Book Reviews

Piers D. Mitchell (ed.), *Sanitation, Latrines and Intestinal Parasites in Past Populations* (Ashgate, London, 2015). 290pp. ISBN: 978–1472–449078. £73.99 (hardback).

While those readers with an interest in all things lavatorial will find this book thought provoking and full of nuggets of interest, this collection of papers is perhaps more likely to appeal to specialist archaeologists than readers of *LPS*. The papers address the important topic of how historic populations dealt with the issue of sanitation but, because most of the contributors consider ancient civilisations such as Mesopotamia, Ancient Greece, 'the New World', East Asia 'prior to modernisation' and 'Africa and the Middle East prior to 1500', the authors are unable to provide any direct evidence of how the methods described actually affected the health of the populations under study.

Two of the sixteen papers consider British towns. In 'A tale of two cities; the efficacy of Ancient and Medieval Sanitation Methods' Taylor compares and contrasts the sanitary facilities of Ancient Rome with those of Medieval London. He judges the two cities on their ability to meet five criteria: that waste could be removed and disposed of without danger to members of the public; that this removal was undertaken by properly regulated civic authorities with minimal inconvenience to the inhabitants; that the waste did not constitute a nuisance by assaulting the senses or threatening the health of the public; that it did not contaminate any food or water supply; and, finally, that it did not contaminate water used for washing or recreation. Taylor concludes that both London and Rome met the first two criteria, did not always achieve the third and failed outright to prevent contamination of their water sources, as the inhabitants had little concept of the dangers carried by sewage and other waste matter. Unable to produce mortality or morbidity rates, however, he can offer no objective assessment of whether Rome or London was more successful at protecting the health of its citizens.

Hall and Kenward offer a chapter on 'Sewers, cesspits and middens, a survey of the evidence for 2000 years of waste disposal for York, UK'. This survey is conducted through an assessment of faecal material found in numerous archaeological sites around York. As the authors state, they concentrate on the 'biological evidence that has been recovered from archaeological deposits, declining to review the 'documentary evidence' from the York Archives. While this approach provides some new insights into sanitation issues for historians—such as the debate over whether textiles or moss were more likely to be used for wiping bottoms in Viking York—the conclusions drawn from observations based on the presence or absence of microscopic worm eggs may be too speculative for some.

Nearly half the papers in the collection are written by paleoparasitologists, and readers have to be comfortable with discussions of 'molecular phylogenetic studies', 'antibody/antigen complex alteration', 'epitope morphology' and 'immunological tests' to follow the evidence provided. The non-specialist may be left puzzling over the significance of the presence, or absence, of particular parasites in the long tables detailing which species had been found at the various archaeological sites surveyed; and may prefer to skip to the 'discussion' or 'conclusion' sections where some interpretation is offered. The discussion offered by Anastasious, for example, succinctly illustrates what the study of parasites can offer the historian; not only can we learn about the hygiene practices of past populations and their dietary habits, but we are also offered glimpses of human migration patterns. The presence of African parasites in latrine sites in Europe provides evidence of migration from one continent to the other, although who was travelling and for what reason remains unclear. Such uncertainty opens up new questions and points to new avenues of research for those interested in migration at this scale.

When one is used to reading works by authors from one's own, or related, fields of interest, dipping into books written by researchers with rather different backgrounds and training can be a challenge, but it can also be interesting, informative and eye-opening. By taking us on a tour of ancient latrines and their contents Mitchell's book reminds us of just how universal and fundamental the problems of dealing with domestic and personal waste have been throughout human history, but particularly so when settlements grew to a size where individual solutions to this problem began to compromise the health and wellbeing of the population. The pictures and diagrams of lavatories from around the world and across time are surprising in their familiarity and may encourage those interested in more recent times and less far flung places to compare the sanitary and hygiene arrangements adopted in the latter communities with those outlined by Mitchell and his colleagues.

Eilidh Garrett
University of Essex

M. Hicks (ed.), *The Later Medieval Inquisitions* Post Mortem*: Mapping the Medieval Countryside and Rural Society* (The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 2016). xiv + 226pp. ISBN: 978–1–78327–079–8. £60.00 (hardback).

This volume of collected essays is one of the outcomes of the project 'Mapping the Medieval Countryside', a collaboration between the University of Winchester and the Department for Digital Humanities at King's College London, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (see the project's website http://www.inquisitionspostmortem.ac.uk/). Inquisitions *post mortem* (IPMs) recorded the lands held by tenants of the crown at their deaths; related documents may include manorial extents and proofs of age (of the heir). Since the system was in operation from c.1236 to the 1640s and covered the marches of Wales and whole of England (except the counties palatine), thousands of IPMs survive. These documents describe the lands held by thousands of families (from nobles to peasants) and thus are a key historical source for almost every settlement in England and many in Wales.

Chapters 2 and 3 deal with 'outliers'. Gordon McKelvie discusses the handful of surviving Scottish IPMs and those taken in Calais. The latter shed light on a particular facet of English military conquest: the regular supply of watches to guard the town (p.19). Paul Dryburgh looks at how the system of conducting IPMs was implemented in Ireland: although Irish public records were destroyed in 1922, 178 Irish IPMs survive at TNA and these provide 'key data and penetrating insights' into landholding in Ireland between 1240 and 1415 (p.24), although survival is patchy and 75 per cent of them are dated between 1280 and 1350. In Chapter 4 Jennifer Ward explores the records of the honour of Clare (and Gloucester), centred on Clare in Suffolk, which demonstrate the component parts of that large estate, that is, how its 384 'knight's fees' were held by the earl's tenants (vassals).

The subsequent chapters are more relevant to *LPS* readers. Christopher Dyer considers the value of IPMs for landscape, farming and society in the West Midlands, 1250–1509. The heir would be granted the estate after the performance of homage and the payment of a 'relief' (a form of inheritance tax). The value of the relief was partly determined by the value of the estate which was ascertained from the extent drawn up by royal officials. Such documents say little about crops and animals but they do disclose land use and occasionally contain information about specific fields, pastures and woods (p. 59). Dyer demonstrates how changes in land management over time can be discovered from a series of extents from the same region. (On p.116 it is noted that only IPMs from 1399–1447 include the contents of extents.) Dyer also compares the change over time indicated by extents with that indicated in Feet of Fines and finds that 'the two sources are telling much the same story' (p. 82), suggesting that the contents of extents were fairly reliable.

In 'Beyond the dots: mapping meaning in the later medieval landscape' Stephen Mileson, considering relevant evidence from the 14 parishes of Ewelme hundred in south Oxfordshire, maps peasant bynames, field-names and other minor place-names contained in local IPMs. These 'provide important raw material for any investigation of peasant perceptions in the later Middle Ages' (p. 86). Mileson shows how early topographical surnames can be used to demonstrate 'something of the way identities were shaped in relation to the environment' (p. 88). He also argues that field-names represent 'a subjective and collective choice' by the local peasantry (p. 92). This fascinating chapter tentatively opens up possibilities for reconstituting 'ordinary inhabitants' perceptions in the later Middle Ages' (p. 99).

The next two chapters consider other aspects of the local economy: markets and fairs, and milling. Focussing on the digitized IPMs from the period 1399–1447, Matthew Holford explores the reliability of the records of markets and fairs in IPMs and their accompanying extents and compares them with details in the *Gazetteer* maintained by the Centre for Metropolitan History. He finds some discrepancies but also notes that some IPMs provide the only evidence of the continued operation of some markets and, in some cases, of their decline in value. Matthew Tompkins studies the structure of the milling industry in the period 1427–37, as revealed in IPMs since mills were manorial assets and therefore would (usually) be included in the valuation. Although a small data sample (464 mills in 327 manors), his maps provide interesting glimpses of the distribution of different types of mill—categorised by power source (wind, water, unspecified) and by function (grain, fulling, unspecified).

William Deller's consideration of the veracity of proofs of age uses a database of the wording of all jurors' proof testimonies from the period 1246–1430 (10,036 in all). He emphasises that the point of the record was to produce a valid legal document 'to trigger the release of land, not to set down accurate eyewitness experiences' (p. 137), thus recollections were limited by convention to a set of about 15 types. Only about 947 (9 per cent) of the whole were uniquely personal in the sense that the content or wording did not appear in any other testimony. Deller explains why close 'correspondence' does not necessarily invalidate proofs of age. In the second part of his analysis, he examines what jurors had to say about their employment and of their experience of buying and selling. His (implicit) point is that although jurors on the same panel might give a repetitious account of an event 'proving' the age of an heir, unique information frequently featured within their proof.

Proofs of age focussed not on the birth but the baptism of an heir, a rite that was usually conducted on the same or the next day; proofs therefore give a snapshot of what went on in a particular parish church around the time of that rite. Katie Clarke and Michael Hicks have extracted details not only of the circumstances of baptisms but also of churchings; indeed proofs are the principal source for the service of purification of the mother following a pregnancy. The examples cited here provide a fascinating insight into this practice, including the celebrations afterwards—surviving childbirth was worth celebrating—even though, as the authors point out, mothers were churched after each pregnancy whether the child survived or not.

Next Hicks considers three other, somewhat disparate, aspects of everyday life revealed in IPMs and proofs of age: retainers, the religious orders and wine. For example, at a christening the father of the infant might seize the opportunity to take homage, make grants, seal deeds or reconcile disputes with those present (p. 177). Proofs of age illuminate monasticism in two ways: the aristocratic connections of regular clergy, for example, in their choice of godparents and monastic details recounted by witnesses to help them date the baptism. Wine features in proofs of age as it was normally served to godparents in the church after the service and to others present at the ceremony. It might be purchased for the subsequent churching, indeed the amount provided on three occasions (1 pipe, i.e. 128 gallons) indicates that churchings could be bigger celebrations (p. 188). Furthermore, proofs might state the provenance of the wine and therefore indicate trading and transport routes.

Janette Garrett examines the relationship between a 'peripheral' area (Northumberland) and the centre (London) by studying how Northumbrian society interacted with royal officials in the IPM process and comparing it with Berkshire. She concludes that although distance might determine the speed with which the process was completed, it was no more difficult for the crown to govern Northumberland than Berkshire, since IPMs were returned from both.

In the final chapter Simon Payling considers late medieval land disputes and the manipulation of IPMs. As he readily admits this is a complex subject and his work is based on a series of case studies that 'may or may not be meaningfully representative' (p. 203). He focusses on IPMs that deliberately and illegally promoted the claim of one individual to land over that of another. He notes that 'In general, the jurors were simply called up to validate, in routine fashion, the uncontested evidence produced for them by the deceased's family' (p. 204). Although the descent of most property was uncontentious and uncontested, where there was a dispute, he argues, jurors had little option but to accept/confirm the evidence of the most powerful, or most adept, of the claimants. Whether an IPM was manipulated can only be verified by the survival of other evidence regarding the landholding in question.

The various authors seem to disagree over the extent of the (in)accuracy of the information contained in the IPMs; nevertheless, it would be pointless to dismiss such detailed evidence altogether. Indeed as the collection's title indicates, these essays suggest ways in which these newly digitized sources might be used to understand better many aspects of the late medieval countryside and of rural society.

Heather Falvey,
University of Oxford, Department of Continuing Education

Nigel Goose et al., *The British Almshouse: New Perspectives on Philanthropy ca 1400–1914* (FACHRS Publications, Milton Keynes, 2016). vii + 407pp. ISBN: 978–0–9548180–2–9. £12 (paperback).

This is a long-awaited book on two counts. Whilst poor relief in general has been studied in detail, the historiography of almshouses, especially after the post-mediaeval period, has hardly progressed beyond impressionistic discovery and has suffered from a 'lack of academic attention' (p. 5). An enquiring reader wishing to have a more detailed understanding of how almshouse charity was located within poor relief and social welfare overall, how almspeople were chosen, how they lived and how almshouses were run, had scant material at his or her disposal. An initiative by Professor Goose and the Family and Community Historical Research Society to help close this knowledge gap, begun in 2006, had ambitiously hoped to publish its conclusions in 2012. Nevertheless, it is a major achievement that, with over 50 researchers involved, with widely differing ranges of experiences, areas of research interests and varied source materials, the project coordinator Anne Langley brought the book to market in early 2016.

The book's three parts contain 20 essays largely bounded by its 1400–1914 period of study. The three chapters of Part One are all general surveys; of the chronology and geography of almshouse foundations in England (Goose), of almshouse buildings (Caffrey) and of the almshouse community (Langley). Part Two—Places, presents eight regional or local studies. The first three discuss founders and foundations of almshouses in Hampshire from 1100 to 1640 (Spruce and Taylor), seventeenth-century Berkshire (Lambert) and Mile End and Whitechapel between 1623 and 1839 (Cumner). The next two chapters analyse almshouse demographics and make some comparisons between almshouse and workhouse provision in the nineteenth-century, first in Warwickshire

(Langley) and then in Derbyshire (Leivers). The next essay considers occupational almshouses in north-east England largely around the end of the nineteenth-century (Seal) and Part Two is completed by studies of the relatively few post-Reformation almshouses in Anglesey (Pinches) and Scotland (Johnson). Part Three—Themes, has nine essays discussing various aspects of almshouse life. The first three reflect on almshouse rules and regulations across England (Blaydon), describe the tribulations of an almshouse master trying to subsist on a meagre stipend and manage an under-endowed almshouse (Drake) and analyse almspersons' possessions at Sherborne almshouse between 1582 and 1760 (Clark). The next three chapters investigate almshouse residents' clothing (Wood), almshouse benefits (Nicholls) and the changing role of almshouse gardens from their early use as almspersons' vegetable plots to the communal gardens of the twenty-first century (Hare). The three final essays examine the social status of almspeople (Ellis), almshouses for clergy widows in Derbyshire (Leivers) and Catholic almshouses in London (Mangion). In addition to its 78 illustrations, fourteen colour plates and four maps, the book's four figures and 35 tables give a wealth of quantitative data.

A mixed economy of welfare with religious, private and local community provision had already evolved by the late mediaeval period but was fractured by the Reformation and the Dissolution of the Monasteries and Chantries with the closure between 1536 and 1549 of nearly half of the estimated existing 671 hospitals and almshouses; most of these closures were of hospitals and not almshouses. New private donors stepped in but by the end of the century establishments had only recovered to an estimated 479 houses but by 1660 had grown to somewhere between 794 and 1,019. The evolution of Elizabethan Poor Law completed by the enabling Acts of 1598 and 1601 saw the introduction of parish rates for relief of the poor but with a very ragged and uncertain implementation across the seventeenth century. The mixed economy of welfare now included formal poor relief, private philanthropy and local community support with taxation progressively becoming the dominant contributor as the century ended, growing from then to the beginning of the nineteenth century by perhaps four times. It was accompanied by renewed growth in charitable giving with private charity becoming increasingly dominant across the Victorian period only for voluntarism to become subordinate again to public welfare because of the introduction of old age pensions in 1908. Almshouses were an expensive contribution to the mixed economy of welfare, providing over the period accommodation for an average of less than 2 per cent of the population over-60, with an extremely variable geographical spread.

The collection's initial three chapters provide a good basic introduction to almshouses and its regional and thematic discussions illuminate the almshouse experience. It is underpinned with much factual data, underlining a very extensive use of primary and secondary sources as evidenced by the extensive collections of footnotes. Its strengths are the wide range of chronology and topics it addresses and above all its unique and substantial provision of quantified almshouse data. Its weaknesses also arise from this wide range—some of the descriptive text would have benefited from supporting tables (although lack of space probably prevented this) and it is not always clear how period-specific some of the discussions are. One of the many themes emerging from the publication is the supposition that almshouse residents largely came from the 'respectable' rather than indigent poor. This conclusion may be influenced by our understanding of how poor law beneficiaries were chosen and because of occupational almshouse studies. Evidence at Sherborne and Hadleigh of the indigent poor being significant within almshouse populations suggests this would benefit from further local studies.

The book should be of interest to all serious students of poverty and social welfare, to those seeking to understand almshouses in more detail and, at least from a quantitative perspective, to all readers of the Local Population Studies Journal. This is an important and unique publication which significantly advances our understanding of British almshouses and their part in the mixed economy of welfare over the last millennium. It is also a call to arms for other historians to continue with local studies to further consolidate this understanding. Almshouse research still needs to find its Aldenhams, Terlings and post-1600 Hadleighs.

Keith Johnson
University of Oxford

Michael Hicks (ed.), *English Inland Trade 1430–1540: Southampton and Its Region* (Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2015). xvi+178pp. ISBN: 978–1–78297–824–4. £45 (hardback).

Inland trade was a significant part of England's medieval and early modern economy, yet it has traditionally received less attention than overseas trade in the academic literature. In recent years, however, this imbalance has begun to be redressed. Studies of institutions and individual merchants have revealed where commodities were purchased, and highlighted the importance of inland distribution networks. This book contributes to this growing field by examining a significant new source, the records of internal tolls which were collected on goods leaving Southampton. It examines the contents of the Southampton brokage books and maps the distribution of trade. Graphs, tables, and 32 high-quality colour maps support the analysis. The book is complemented by an online free-access database where the data can be queried and results provided as Excel files or maps. Funding constraints prohibited the extension of the project to all 30 complete surviving brokage books, but the sample of 13 represents all decades with complete books and includes consecutive books when a particular year might be 'exceptional'.

Three categories form the book's structure. The first four chapters outline the history of Southampton and explore the relationships between its overseas trade and internal trade. Five chapters then examine Southampton's trading partners of Salisbury, London, Winchester, the small towns of Hampshire and Wiltshire and areas further afield, such as Bristol and Gloucester. The role of 'The Brokage Books as Sources for Local and Family History' is then examined. Five chapters analyse individual commodities: 'wine', 'luxury goods, spices and wax', 'fish', 'the cloth industry' and 'miscellaneous commodities'. The final chapter 'An Assessment of the Brokage Books' outlines their advantages and limitations as a source on inland trade. This structure is effective because it moves from the general to the specific. However, amalgamating the 'Technical Foreword' and the 'Assessment of the Brokage Books' into the overall introduction to the volume could have avoided some elements of repetition, and clarified the relationship with the online database. The chapter on 'Local and Family History' could then have concluded the book.

While the internal distribution of agricultural goods has been extensively studied, this book emphasises the scale and diversity of inland trade. Commodities flowed out from Southampton to a range of inland locations. Salisbury was significant as it was the main source of Southampton's cloth exports and a key customer for fish and wine from the port. Salisbury merchants engaged in this inland trade, notably the grocer and cloth trader William Swayne who made regular trips to Southampton to purchase 'dyestuffs, wine, fruit, wax, almonds, oil, soap and fish' (pp. 57–58). Winchester's institutional customers purchased everyday essentials, again mainly wine and fish, from Southampton. London, meanwhile, was served primarily with dyes and tin. More surprising is Southampton's trading partnership with Bristol, whose merchants exported cloth through Southampton in exchange for wine and spices.

People, as well as places, feature in the book. Italian traders were responsible for providing many of the imports to Southampton, especially woad and wine. Some developed long-term links with the town; the Venetian Gabriel Corbet became a denizen and 'introduced organised accounting in columns along Italian lines to the town stewards' accounts c.1440 when he held town office' while the Florentine Christopher Ambrose was mayor on two occasions (p. 13). London merchants were key players in the Southampton to London inland trade route until it was superseded by direct sea trade with Antwerp.

The extent to which the residents of Southampton were engaged in, or benefited from, overseas and inland trade has been the subject of debate. Beaumont James suggests that local merchants were active in the provisioning of ships and, as competition from London intensified, tried to cultivate imports from Brazil. Hare's analysis demonstrates that local merchants purchased and distributed imports. The merchant and mayor Walter Fetplace, for example, was involved in the inland trade in dye and wine to locations as wide-ranging as Salisbury, Hungerford, Oxford, Reading and Guildford (p. 30). Local carters were a crucial component of inland trade and Hicks assesses their business practices and identities. Transport was not coordinated to the extent of haulage arrangements or timetabled routes, but there was a degree of more informal coordination. While carters ran their firms independently of one another they would often travel together, and most carters had a route that they specialised in, for example Southampton to Winchester. Carters needed to be of sufficient means to cover costs of horses, grooms and the cart itself, as well as on-going maintenance and over-night accommodation for longer trips. Some carters appear to have taken advantage of the exemption on tolls for those 'trading on their own behalf in their own carts' to run a second business, such as inn (p. 49).

Three agendas for future research are set by the book. The first is the potential to use local records to further investigate the biographies of individuals in the brokage books, as a place of residence is recorded for many of them in the database. This agenda is likely to be of particular interest to local and family historians. The second agenda is to further highlight the importance of internal trade and its relationship to overseas trade. While source availability would make it difficult to reproduce such a detailed study for other locations, the authors convincingly demonstrate the chains of transactions that occurred in medieval England. The third is the intriguing questions the book raises about the under-researched topic of trading relationships between large towns, such as Southampton and Bristol.

Economic historians are likely to find the book of particular interest as it builds on other recent work in the field, such as that of Yates and Lee, and provides new data in a systematic manner. The accompanying database and maps also provide an opportunity to use the book in teaching and for student research projects.

Catherine Casson
University of Manchester

D. Hey, *The GrassRoots of English history: Local Societies in England before the Industrial Revolution* (Bloomsbury Academic, London, 2016). x + 229pp. ISBN: 978–1–4742–8164–5. £19.99 (paperback).

David Hey was a local and family historian with impeccable academic credentials whose most widely-known work was on Richard Gough's *The History of Myddle*. The 'local societies' in the title of the book under review are analogous with Myddle (Shropshire): the people who comprised a community within a particular district, often in past times referred to as their 'country'. Published just after the author's untimely death, the book covers a wide-range of themes relating to those 'countries' including landscape history; historic towns and cities; villages, hamlets and farmsteads; earning a living in the countryside; and buildings, not only castles and large houses, churches and chapels, but also timber-framed houses. All of these chapters are eminently readable; however, from the point of view of *LPS* readers, the most interesting chapters are those on the local nature of English surnames, together with their distribution and meaning (Chapter 1); the people, or rather peoples, of England, i.e. the ethnic origins of the early population (Chapter 2); and population, family life and society (Chapter 9).

In Chapter 1 Hey demonstrates how our understanding of the history of surnames, their origins and meanings has changed dramatically since P. H. Reaney's *A Dictionary of English Surnames* was published in 1958, not only due to DNA analysis making a case for single-family origins of many surnames but also due to the mapping of surnames recorded in the 1881 census. Using some Staffordshire names as examples, Hey indicates the derivation of various surnames from place-names, such as Wedgwood, Dillon and Huntbach, and gives a remarkable example from literature in Terrick, the shortened form of Tellwright. Furthermore, he shows that where returns of the poll-tax (1377–81), the hearth tax (late seventeenth century) and the 1881 census survive, it may be possible to trace surnames, and their movement, over 500 years. London, of course, has always exerted a pull on the population and Hey notes how the London and Middlesex hearth tax returns of 1666 'capture some of the drift of migrants from the provinces and abroad over the centuries' (p.19).

Chapter 2 is a bold attempt to bring together the latest scholarship on the origins of the English people and provides a brief but lucid account of the ancient territories and their inhabitants. Interestingly Viking and other ancient place-names are often captured in seventeenth and eighteenth century maps—i.e. long before the Ordnance Survey—not least because the earlier surveyors relied on locals for their information. As Hey notes, 'the impact of the Norman Conquest was felt in every part of the land' (p.37) but whereas by 1300 Norman personal names had replaced nearly all Old English and Scandinavian ones, the Conquest had hardly any effect on place-names.

In Chapter 9 Hey traces population growth from the Black Death to the Industrial Revolution. Here again he provides a useful summary of the latest scholarship and gives snapshots of 'the pestilence' striking various communities at different times. As the population grew so did the proportion of those who were poor, but although subject to the settlement laws of the late seventeenth century, some were so transitory that they were rarely, if ever, visible in the surviving documents. Returning to the hearth tax, Hey shows how two sets of returns can be used to demonstrate movement into/out of a settlement over a short period of time (p. 184). His examples indicate that even within the tax-paying population perhaps only two-thirds were stable (or, as much as one-third was migratory).

In this book Hey has interwoven summaries of other historians' work on the various topics under discussion together with his own research, in particular his pioneering work on the origins of surnames. His style of writing is engaging and his enthusiasm for his subject—and in particular for his fellow countrymen of the West Riding—shines through.

Heather Falvey,
University of Oxford, Department of Continuing Education

R-M. Crossan, *Poverty and welfare in Guernsey 1560–2015* (Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 2015). xv + 332pp. ISBN: 978–1–78327–040–8. £35.00 (hardback).

Rose-Marie Crossan sets out to disprove Robert Montgomery Martin's statement in volume five of his *History of the British Colonies* (1835) that in Guernsey there were 'no poor laws, and no paupers requiring relief' [page 275 in *Poverty and Welfare*]. This she does comprehensively and emphatically.

She sets the scene with an opening chapter describing the governance of Guernsey from before the thirteenth century until the twentieth century, continuing with a description of Guernsey's economic history over this period, highlighting those troughs which were likely to have resulted in poverty for portions of the population. This chapter concludes with a brief section on demography and social structure. She moves on to consider the experience of poverty in the rural parishes and in the urban parish of St Peter Port.

The second main section of the book looks at various aspects of welfare; the beginnings of parochial poor relief, out-door relief from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries, and the part played by self-help and voluntary charity.

The largest part of the book (124 pages) is devoted to a history of the 'Town Hospital'. This was established as a workhouse in 1743. It was never intended as a place of treatment for the sick, but as a means of supplying in-door relief to the poor of the parish of St Peter Port. The author outlines the circumstances which led to its foundation and the evolution of its governance. She describes its physical structure and how this was influenced by changes in the patterns of its occupation over time. She considers its finances, policies and regimes. Inevitably among the poor requiring in-door relief were those who were sick and infirm. By 1811 an infirmary existed within the Town Hospital to cater for their needs. The author accounts for the medical staff, the maladies and the methods of treatment. Mental illness was also an issue with which the Town Hospital struggled between 1815 and 1851, when a separate lunatic asylum was established. The author digresses from her description of the services provided by the Town Hospital to describe the further development of provision for the mentally ill, culminating in the building of the Vauquiédor Mental Hospital in 1940, only for it to be appropriated by the occupying forces in 1941 as vastly superior to the Town Hospital.

Returning to the history of the Town Hospital itself, the author considers the administrators and staff and also the inmates. Increasingly through the latter part of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century those inmates were predominantly elderly. Children were transferred to a separate block within the hospital by 1906 and in 1930 to a separate Children's Home. By the late 1960s the Town Hospital had become effectively a geriatric hospital.

The author describes the daily life of the inmates, the routines of the hospital from 1743, the living conditions, diet, clothing, discipline, religious observance, and how each of these evolved. She makes the point that the surviving records show the gradual change from French to English as the spoken and written language in use.

The final section of the book describes the changes in welfare provision, in social security and in medical services during the twentieth century and how these are continuing to evolve in the early years of the twenty-first century. The Town Hospital finally closed in October 1986 and the building, having briefly held the Island Archives, was refurbished and became the police headquarters in 1993.

Throughout the book the author is at pains to compare and contrast the situation on Guernsey with that on the British mainland and also on the European mainland. Guernsey exhibits features of both British and European regimes, but charts a distinct path even from Jersey. The poor relief systems on Jersey and the other Channel Islands are described in an appendix. This book spans the periods of the Old Poor Law and the New Poor Law systems on the British mainland and the author shows where developments on the mainland influenced those on Guernsey and also where the island authorities deliberately took different decisions.

The book includes good maps; the first of Guernsey in relation to the other Channel Islands and to southern England and northern France; the second of the parishes of Guernsey. A third map would have been helpful showing the layout of the town of St Peter

Port and possibly its development between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries. Tables and graphs are used sparingly in the text, but to good effect. There are further tables in the appendices. All the eleven illustrations are placed centrally in the book but are referred to at appropriate points in the text. The tenth appendix is a very useful timeline of developments in poor relief and social security 1700–2010. Together with the text this demonstrates that Montgomery Martin was indeed incorrect in asserting that there were no poor laws and no paupers requiring relief on Guernsey. The laws were different from those on the British mainland and so was the nature of the relief, but there were paupers in plenty.

The book concludes with an extensive bibliography divided into primary and secondary sources. The primary sources are sub-divided by the location of the archives, by far the largest being the Island Archives, but also some at TNA. The secondary sources are divided into those from the eighteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century, and those described as ‘modern’. These include articles by Goose, Hinde, Jackson and Snell published in *Local Population Studies,* together with articles from a wide range of other journals and books by most of the authors currently researching poverty and welfare. Finally there is a useful index of people, places and themes.

This book is not, as its title might suggest, merely a work of interest to local historians of the Channel Islands but contains substantial and well-presented research of relevance to all scholars of poverty and welfare under both the Old and New Poor Laws in Britain.

Christine Jones,
Member of the *Local Population Studies* editorial board.

Anthony Buxton, *Domestic Culture in Early Modern England* (Boydell & Brewer Ltd., Woodbridge, 2015). 324 pp. ISBN: 978–1783270415. £75 (hardback).

Anthony Buxton’s book examines people’s belongings during the seventeenth century to further our understanding of domestic culture and daily life. The book is primarily based on 188 probate inventories from the Oxfordshire market town of Thame, but also incorporates household manuals and artefactual and pictorial evidence to garner a more comprehensive view of the home. Through this Buxton assesses Thame households holistically by considering aspects such as domestic production, household goods and rooms/room use.

The author discusses the source material and Thame in the introduction and chapters 1–2. A particular strength of these sections is the writer’s command of the interdisciplinary and theoretical considerations of conducting this study. Buxton convincingly argues that human life is founded on material existence and people’s interactions with goods, and illustrates how inventories can be used alongside other sources to examine people’s relationships to items and the values that they invest on their possessions. These chapters contextualise the study well, but some of the sections are unnecessary. For example, there is a five–page discussion about relational databases that could have been summarised much more succinctly. More attention should have instead been given to discussing issues revolving around the small sample and the representativeness of the occupations and statuses of people from the probate inventories. The sample, for example, only includes two labourers' and five gentlemen's probate inventories taken across the seventeenth century, meaning that the findings are very tentative when the author examines ownership of material goods over time and by occupational status.

The primary evidence from Thame is examined in the remainder of the book. Chapter 3 assesses food provisioning, processing and cooking, chapter 4 considers the preparation of food and drink and its consumption, and chapter 5 looks at provisions for rest and storage of items. Buxton shows a strong command of the Thame inventories by assessing the vast majority of moveable items that are recorded in these documents in intricate detail. It is in these chapters where the book is strongest and where the originality and hard work of the author comes to life. Buxton does not shy away from assessing items that are more tricky to examine or goods that are habitually ignored in the literature, such as bed hangings and eating and drinking vessels. He writes a convincing history of the homes of Thame residents, helping the reader to understand how people used and perceived their possessions while conducting a wide variety of activities such as domestic work, eating and resting. This gives the reader a stronger feel for what domestic life was like than has hitherto been achieved in the literature.

Buxton considers the spaces and contexts in which people's belongings were located in chapter 6. A number of the findings are largely unsurprising. Halls and chambers, for example, were the most common rooms recorded in the seventeenth-century inventories and they largely had similar functions to those identified by other writers. The chapter nevertheless presents some interesting results. The author explores how some rooms became more 'specialised' with how people used them, but importantly reminds the reader that there could be considerable overlap between different rooms and that activities could happen simultaneously across numerous spaces. Service rooms (such as brewing and boulting houses) are found to be most common in larger households in the early seventeenth century, but became much more widespread in small and medium-sized dwellings over the period. The agency of objects such as wooden panelling and painted cloths is also explored, adding another interesting dynamic to our understanding of room function and item contexts. In the final chapter Buxton fleshes out his statistical findings by qualitatively assessing the homes of nine people who were representative of agriculturalists, artisans, traders, clerics, gentlemen and widows. Using wills and other records such as parish registers, the author describes the lives of each person and presents images of how their homes may have been laid out and used. Much of this analysis is speculative, but is nevertheless stimulating and Buxton should be applauded for attempting this.

Buxton argued that the inhabitants of Thame 'existed not in isolation but in contact with a wider world in which each household was embedded and which affected its material condition' (p. 38). Yet, oddly makes little attempt to compare and contextualise the material lives of Thame residents to other areas which have been covered in probate inventory studies. This would have allowed the writer to test the representativeness of his sample, as well as examine the extent to which certain aspects of domestic culture was unique to Thame or Oxfordshire more widely. The book is based on Buxton's DPhil research completed in 2012. A comparison of the two shows that large parts of the book and thesis are identical. This does not undermine the overall quality of the writing, however this may aggravate some readers due to the book's hefty price tag. More substantially, the references do not appear to have been updated since Buxton completed his doctoral work. For example, there is no use of Craig Muldrew's highly-relevant *Food, Energy and the Creation of Industriousness* (2011). A number of the tables and figures used to show Buxton's findings are only available in online appendices, yet the link to these did not work. This was frustrating as the tables sounded very useful and would have helped one to further understand the author's reasoning and arguments.

Overall, the book is admirable and well written with numerous illustrations which help to bring the findings to life. The book is a useful addition to the historiography due to Buxton's highly detailed analysis and will be of interest to early modern historians of consumer culture and domestic life.

Joe Harley
Institute of Historical Research, University of London

Alan Fox (ed.), *Parish Government in a Leicestershire Village: The Buckminster Town Book, 1665–1767 and Constable's Book, 1755–1813* Leicestershire Record Series, vol. 1, (Leicester, 2015), xxvi+228pp. ISBN 978–0954238841

This is the first volume in what will hopefully be a long series of primary source editions, produced by the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society as their Leicestershire Record Series. This kind of volume has a long history, of course, but as the publication of primary sources increasingly moves online, it is perhaps brave to be commencing such a series at this time. Nonetheless, one can only wish the venture the utmost success.

The volume itself relates to the village of Buckminster, right on the eastern fringe of Leicestershire. It was a small place, with a population of around 500 in 1801. There is no such thing as a typical English village, of course, but there was equally not much that was particularly atypical about Buckminster. The documents transcribed are a 'Town Book', dated from 1665 to 1767, and a set of constables' accounts from 1755 to 1813. The constables also served the office of supervisor of the highways, so the accounts cover that aspect of parish administration too. The introduction is brief. It would have benefited from a bit more contextual information about the parish itself, particularly its economic and agrarian conditions. Nor does the reader get much in the way of analysis: they will have to mine the transcripts themselves, although they will be helped immeasurably by an excellent index. The transcripts are well organized, clear, and come with a very useful glossary at the end.

What do they tell us? Perhaps this is a question best left to future researchers. I have to admit I felt the 'Town Book' was of fairly limited interest, essentially comprising a list of names of officers and their end-of-year balances. These will be of use to local genealogists, of course, and historians of parish government would be able to construct rotations of officers, and may even be able to link these to other sources to get some sense of the social basis of parish officeholding. But that is pretty much it.

Things liven up a lot with the later constables' accounts. Readers will find their own points of interest: the role of constables in ensuring the movement of poor 'passengers' is well known, and the lists of animals killed and the role of the parish molecatcher will be familiar to many. I have to confess I was unaware that pinders (who managed the parish pinfold) would have sworn an oath, but I was less surprised by the fact the pinfold received considerably more maintenance than the stocks. There are references to militia lists being posted on the church door, which confirms that this could be de facto parish noticeboard. The parish evidently engaged in organized conviviality. They had an annual feast at which the poor were given ale; they celebrated the 5 November every year, as well as the accession of George III in 1760, and an unnamed day of thanksgiving during the previous *Annus Mirabilis*. The poor were badged in 1765, 'by the consent of the neighbours', but when a poor woman was found almost starved to death in the streets in 1807 she was taken in, provided for, and given gin.

This is, then, an interesting volume which will be of interest to local historians, but may also be mined by historians of the Georgian parish. I hope this is the first of many volumes in this series.

Jonathan Healey
Kellogg College, University of Oxford

Yoshifumi Shimizu, *Studies of post-1841 Irish Family Structures* (St Andrews University (Osaka) Monograph Series 30, Osaka, 2016). xix+260pp. ISBN: 978–4–944181–22–3. (available via https://www.andrew.ac.jp/soken/pdf_5-3/no30.pdf) (paperback).

Professor Shimizu's book examines the Irish family through a series of detailed quantitative studies of Ireland's census material during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. His thesis is that during the early nineteenth century Ireland had a largely nuclear family system based on partible inheritance and then as a consequence of the Great Famine and the resulting economic changes single-child inheritance was introduced and a stem family system developed (p. 26). As suggested by the title, the book is essentially a collection of papers whose main focus is on Irish family structures. Thus, the first three introductory chapters discuss approaches to studying the family; chapter 4 examines Ireland in the early nineteenth century and the following four chapters provide detailed analysis of the early twentieth century. There is also a discussion of Irish immigrants in Britain and the USA in the 1880s and a short conclusion.

The greater part of the book focuses on the early twentieth century and this is explained by the survival of Irish census material. The returns for 1861, 1871, 1881 and 1891 were not kept, while most of those for 1821 (the first substantial census), 1841 and 1851 were destroyed when the national archives were burnt down during the Irish civil war. This means that the census returns for 1901 and 1911 are the earliest to survive complete and

Professor Shimizu's analysis of family forms, which uses the standard Hammel-Laslett classification system, is the first to be based on these entire censuses. The 1821 census returns survive intact for the counties of Cavan, Fermanagh, Galway, Kings and Meath and these are also used in their entirety rather than sampled as in previous studies. According to Jane Gray's introduction, Professor Shimizu has now provided us with 'definitive answers to many of the questions about Irish families that pre-occupied twentieth century social scientists' and this means that social historians 'can build on these findings to ask different questions of the historical record and to develop a deeper understanding of family, household and kinship processes' (p. 2). Many of these results can be found in the 171 figures, tables and maps that are liberally scattered throughout the book.

While the basic thesis outlined above is in general upheld, Shimizu's detailed analysis is also able to reveal many local differences. Thus, in the early nineteenth century simple families were more common in Cavan and Fermanagh counties while complex families were more common amongst livestock farmers, particularly in Kings County and Meath. Galway by contrast can be characterised by very small farms and more complex households which 'is not evidence of a stem family system, but rather a strategy of retaining children at home to care for parents in their old age' (pp. 5–6). Chapter 5 provides an extensive discussion of regional variations across Ireland using GIS and record linkage. East/west differences are identified with stem families more common in the west. Building upon this finding Chapter 6 examines County Mayo in detail where the nuclear family system persisted longest. Here Shimizu argues that the formation of complex households was encouraged by the introduction of the old age pension. There are also discussions of class differences (Chapter 7), via a comparison between County Clare and County Meath, while his analysis of Dublin not surprisingly perhaps, shows that the city was dominated by simple households. Finally Chapter 8 provides an interesting examination of Irish immigrant families and reveals that while they were larger than those of the native population their form tended to conform with those of their neighbours.

The large range of data contained within the various chapters reveal in some detail how the Irish family changed over the century from 1820. Each of the chapters are essentially self-contained and apart from the conclusion no attempt has been made at unification. Thus, in Chapter 2 examples of different family structures are introduced for comparative purposes and it is assumed that the reader is familiar with the Japanese *ie* system which may not always be the case. There are also places where the text is difficult to follow. Nonetheless, we need to be thankful for Professor Shimizu's careful analysis of the surviving census material and his book provides an excellent resource for Irish family historians.

Chris Galley
Member of the *Local Population Studies* editorial board.

Kim Price, *Medical Negligence in Victorian Britain: the Crisis of Care under the English Poor Law, c.1834–1900* (Bloomsbury, London, 2015). xi+235pp. ISBN: 978–1–4411–2546–0235. £85 (hardback).

This book argues that the New Poor Law of 1834 ushered in a substantial change in the provision of medical care and that it was this system that was at the root of many cases of medical negligence. 'The neglect of patients under the [new] poor law has itself', Price argues, 'been neglected by historians' (p. 16). District or workhouse medical officers were appointed to the new unions on a part-time and poorly paid basis. These conditions of employment meant that medical officers could not carry out their duties effectively. While the system created a situation where medical negligence was almost inevitable it was individual medical officers who bore the brunt of the blame. We learn about the 'mixed workforce of medical officers, [who were] made up of the inexperienced, desperate, ambitious, ideological and the established medical professionals' (pp. 35–6). The combination of their poor law work and private practice resulted in 'divided loyalties' for medical practitioners between their pauper and private patients and they were caught in a 'catch-22' (chapter 7). Medical officers kept prearranged poor law surgery times but could be called out of hours for emergencies and could be expected to provide domiciliary care. While surgery hours came under the contract, practitioners could claim additional fees for extra work and medicines. This part of the contract caused considerable conflict between the medical officer and the relieving officer and/or guardians, since the former wanted to at least cover his costs if not boost his low contract salary, while the latter wished to keep down the poor rates. To fulfil their union contracts medical officers frequently relied upon assistants.

'Medical negligence' is very broadly defined to include not just what we might today consider inattention to patients but also neglect of duty such as disputes between medical officers and workhouse masters, relieving officers, and guardians over infirmaries' expenditure or medical regimen. Medical officers might be punished for disobedience, discord or violation. Whilst there are certainly case studies of 'active neglect', rather more space is devoted to contractual disputes, dismissals and forced resignations. Price has found 120 cases over this long chronological period; while one-third of medical officers were disciplined, the 'great majority' were for minor infringements. The book would certainly have benefitted from a breakdown of the types of 'medical negligence' and much greater discussion of actual everyday medical care rather than employment conditions. Despite the case studies, the voices of paupers making complaints have been somewhat drowned out by those higher up the social scale. However, it is clear that inquiries into medical negligence do reveal what was acceptable practice and what was not.

Price shows how medical negligence was a 'consistently politicised phenomenon' (p. 176). The chapter sub-titled 'the psychological moment' is devoted to that most famous of poor law scandals, the Andover Scandal of 1845–7, as well as the Lancet's Commission to investigate London's workhouse infirmaries in 1865–6. Price also charts the 'latent failure' of the Crusade Against Outrelief following the Goschen Minute of 1869, which, with its climate of financial retrenchment, contributed to medical negligence. A chapter is devoted to the micro-mechanics of the poor law inspectorate. Price also argues against the standard view that hospital and medical care improved towards the end of the nineteenth century as institutions specialised in their provision, contending that, by contrast, '[P]oor law infirmaries were … exhibiting an outward image of developing health care provision that concealed a different internal reality' (p. 181). A major theme running through the book is how little was achieved in poor law medical reform and its implications for our narrative of medical professionalisation over the nineteenth century.

In terms of presentation, whilst it is a nice looking book, the font size is too small to read comfortably and, as seems to be usual with many publishers, the footnotes are confined to the back of the book which makes following up references tricky as well as identifying when the author is using primary material. With the latter in mind the bibliography does not even list the primary material but rather 'collections'. There is also no list of abbreviations in the frontispiece and yet there are many of them throughout the book.

This book will be of interest to historians of the poor law as a system, its role in medical contracting and the disputes that arose.

Samantha Williams
University of Cambridge

Melanie Reynolds, *Infant Mortality and Working-class Child Care, 1850–1899* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2016). ix+251pp. ISBN: 978–1–137–36903–1. £63 (hardback).

When I was offered the chance to review this book its title made me jump at the chance, as, like many historical demographers, I have a considerable interest in infant mortality. Furthermore, the blurb on the back assured me that the volume would '(unlock) the hidden history of working-class child care during the second half of the nineteenth century'. 'What was not to like?' as the saying goes.

The author's aim, not concisely laid out until page 162 in the concluding chapter, was to '(eschew) the Registrar General's material ... (to challenge) the deep-seated suspicions, held and expressed by nineteenth century contemporaries and historians alike, regarding incompetent and neglectful modes of maternal and institutional care as the prime cause of the high northern IMR'. This challenge was to be made through an extensive trawl through a myriad of textual sources such as newspapers, reports, court records, medical journals and Poor Law records to produce evidence that 'northern mothers', and particularly working mothers, or their surrogates, were not the uncaring, neglectful beings they had been painted as and were therefore not responsible for the high number of deaths amongst 'northern' infants. The chapter titles are indicative of the groups being considered: 'Industrial mothers', 'Workhouse Nurses', 'Workhouse Infant Diet', and 'Day-care and Baby-Minding'.

The problem with 'eschewing' statistical sources is that the many pieces of 'evidence' produced are not placed in a context which allows them to be properly evaluated and therefore the force of the arguments offered is lost. Throughout the volume there are statistical and demographic inconsistencies in the text which will jar with readers of *LPS*. The very first sentence: 'During the period 1850–1899 the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) was significantly high in many parts of Britain' gives warning that the author is not a demographer who would immediately ask 'how high is significantly high', and wonder 'in relation to what'? Throughout the book there is a vagueness and imprecision when using statistical material which irritates and obfuscates. What are we to make of a sentence such as: 'Whooping cough, diarrhoea or the myriad atrophic wasting diseases were responsible for urban infant death at 12 months at rates of 694, 3,961 and 2,734 respectively, …' (p. 9)? There are many snippets of interesting information presented, but a considerable number, if presented in court, would be deemed 'anecdotal' or 'hearsay evidence'. How many workplaces provided 'breastfeeding holes' through which working mothers could breastfeed their babies without bringing them onto the premises? How many factories, at what time periods, allowed mothers to bring infants and young children to work with them, unless the children were also working? What proportion of infants found themselves in the workhouses, and was this sufficient to have an effect on the overall infant mortality rate? These and many more points would have benefitted from a discussion of the 'statistical sources' to 'set the scene', and illustrate more precisely the claims which the author is trying to overturn.

This vagueness extends to cover time periods and geography too. The book gives very little sense of an appreciation of the great economic, social, cultural and technological changes that were unfolding over the second half of the nineteenth century. Although these are discussed in the introduction and the chapter on 'Scholarship on Women's Waged Work and their Child Care' they are not then reintroduced to help interpretation of the 'facts' produced in subsequent chapters. Women's paid factory employment, the physical spaces and legal environment in which it was carried out, all changed across the four decades being studied. Observations by factory or medical inspectors from 1850 cannot be taken as indicative of conditions in the 1890s, yet the narrative gives the impression of paying scant attention to changes over time. Mothers, married and unmarried, worked in factories, sweat shops, fields, and workshops in the South as well as the North, and this is acknowledged, but few comparisons are made. The impression is given that neither infant mortality levels nor child care in 'southern' districts gave any cause for concern, although when an example from 'the north' to illustrate a particular point is not readily available, an alternative one from 'the south' is used, very often with little comment on whether any caveats ought to be attached to it. The constant use of the description 'northern' women wears thin very quickly. There were many different types of region in 'the north', many of them with levels of infant mortality as good as, if not better, than most 'southern' regions, and certainly better than many areas of London. Perhaps the use of 'northern factory workers', being more precise, would not have grated quite so much, and it would have been helpful to define which areas were being taken as constituting 'the North'.

Whether by design or through the style of writing the author manages to convey that 'demographers' have absorbed the writings of nineteenth century commentators, and cling to outmoded and unfair beliefs that nineteenth century mothers, and those from the 'northern' urban working classes in particular, were poor mothers who did not have an emotional attachment to their children and failed to give them 'proper' care. Furthermore they are accused of condemning those who looked after the children of working mothers and the 'workhouse nurses' who had to care for the youngest inmates and their mothers. The impression is given that Robert Woods, who is much quoted, is particularly to blame in this regard. This seems a singularly unfair assessment of Woods' work. His book *Children Remembered: Responses to Untimely Death in the Past* (Liverpool University Press, 2006) took a considered literary look at how attached parents were to their children from a variety of eras and in many publications he was adamant that 'the insult of parental, especially maternal, indifference has not been supported by empirical evidence from the nineteenth century' (Garrett et al., *Infant Mortality, a Continuing Social Problem* (Ashgate, 2006) p. 47). He and many other demographers have been only too aware of the challenges that all parents faced in trying to bring up their children in that era of unprecedented population growth, and sought to explain why it was children in urban, industrial areas who suffered most.

Finally, while presentation is very much a matter of taste, this volume suffers from issues which could have been addressed before publication. The, very few, illustrations have legends which are indecipherable and such minimal accompanying labels that it is impossible to work out what is being shown. The bibliography is divided into so many sections as to make it a chore to find a reference, and the references themselves are sometimes inaccurate and do not lead the reader immediately to the source of the quotes being referenced. While referring to an author by their full name can, in some circumstances, be a mark of respect, one has to be sure to use the name that the individual cited usually goes by, and also to refer to them using the correct gender, so that they can be easily recognised. If this is not possible then it is surely best just to refer to them by surname.

Despite its subject matter and the great deal of work which has obviously gone into uncovering the material it presents, I am afraid that from a demographic perspective there was much less to like about this volume than I had initially hoped.

Eilidh Garrett
University of Essex

R. Hutchinson, *The Butcher, the Baker, the Candlestick Maker: the Story of Britain through its Census, since 1801* (Little, Brown, London, 2017). xii+340pp. ISBN: 978–1–4087–0701–2. £20 (hardback).

The broad outlines of the history of the decennial censuses of the British Isles will be well known to most readers of *LPS*. Beginning with what was little more than a head-count in 1801, the range and scope of questions gradually expanded until 1831. With the advent of civil registration in 1837 the geographical organization of the census was transformed, and from 1841 censuses began to assume a recognizably modern form, both in the way they were taken and in the format in which the results were published. The same fundamental procedure was maintained until 1991, though the range of questions continued to expand. A major change was effected in 2001 with the decision to move to online or postal return of the forms. Several good introductions to the history of the census are in print (see, for example, E. Higgs, *Life, Death and Statistics: Civil Registration, Censuses and the Work of the General Register Office* (Hatfield, 2004)), as are works advising historians how best to use them (such as E. Higgs, *Making Sense of the Census Revisited: Census Records for England and Wales 1801–1901—a Handbook for Historical Researchers* (London, 2005)). With the availability of the original returns from many historical censuses at the click of a mouse, census records have never been more accessible to the general public, many of whom are using them to trace their own family histories.

This is Hutchinson's point of departure. '[I]f', as he says, 'the census first taken in 1801 can be trusted to trace the histories of families … it can also trace the history of a nation' (p. x). He has written a book which is neither a history of the census, nor a 'how to' guide for researchers. Instead, it uses the census to reveal aspects of the social, cultural and economic history of the population of the British Isles over the past 200 years. It is a book about the country and the people as seen through the documentary record left by past censuses. It is not an academic book, but I think academic historians will find much of interest between its covers.

Hutchinson spends the first part of the book looking at the development of the census in the early nineteenth century. He explains the arguments in favour of the first census, and describes the parts played by the key individuals involved (John Rickman, George Rose, Charles Abbot). The text is lively and entertaining, giving the reader a good sense of how the political argument for a census was won both outside, and eventually within, parliament.

The remainder of the book examines different aspects of society as revealed by census records across time and space. There is a loose organization to the chapters, but Hutchinson does not allow himself to be constrained by too rigid a structure. Thus, for example, the chapter on the occupations of the people in the mid-nineteenth century includes a discussion of the questions asked about religion in 1851, and of geographical variations in the proportion of women married. The range of topics covered is impressive. There is a section on the prevalence of minority languages (I did not realise, for example, that the number of speakers of Manx Gaelg rose ten-fold between 1971 and 2011). Migration figures prominently, both international migration to and from the British Isles, and internal migration. In one of the most illuminating sections, Hutchinson uses the history of a family in county Durham to bring to life a complex pattern of (mainly) short-distance migration, and to suggest reasons for each of the moves made by family members. He places the actual *moves* in the foreground, whereas the academic history of migration often treats migration as a series of *transitions*. The final part of the book examines what the census of 1921 tells us about the impact of the Great War, and what those of 1931 and 1951 reveal about the depression and the post-war recovery.

Hutchinson has done his research well, and most of the descriptions of the processes of census taking and analysis, and of the content, are accurate. There are a few misunderstandings, for example the statement that the 1851 census 'should for the first time ascertain the religious beliefs of the British people' (p. 99). It did not: a separate element of the 1851 census ascertained the extent of attendance at *religious worship*. But Hutchinson is not the first to get this wrong, and it is a minor issue in a work of such broad scope.

I can recommend this book to both amateur and professional historians of population and society. It is fast-paced, readable and insightful. Another strength is that it covers the whole of the British Isles, including many examples drawn from Scotland and Ireland as well as the smaller islands of the British archipelago, though Hutchinson is careful to explain the differences between the censuses in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland. Finally, at a time when the future of the census is being debated by bean-counters in government and the civil service, it reminds us of the wonderful diversity and individuality of our people, which can only be revealed in its full glory by a survey of the whole population.

Andrew Hinde
University of Southampton