren or siblings provided the widowed with some form of company. Furthermore, Ware Urban had 15 almshouse residents in 1851 and 24 in 1891, all of whom were female. When they were included, more older men co-resided with offspring, extended kin, or both than older women by five percentage points in 1851 and eight percentage points in 1891. When almshouse residents were excluded, the proportions of older women in Ware Urban co-

⁵⁰ Appendix 2 is identical to Appendix 1, except that residents of almshouses are excluded and data are only given for individual urban parishes, the four urban parishes and the eight study parishes taken together.

residing were, in both periods, one percentage point higher than older men. The exclusion of almshouses does not show that familial support was heavily biased towards older women, even when those living with extended kin only were included. In fact, preferential treatment was given to older men even when almshouses were excluded in Hertford Urban in 1851 and Aldenham and Bushey in 1891. Therefore, rather than familial support being biased towards older women, as found in previous literature, it is argued here that older men and women received assistance from their families in roughly the same proportions.

As has been explained above, the majority of communities saw a decline in older people-offspring co-residential patterns from 1851, contrasting with the previous literature.⁵¹ Overall, 41.3 per cent of older people co-resided with offspring in 1891, down from 43.6 per cent in 1851, and still narrowly higher than Thomson's 40 per cent limit (Table 1). Excluding almshouses (Table 2) shows a fall from 45.5 per cent in 1851 to 42.8 per cent in 1891. In both tables, more older men co-resided with offspring than older women, reflecting Wall's 13 communities in 1891.⁵² The highest percentages for co-residential rates in 1891 were found in Ware Urban at 47.3 per cent, slightly above the agrarian parishes of Therfield and Barley, at 46.2 and 44.0 per cent respectively (Table 1). Aldenham had the lowest co-residential rate, at 24.6 per cent in 1891, down from 34.8 per cent in 1851. Five women in Aldenham were given rented accommodation in the Red Lion Cottages, formed in 1846 from a public house. Four houses in the Round Bush address were erected by 'the late Mrs Stuart of Aldenham Abbey, in the year 1839, for four aged labourers'.⁵³ By 1891, there were three almshouses in the Round Bush area, although only one of these hosted older people living without offspring or kin. However, five of the eight recorded in the Round Bush area lived without any kin, all of them migrants. This included solitary householder William Burnell from Watford, aged 75 and recorded as a '[p]ensioner'. The migratory habits of the older people may indicate that they spent their retirement in the suburbs. Living in Delrow Almshouses without any kin were six pensioners, their keep provided by the Brewers' Company. Besides living in almshouses, several of the older people that lived without kin worked in agrarian or general labour, or as hay-binders and grocers. Therefore, co-residential ties were minimal not only because retirement was sought in the country, but also offspring of labouring families may have migrated to London or Watford nearby.

Only in Great Gaddesden and Ware did co-residence become more common between 1851 and 1891. In Great Gaddesden, more offspring were recorded in employment in the houses of the older people by 1891, with only one unemployed in 1891, five in 1851. In 1891, eight offspring assisted their older parents in the straw plait and hat trades. The majority of older people worked in agriculture, with three older women working in straw plait or straw hat manufacture. Unusually, Lilley, the other straw plait community, saw a decline in co-residential patterns across the 40 years from 1851 to 1891.

51 Wall, 'Elderly persons', p. 92.

52 Ibid., p. 91.

53 *Kelly's Directory of Hertfordshire*, p. 695.

Co-residence increased in Ware, whereas in neighbouring Hertford it declined (Table 1). In 1891, 47.3 per cent of older people in Ware co-resided with offspring (and 53.3 per cent of older men did so). This is partly to do with the brewing and malt-making industry of Ware. For example 66-year-old Robert H. Sell lived with his 31-year-old son Walter, recorded as ‘assistant malt’. Robert Sell appears in the 1890 trade directory.⁵⁴ Overall, 11 per cent of all older men in Ware that co-resided with offspring only or with both offspring and kin worked in the brewing industry. Furthermore, 15.2 per cent of older men in Hertford Urban were lodgers, as opposed to only 5.8 per cent in Ware Urban. As lodgers are generally considered migratory, this affected the percentages living with family.⁵⁵ Furthermore, in both 1851 and 1891, around 47 per cent of the population of Hertford Urban were native, compared with about 60 per cent in Ware Urban.⁵⁶ In Ware, 45.2 per cent of older men living with offspring or with both offspring and kin were native to the parish, compared with 28.6 per cent of aged male lodgers in Hertford. Co-residence was borne out of geographical immobility by older people and their relatives, providing a sense of community cohesiveness.⁵⁷

Bushey’s co-residential proportion in 1891 was exactly the same as in 1851, at 41 per cent, although more men in Bushey co-resided than women in 1891, contrary to 1851. When almshouses were excluded in Table 2, co-residential ties increased in 1891 from 1851. In Appendix 1, there was an increase in older men living in the same household with offspring and kin at 21.4 per cent in 1891, compared with 11.8 per cent in 1851. In 1891, 33.5 per cent of older women lived without kin (coded as NOKIN) against 24.7 per cent 40 years earlier. Bushey evidently attracted older women on annuities or independent means, although two older women living with no kin in their households or in lodgings received parish relief, three were needlewomen and one was a charwoman. This indicates that Bushey attracted those of varying social persuasions to migrate from their families. The increase noted for Bushey’s older men could reflect government expenditure cuts to poor relief for the older people since the 1870s.⁵⁸

The increase in older men co-residing with offspring is further illustrated by calculating the sex ratio for certain living arrangements in comparison with the overall sex ratio in the parish. The sex ratio for those living with offspring only (coded as LWOFF and calculated from Appendix 1) in Hertfordshire’s eight communities in 1891 was 107 males per 100 females, or 143 males against 134 females. This is above the overall sex ratio of 81 when the 565 older men and 698 older women are considered. Barley’s ratio was exceptional: ten men lived with offspring only against four women. There were also more men than women living with offspring only in Aldenham and Bushey, as the majority of older men tended to be married rather than widowed. The lowest sex ratio was in households where older

54 *Kelly’s Directory of Hertfordshire*, p. 850.

55 Anderson, *Family Structure*, pp. 39, 52–55.

56 For further information on the relationship between migratory habits and household composition, see Heritage, ‘Comparative Perspective’, pp. 36, 38–39, 52–56.

57 Heritage, ‘Comparative Perspective’, p. 74.

58 Thomson, ‘Welfare and the historians’, p. 374.

people co-resided with extended kin and no offspring (LWKIN), at 55, or 57 men compared with 103 women. Appendix 1 shows that the percentage of older women in this group increased from 12.9 per cent in 1851 to 14.8 per cent in 1891. Once again, this was found to be attributed to the female widowed population. This also affected the likelihood of women living in an extended household with offspring and kin, with a sex ratio of 82. Even when the percentages of women in this category declined in 1891 from 1851, there were more older women in this category than men by numbers alone. Out of 134 women, 76 were mothers to the household head, with only two of these married. Furthermore, 51.4 per cent of all older people recorded with married and ever-married offspring were widows, compared with 31.3 per cent representing widowers. This reflects Anderson's findings for Preston in 1851, where 'being widowed and alone, rather than old age itself [...] was crucial in leading to the co-residence of married children and parents'.⁵⁹

When almshouses are excluded (Appendix 2), the sex ratio in 1891 for those living without kin (NOKIN) was higher than when the older people lived with both offspring and kin (LWOK). In Appendix 1, the opposite was true.⁶⁰ The most common living arrangement for the older people in domestic households (excluding almshouses) was to live without relatives at 35 per cent, echoing the 34 per cent for both older men and women in Wall's data.⁶¹ The sex ratio fell in 1891 from 1851 for the older people living without relatives, from 82 to 78 including almshouses in Appendix 1 and 97 to 90 excluding almshouse residents in Appendix 2. Therefore, as the Victorian period progressed, women increasingly lacked an intra-household relationship with their offspring and kin. For example, in Aldenham in 1891, 58.2 per cent of older women were coded as living without any kin (excluding lodgers, servants and visitors), compared with only 43.8 per cent of men (Appendix 2). When almshouses were included, 60.7 per cent of older women lived without any kin. Ten older women lived alone in households. Four of these were living on their own means, three resided in almshouses and three had no occupation. Many of those living without kin had moved into the parish. Of 37 women living without any kin, only 9 belonged to the parish of Aldenham and its hamlet, Radlett.

Although the numbers of older women surveyed for the rural parishes are small (82 in 1851 and 103 in 1891), the proportion of women that lived without kin (again excluding lodgers, servants and visitors) also increased in 1891, at 35.0 per cent, compared with 18.3 per cent in 1851. Out-migration of younger populations from the rural parishes and in-migration to suburban communities may have equally produced a higher number of older women lacking contact with kin. These circumstances for both older men and women were reported for the Buntingford Union near Barley and Therfield in the 1893 *Royal Commission on Labour*: a parliamentary enquiry into agricultural depression in the late nineteenth

59 Anderson, *Family Structure*, p. 140.

60 When data from Appendix 1 is applied, the sex ratio for NOKIN was 78; for LWOK, it was 82. In Appendix 2, for NOKIN it was 90; for LWOK, it was 82.

61 Calculated from Wall, 'Elderly persons', p. 91, based on the percentages of those living alone, with spouse only and non-relatives only.

century.⁶² Assistant Poor Law Commissioner Cecil M. Chapman commented: ‘The young men of intelligence have left the country, and nothing but oldish men, or men hampered by their circumstances, are left behind’.⁶³ The decline in population, arising from migration by offspring to the towns, meant that the Poor Law Guardians assisted older people in place of their relatives. Mr Shepherd Cross noted that in nearby Braughing parish there were 30 widows in receipt of relief, stating, ‘it is something dreadful the amount of outdoor relief in this part of the country’.⁶⁴ Changes in late Victorian economy and society impacted on intra-household ties between older people and kin.

With regard to older lodgers, for the eight communities as a whole in 1851, 9.3 per cent of older men were lodgers, compared with 6.1 per cent for older women (Appendix 1). By 1891, the proportion of male lodgers fell to 7.6 per cent while a small increase was found for older women, at 6.2 per cent. While the percentage of male lodgers was still higher than female lodgers in 1891, the numbers of these lodgers were equal at 43. Again, these numbers are small. Despite this, the increase in female lodgers in Hertford Urban and Bushey, by around two to three percentage points, adds to the idea that population growth and urbanisation (including suburbanisation) determined the degree of older women receiving familial assistance.

The ‘nuclear hardship’ hypothesis

Dupree concluded that, because familial care was limited in agricultural and small town communities, the main safety nets for the aged were ‘collective’ forms of welfare, being mainly the Poor Law and almshouses.⁶⁵ The 1851 and 1891 CEBs for the two towns, Hertford Urban and Ware Urban, can be used test this argument. These towns contain both almshouses and their respective Union workhouses, enabling a comparison between aged workhouse and almshouse inmates and older people living with their offspring in domestic households. The 1851 and 1891 censuses were held when workhouse admissions had slackened as winter gave way to spring and the period of seasonal unemployment ended, which may compromise a true reflection of the number of older inmates.⁶⁶

Table 3 groups the older people in Ware and Hertford into different categories. Those receiving ‘collective’ forms of welfare in the form of workhouse accommodation, almshouse residence and outdoor relief are compared with those in domestic households with offspring only, kin only, or both. Those that received both familial support and outdoor relief or almshouse residence were excluded from the ‘collectivity’ group to analyse those who relied solely on ‘collective’ sources. A further breakdown by those

62 Royal Commission on Labour, *The Agricultural Labourer. Vol. I. England. Part II* (British Parliamentary Papers, 1893–94, XXXV) pp. 148–57.

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid.

65 Dupree, *Family Structure*, p. 328.

66 See A. Hinde and F. Turnbull, ‘The populations of Two Hampshire workhouses, 1851–1861’, *Local Population Studies*, 61 (1998), pp. 38–53, esp. pp. 44–47.

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Table 3 Numbers of persons aged 65 years and over under the 'collectivity' and in domestic households in Hertford Urban and Ware Urban, 1851 and 1891

Parish	1851			1891		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Hertford Urban						
<i>Collectivity</i>						
Almshouses	6	0	6	5	0	5
Workhouses	25	18	7	43	29	14
Outdoor relief	21	2	19	4	1	3
TOTAL	52	20	32	52	30	22
<i>Domestic households</i>						
LWKIN	20	8	12	39	11	28
LWOFF	50	28	22	68	33	35
LWOK	56	26	30	64	24	40
TOTAL	126	62	64	171	68	103
<i>Dependent kin</i>						
LWKIN	5	1	4	10	2	8
LWOFF	4	2	2	0	0	0
LWOK	31	15	16	37	11	26
TOTAL	40	18	22	47	13	34
Ware Urban						
<i>Collectivity</i>						
Almshouses	15	0	15	24	0	24
Workhouses	25	13	12	52	41	11
Outdoor relief	8	2	6	7	0	7
TOTAL	48	15	33	83	41	42
<i>Domestic households</i>						
LWKIN	26	15	11	30	11	19
LWOFF	39	18	21	82	40	42
LWOK	38	17	21	67	33	34
TOTAL	103	50	53	179	84	95
<i>Dependent kin</i>						
LWKIN	6	3	3	6	1	5
LWOFF	1	0	1	1	0	1
LWOK	13	3	10	39	18	21
TOTAL	20	6	14	46	19	27

Notes: The numbers listed under 'collectivity' exclude those that received both almshouse residence/outdoor relief and familial support. Those who received both outdoor relief and familial support were included under 'domestic households'. 'Dependent kin' is a subgroup of 'domestic households', incorporating all older people not described as 'Head' or 'Wife', but who were related to the head of the household.

Source: Digitized Census Enumerators' Books, 1851 and 1891, Centre for Regional and Local History, University of Hertfordshire.

recorded as 'dependent kin' to the household head in domestic households was included. Here 'dependent kin' are defined as all those living in domestic households who were not described in the CEBs as either 'head' or 'wife'.

First, in 1851 the majority of older people resided with offspring and extended kin. In Hertford, 52 received 'collective' welfare resources against the 126 with familial support. The gap was narrower in Ware: 48 had support from institutions and the Poor Law against 103 living with offspring and kin. Interestingly, only 12 more older people in Hertford were assisted by the 'collectivity' than taken as dependent kin into the households of the household head. However, there was a difference of 28 between those two categories in Ware. In terms of the 'collectivity', the majority of older women in Hertford received outdoor relief; in Ware, it was primarily almshouse accommodation. The schedules of 134 to 141 Butcherley Green Street in Hertford, described earlier as disease-ridden, produced exceptional rates of older women on poor relief, nearly half of all the female relief applicants living without kin in Table 3. Remembering that familial support was lacking in Butcherley Green, 'nuclear hardship' was a reality for women forced onto poor relief in Hertford.

In Hertford, those in workhouses and domestic households increased between 1851 and 1891. The gap was widening between those under the 'collectivity' and those with family in domestic households, reflecting the greater need for support under the stricter Poor Law regime. In 1891 there were 34 older women dependent to the household head against only 22 solely assisted by the 'collectivity.' For older men, 13 were recorded as dependent kin compared with 30 supported by the 'collectivity'. The decline in outdoor relief for older women, coupled with fewer almshouses in Hertford than Ware, challenges Laslett's 'nuclear hardship' hypothesis. The majority of dependent female kin were widows and parents of the household head. Thus, the obligation by offspring to help out their mothers (or mothers-in-law) cancelled out any circumstances of 'nuclear hardship' in Hertford. Conversely, in Ware, the older people were more likely to be assisted by the 'collectivity' (24 women in almshouses and 41 men in workhouses). However, the gap between those enumerated as dependent kin and those under the 'collectivity' was wider for older men in Ware than for women. Around 1892, the Watford Board of Guardians reported to Victorian philanthropist Charles Booth that many older women 'live with married children and help in housework'.⁶⁷ Women were more likely to be accommodated in the households of their relations and less likely to rely solely on parish relief or reside in institutions, whereas the opposite was true for older men. This is in spite of the roughly equal proportions of older men and women co-residing with at least one offspring in Tables 1 and 2. Therefore, in 1891 Hertford, the 'collectivity' did not comprise the main sources of assistance for the older people.

67 C. Booth, *The Aged Poor in England and Wales* (London, 1894), p. 166.

Conclusion

The proportions of older people co-residing with their offspring in the 1851 and 1891 CEBs for Hertfordshire were higher than the maximum of 40 per cent proposed by Thomson. This was evident in both rural and urban parishes, albeit more prominent in the rural. Co-residence rates were higher than expected in urban parishes, such as in Hertford Urban in 1851 and Ware Urban in 1891. The most revealing discovery is that, in these urban parishes in 1851 and 1891, over half of older men co-resided with offspring only or with both offspring and kin compared with lower proportions of co-residence for older women. The argument that older women lived with offspring more often than did older men may thus be incorrect, an assumption based on the disproportionate number of old men in workhouses. Even when almshouse residents were excluded and the numbers living with extended kin only were taken into account, it was by no means universal that familial support was preferentially given to older women. As the numbers of older men co-residing with offspring or with both offspring and kin increased in 1891 from 1851, a fall for older women in these households was discovered.

Women were more favoured as co-residents with extended kin, due to their widowed status. Also, relatives may have felt more inclined to accommodate older women than older men into their own households. Since older men were more likely to be married than widowed, they were more favoured than women living with offspring only, specifically in a nuclear family structure. Urban businesses were conducive to a family structure comprised of both adult offspring and an older household head. In this case, the conclusion that familial support was more directed towards older women needs refining, especially for the late nineteenth century.

Between 1851 and 1891, co-residence between older people and offspring declined, contrasting with previous findings.⁶⁸ Among the places studied in this article, co-residence increased only in Great Gaddesden and Ware Urban, while Bushey's rate was the same in both periods. The co-residential ties in the agricultural parishes of Barley and Therfield were severed by long-term agricultural depression as younger people migrated from the parish in search of work elsewhere. Co-residence was also more limited in the growing suburban parishes of Aldenham and Bushey. Suburbia witnessed the in-migration of those living in old age, some of them residing in almshouses or in lodgings. Therefore, the decline and growth in population by 1891 went somewhat hand in hand with the extent of older people forming ties with offspring and kin. Specific occupations also affected co-residential ties. The straw plaiting trade in Great Gaddesden and the malt-making and brewing industries in Ware were partly responsible for the increase in co-residence in these two parishes by 1891. Furthermore, Hertford contained more older lodgers than Ware in 1891. Lodgers were generally migrants and did not share the benefits of a co-residential structure. By contrast, the majority of Ware's population were mainly native-born, held strong

68 Wall, 'Elderly persons', p. 92.

occupational ties to the local brewing industry and thus forged intra-household links with offspring.

Laslett's 'nuclear hardship' hypothesis was assessed for two Hertfordshire towns. The majority of older people in both 1851 and 1891 lived in domestic households with offspring, extended kin or both. In 1851, the proportion of older people assisted outside the family in the form of the 'collectivity' was greater than the numbers accommodated in the household of a relative. This was attributed to the numbers of older women on outdoor relief in Hertford and in almshouses in Ware. By 1891, this persisted in Ware due to the increasing workhouse admissions by older men and almshouse residence for older women. However, in Hertford, more older women were admitted into the household of a relative than were in institutions or relying solely on poor relief. The limited number of almshouses in Hertford highlights how the 'nuclear hardship' hypothesis is both confirmed *and* challenged based on local circumstances.

This article has demonstrated that the differences in living arrangements across time and geography in mid Victorian Hertfordshire are explained by a range of factors. Occupational structure, widowhood, migratory habits and almshouse accommodation determined the degree of co-residential patterns with offspring and kin. Changes to social welfare are evident too. Thomson's argument that a cut in poor relief expenditure to the older people in the 1870s may have affected the rise in older men as co-residents is confirmed by this research.⁶⁹ More accounts of living arrangements in old age can be discovered thanks to datasets from the newly completed Integrated Census Microdata Project (I-CeM): a digitised transcription of all households across all of England, Wales and Scotland in the mid-Victorian and Edwardian period.⁷⁰ This means more opportunities to reinforce the argument that familial support was an important resource for the older people in nineteenth century society, perhaps on a scale above the Poor Law and institutional care.

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⁶⁹ Thomson, 'Welfare and the historians', p. 374.

⁷⁰ For more information, visit <https://www.essex.ac.uk/history/research/icem/> (Accessed 15 May 2017).

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Appendix 1 Living arrangements of persons aged 65 years and over by parish and by groups of rural, urban and totals, 1851 and 1891

Parish	1851						1891					
	Tot.	%	Male	%	Fem.	%	Tot.	%	Male	%	Fem.	%
Lilley												
LWOFF	2	11.8	0	0.0	2	16.7	6	21.4	3	25.0	3	18.8
LWKIN	3	17.6	0	0.0	3	25.0	9	32.1	3	25.0	6	37.5
LWOK	7	41.2	3	60.0	4	33.3	6	21.4	3	25.0	3	18.8
NOKIN	2	11.8	1	20.0	1	8.3	6	21.4	3	25.0	3	18.8
LAS/V/L	3	17.6	1	20.0	2	16.7	1	3.6	0	0.0	1	6.3
TOTAL	17	100.0	5	100.0	12	100.0	28	100.0	12	100.0	16	100.0
LAL	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.6	0	0.0	1	6.3
LWOFF/K	9	52.9	3	60.0	6	50.0	12	42.9	6	50.0	6	37.5
Gaddesden												
LWOFF	7	19.4	3	20.0	4	19.0	12	18.2	6	17.6	6	18.8
LWKIN	9	25.0	3	20.0	6	28.6	7	10.6	3	8.8	4	12.5
LWOK	6	16.7	2	13.3	4	19.0	15	22.7	7	20.6	8	25.0
NOKIN	11	30.6	6	40.0	5	23.8	30	45.5	17	50.0	13	40.6
LAS/V/L	3	8.3	1	6.7	2	9.5	2	3.0	1	2.9	1	3.1
TOTAL	36	100.0	15	100.0	21	100.0	66	100.0	34	100.0	32	100.0
LAL	3	8.3	1	6.7	2	9.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
LWOFF/K	13	36.1	5	33.3	8	38.1	27	40.9	13	38.2	14	43.8
Barley												
LWOFF	14	34.1	6	31.6	8	36.4	14	28.0	10	34.5	4	19.0
LWKIN	4	9.8	1	5.3	3	13.6	4	8.0	2	6.9	2	9.5
LWOK	7	17.1	3	15.8	4	18.2	8	16.0	3	10.3	5	23.8
NOKIN	12	29.3	8	42.1	4	18.2	21	42.0	13	44.8	8	38.1
LAS/V/L	4	9.8	1	5.3	3	13.6	3	6.0	1	3.4	2	9.5
TOTAL	41	100.0	19	100.0	22	100.0	50	100.0	29	100.0	21	100.0
LAL	3	7.3	1	5.3	2	9.1	1	2.0	1	3.4	0	0.0
LWOFF/K	21	51.2	9	47.4	12	54.5	22	44.0	13	44.8	9	42.9
Therfield												
LWOFF	19	35.8	10	38.5	9	33.3	16	24.6	8	25.8	8	23.5
LWKIN	4	7.5	1	3.8	3	11.1	9	13.8	3	9.7	6	17.6
LWOK	14	26.4	5	19.2	9	33.3	14	21.5	7	22.6	7	20.6
NOKIN	12	22.6	7	26.9	5	18.5	24	36.9	12	38.7	12	35.3
LAS/V/L	4	7.5	3	11.5	1	3.7	2	3.1	1	3.2	1	2.9
TOTAL	53	100.0	26	100.0	27	100.0	65	100.0	31	100.0	34	100.0
LAL	4	7.5	3	11.5	1	3.7	2	3.1	1	3.2	1	2.9
LWOFF/K	33	62.3	15	57.7	18	66.7	30	46.2	15	48.4	15	44.1
Aldenham												
LWOFF	16	17.4	9	18.4	7	16.3	17	14.9	10	18.9	7	11.5
LWKIN	11	12.0	6	12.2	5	11.6	16	14.0	7	13.2	9	14.8
LWOK	16	17.4	6	12.2	10	23.3	11	9.6	5	9.4	6	9.8
NOKIN	41	44.6	23	46.9	18	41.9	61	53.5	24	45.3	37	60.7
LAS/V/L	8	8.7	5	10.2	3	7.0	9	7.9	7	13.2	2	3.3
TOTAL	92	100.0	49	100.0	43	100.0	114	100.0	53	100.0	61	100.0

Tom Heritage

Appendix 1 *continued*

Parish	1851						1891					
	Tot.	%	Male	%	Fem.	%	Tot.	%	Male	%	Fem.	%
LAL	5	5.4	2	4.1	3	7.0	7	6.1	6	11.3	1	1.6
LWOFF/K	32	34.8	15	30.6	17	39.5	28	24.6	15	28.3	13	21.3
Bushey												
LWOFF	43	24.9	17	22.4	26	26.8	62	21.0	33	25.2	29	17.7
LWKIN	23	13.3	10	13.2	13	13.4	45	15.3	17	13.0	28	17.1
LWOK	28	16.2	9	11.8	19	19.6	59	20.0	28	21.4	31	18.9
NOKIN	51	29.5	27	35.5	24	24.7	101	34.2	46	35.1	55	33.5
LAS/V/L	28	16.2	13	17.1	15	15.5	28	9.5	7	5.3	21	12.8
TOTAL	173	100.0	76	100.0	97	100.0	295	100.0	131	100.0	164	100.0
LAL	13	7.5	8	10.5	5	5.2	19	6.4	6	4.6	13	7.9
LWOFF/K	71	41.0	26	34.2	45	46.4	121	41.0	61	46.6	60	36.6
Hertford												
LWOFF	50	22.5	28	28.9	22	17.6	68	20.6	33	23.9	35	18.2
LWKIN	20	9.0	8	8.2	12	9.6	40	12.1	11	8.0	29	15.1
LWOK	56	25.2	26	26.8	30	24.0	64	19.4	24	17.4	40	20.8
NOKIN	59	26.6	18	18.6	41	32.8	109	33.0	47	34.1	62	32.3
LAS/V/L	37	16.7	17	17.5	20	16.0	49	14.8	23	16.7	26	13.5
TOTAL	222	100.0	97	100.0	125	100.0	330	100.0	138	100.0	192	100.0
LAL	24	10.8	14	14.4	10	8.0	41	12.4	21	15.2	20	10.4
LWOFF/K	106	47.7	54	55.7	52	41.6	132	40.0	57	41.3	75	39.1
Ware												
LWOFF	40	20.2	18	20.5	22	20.0	82	26.0	40	29.2	42	23.6
LWKIN	29	14.6	15	17.0	14	12.7	30	9.5	11	8.0	19	10.7
LWOK	38	19.2	17	19.3	21	19.1	67	21.3	33	24.1	34	19.1
NOKIN	60	30.3	22	25.0	38	34.5	117	37.1	43	31.4	74	41.6
LAS/V/L	31	15.7	16	18.2	15	13.6	19	6.0	10	7.3	9	5.1
TOTAL	198	100.0	88	100.0	110	100.0	315	100.0	137	100.0	178	100.0
LAL	11	5.6	6	6.8	5	4.5	15	4.8	8	5.8	7	3.9
LWOFF/K	78	39.4	35	39.8	43	39.1	149	47.3	73	53.3	76	42.7
RURAL												
LWOFF	42	28.6	19	29.2	23	28.0	48	23.0	27	25.5	21	20.4
LWKIN	20	13.6	5	7.7	15	18.3	29	13.9	11	10.4	18	17.5
LWOK	34	23.1	13	20.0	21	25.6	43	20.6	20	18.9	23	22.3
NOKIN	37	25.2	22	33.8	15	18.3	81	38.8	45	42.5	36	35.0
LAS/V/L	14	9.5	6	9.2	8	9.8	8	3.8	3	2.8	5	4.9
TOTAL	147	100.0	65	100.0	82	100.0	209	100.0	106	100.0	103	100.0
LAL	10	6.8	5	7.7	5	6.1	4	1.9	2	1.9	2	1.9
LWOFF/K	76	51.7	32	49.2	44	53.7	91	43.5	47	44.3	44	42.7
URBAN												
LWOFF	149	21.8	72	23.2	77	20.5	229	21.7	116	25.3	113	19.0
LWKIN	83	12.1	39	12.6	44	11.7	131	12.4	46	10.0	85	14.3
LWOK	138	20.1	58	18.7	80	21.3	201	19.1	90	19.6	111	18.7

The Living Arrangements of Older People in Hertfordshire

Parish	1851						1891					
	Tot.	%	Male	%	Fem.	%	Tot.	%	Male	%	Fem.	%
NOKIN	211	30.8	90	29.0	121	32.3	388	36.8	160	34.9	228	38.3
LAS/V/L	104	15.2	51	16.5	53	14.1	105	10.0	47	10.2	58	9.7
TOTAL	685	100.0	310	100.0	375	100.0	1,054	100.0	459	100.0	595	100.0
LAL	53	7.7	30	9.7	23	6.1	82	7.8	41	8.9	41	6.9
LWOFF/K	287	41.9	130	41.9	157	41.9	430	40.8	206	44.9	224	37.6
TOTAL												
LWOFF	191	23.0	91	24.3	100	21.9	277	21.9	143	25.3	134	19.2
LWKIN	103	12.4	44	11.7	59	12.9	160	12.7	57	10.1	103	14.8
LWOK	172	20.7	71	18.9	101	22.1	244	19.3	110	19.5	134	19.2
NOKIN	248	29.8	112	29.9	136	29.8	469	37.1	205	36.3	264	37.8
LAS/V/L	118	14.2	57	15.2	61	13.3	113	8.9	50	8.8	63	9.0
TOTAL	832	100.0	375	100.0	457	100.0	1,263	100.0	565	100.0	698	100.0
LAL	63	7.6	35	9.3	28	6.1	86	6.8	43	7.6	43	6.2
LWOFF/K	363	43.6	162	43.2	201	44.0	521	41.3	253	44.8	268	38.4

Notes: Residential patterns are defined through the following codes: LWOFF – living with offspring only (or with sons, daughters and/or stepchildren); LWKIN – living with extended kin only (for example, grandchildren, siblings, aunts/uncles); LWOK – living with both offspring and extended kin in the same household; NOKIN – living without any kin; LAS/V/L – living as servants, visitors, lodgers or boarders. Further categories under TOTAL for each parish, rural, urban and total collectives are defined as: LAL – living as a lodger/boarder only; LWOFF/K – rate combined from LWOFF and LWOK. **RURAL** combines rates from Lilley, Great Gaddesden, Barley and Therfield; **URBAN** in bold combines rates from Aldenham, Bushey, Hertford Urban and Ware Urban. Excludes workhouse residents in Hertford Urban and Ware Urban and hospital/prison residents in Hertford Urban.

Source: Digitized Census Enumerators' Books, 1851 and 1891, Centre for Regional and Local History, University of Hertfordshire.

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Appendix 2 Living arrangements of persons aged 65 years and over excluding almshouses by parish and by groups of urban and totals, 1851 and 1891

Parish	1851						1891					
	Tot.	%	Male	%	Fem.	%	Tot.	%	Male	%	Fem.	%
Aldenham												
LWOFF	16	19.8	9	20.5	7	18.9	16	15.5	9	18.8	7	12.7
LWKIN	10	12.3	6	13.6	4	10.8	14	13.6	6	12.5	8	14.5
LWOK	16	19.8	6	13.6	10	27.0	11	10.7	5	10.4	6	10.9
NOKIN	31	38.3	18	40.9	13	35.1	53	51.5	21	43.8	32	58.2
LAS/V/L	8	9.9	5	11.4	3	8.1	9	8.7	7	14.6	2	3.6
TOTAL	81	100.0	44	100.0	37	100.0	103	100.0	48	100.0	55	100.0
LAL	5	6.2	2	4.5	3	8.1	7	6.8	6	12.5	1	1.8
LWOFF/K	32	39.5	15	34.1	17	45.9	27	26.2	14	29.2	13	23.6
Bushey												
LWOFF	43	24.9	17	22.4	26	26.8	61	21.3	32	24.8	29	18.5
LWKIN	23	13.3	10	13.2	13	13.4	45	15.7	17	13.2	28	17.8
LWOK	28	16.2	9	11.8	19	19.6	59	20.6	28	21.7	31	19.7
NOKIN	51	29.5	27	35.5	24	24.7	93	32.5	45	34.9	48	30.6
LAS/V/L	28	16.2	13	17.1	15	15.5	28	9.8	7	5.4	21	13.4
TOTAL	173	100.0	76	100.0	97	100.0	286	100.0	129	100.0	157	100.0
LAL	13	7.5	8	10.5	5	5.2	19	6.6	6	4.7	13	8.3
LWOFF/K	71	41.0	26	34.2	45	46.4	120	42.0	60	46.5	60	38.2
Hertford												
LWOFF	50	23.1	28	28.9	22	18.5	68	21.0	33	23.9	35	18.8
LWKIN	20	9.3	8	8.2	12	10.1	39	12.0	11	8.0	28	15.1
LWOK	56	25.9	26	26.8	30	25.2	64	19.8	24	17.4	40	21.5
NOKIN	53	24.5	18	18.6	35	29.4	104	32.1	47	34.1	57	30.6
LAS/V/L	37	17.1	17	17.5	20	16.8	49	15.1	23	16.7	26	14.0
TOTAL	216	100.0	97	100.0	119	100.0	324	100.0	138	100.0	186	100.0
LAL	24	11.1	14	14.4	10	8.4	41	12.7	21	15.2	20	10.8
LWOFF/K	106	49.1	54	55.7	52	43.7	132	40.7	57	41.3	75	40.3
Ware												
LWOFF	39	21.8	18	20.5	21	23.1	82	28.2	40	29.2	42	27.3
LWKIN	26	14.5	15	17.0	11	12.1	30	10.3	11	8.0	19	12.3
LWOK	38	21.2	17	19.3	21	23.1	67	23.0	33	24.1	34	22.1
NOKIN	45	25.1	22	25.0	23	25.3	93	32.0	43	31.4	50	32.5
LAS/V/L	31	17.3	16	18.2	15	16.5	19	6.5	10	7.3	9	5.8
TOTAL	179	100.0	88	100.0	91	100.0	291	100.0	137	100.0	154	100.0
LAL	11	6.1	6	6.8	5	5.5	15	5.2	8	5.8	7	4.5
LWOFF/K	77	43.0	35	39.8	42	46.2	149	51.2	73	53.3	76	49.4
URBAN												
LWOFF	148	22.8	72	23.6	76	22.1	227	22.6	114	25.2	113	20.5
LWKIN	79	12.2	39	12.8	40	11.6	128	12.7	45	10.0	83	15.0
LWOK	138	21.3	58	19.0	80	23.3	201	20.0	90	19.9	111	20.1
NOKIN	180	27.7	85	27.9	95	27.6	343	34.2	156	34.5	187	33.9
LAS/V/L	104	16.0	51	16.7	53	15.4	105	10.5	47	10.4	58	10.5
TOTAL	649	100.0	305	100.0	344	100.0	1,004	100.0	452	100.0	552	100.0

The Living Arrangements of Older People in Hertfordshire

Parish	1851						1891					
	Tot.	%	Male	%	Fem.	%	Tot.	%	Male	%	Fem.	%
LAL	53	8.2	30	9.8	23	6.7	82	8.2	41	9.1	41	7.4
LWOFF/K	286	44.1	130	42.6	156	45.3	428	42.6	204	45.1	224	40.6
TOTAL												
LWOFF	190	23.9	91	24.6	99	23.2	275	22.7	141	25.3	134	20.5
LWKIN	99	12.4	44	11.9	55	12.9	157	12.9	56	10.0	101	15.4
LWOK	172	21.6	71	19.2	101	23.7	244	20.1	110	19.7	134	20.5
NOKIN	217	27.3	107	28.9	110	25.8	424	35.0	201	36.0	223	34.0
LAS/V/L	118	14.8	57	15.4	61	14.3	113	9.3	50	9.0	63	9.6
TOTAL	796	100.0	370	100.0	426	100.0	1,213	100.0	558	100.0	655	100.0
LAL	63	7.9	35	9.5	28	6.6	86	7.1	43	7.7	43	6.6
LWOFF/K	362	45.5	162	43.8	200	46.92	519	42.8	251	45.0	268	40.9

Notes: See Appendix 1. **URBAN** combines rates from Aldenham, Bushey, Hertford Urban and Ware Urban. **TOTAL** combines rates from RURAL in Appendix 1 and URBAN in Appendix 2.

Source: Digitized Census Enumerators' Books, 1851 and 1891, Centre for Regional and Local History, University of Hertfordshire.