

## THE POPULATION OF DERBYSHIRE IN 1563

BY PHILIP RIDEN  
(University College, Cardiff)

In 1563, as part of a wider enquiry into the state of the church, the Privy Council called for a return of the number of households in each parish in England and Wales. The replies to the enquiry survive for several dioceses in the southern province, although none have been found for York. This valuable source for sixteenth-century population history has been well known for twenty years but remains surprisingly little explored at local level. The figures for the vast diocese of Lincoln were published in summary form many years ago by C. W. Foster, but without any analysis of the light they shed on the economic and social structure of the region, while Mrs. Thirsk has examined those for Lincolnshire in more detail.<sup>1</sup> In view of this neglect, it may be useful to consider some of the possibilities and problems of the material through the example of a single county. Derbyshire, straddling the boundary between highland and lowland Britain, with its sharp contrasts of landscape and parochial geography, its varied settlements and mixed economy, including a few small towns, is perhaps a particularly interesting case for detailed analysis. It is moreover a county whose population history has otherwise been neglected, as has its general economic and social history in the early modern period.<sup>2</sup>

The enquiry of 1563 was conducted through the territorial hierarchy of the Anglican church and thus the returns were compiled by diocese, archdeaconry and deanery, with parishes lying outside archidiaconal jurisdiction listed separately. Within each deanery the parishes were arranged under two heads, those churches which had under them parochial chapels and those which did not; in each case the figure returned was the number of households in the parish or chapelry. From the returns for the diocese of Lichfield it is straightforward enough to extract the section relating to the archdeaconry of Derby, whose boundaries were in general co-terminous with those of the sixteenth-century county.<sup>3</sup> The exceptions to this were the extra-parochial liberties and parishes within peculiar jurisdiction outside the archdeaconry. Extra-parochial liberties were outside any ecclesiastical (or indeed civil) jurisdiction and so there are no returns for them at all; this is not a major blow to the general usefulness of the census, since by their nature such areas as Peak Forest, Hulland Ward and Codnor Park were thinly populated. Parishes in the peculiar jurisdiction of the dean and chapter of Lichfield, together with the prebendary of Sawley, which was co-extensive with the parish of that name, are listed separately in the Lichfield return after the various archdeaconries along with other peculiars whose jurisdiction did not include any Derbyshire parishes. Taken together, the Lichfield return provides figures for almost every parish in Derbyshire, apart from some in the extreme south of the county, locally situated in Leicestershire, where a figure may have been included in the Leicester diocesan return, which has not survived. Elsewhere, only the parishes of Norton, Elmton and Ashover in the deanery of Chesterfield and Shirley in Derby are missing from the archdeaconry return and Kniveton from among the dean and chapter peculiars. There is no figure for any of the extra-parochial liberties, nor for the township of Winshill, which was in Derbyshire but formed part of the parish of Burton upon Trent in the county and archdeaconry of Stafford.

The Harleian text is the only source for the 1563 return; neither for Lichfield nor anywhere else have local duplicates survived among the diocesan archives. In 1603 a rather similar survey of the state of the church called for a return of the number of communicants and recusants in each parish. In this case no figures survive for Derbyshire either in the British Library or at Lichfield, although there is a list of benefices in the diocese of 1602 associated with the survey.<sup>4</sup>

In analysing the 1563 figures it is not always easy to determine the thoroughness with which separate returns were made for the parochial chapeltries within many of the large

upland parishes of north and west Derbyshire; indeed the fact that much of the county was divided into very large ancient parishes in which chapels of ease had been built in the middle ages makes detailed analysis of the census difficult. It is impossible to be sure, even after eliminating those (such as Edale in Castleton parish) known to have been founded after 1563 whether the absence of a separately enumerated chapel normally thought to have been parochial at this date indicates that its population was included in that of the mother parish, or simply that a return was not made.

Table 1 sets out the number of households in each parish and (where the figures exist) each parochial chapelry, together with the acreage of the area concerned. This exercise is not as simple as it might first appear, which accounts for the extensive annotation to the table, and it has in some cases proved impossible to establish the acreage of the area for which a return was made in 1563, and thus impossible to produce a figure in the final column for the ratio of acres to households. The original form of the return, with the parishes divided into two lists within each deanery, has not been retained, nor has the spelling of place-names, which is too late to be of any interest. The return is almost devoid of additional notes, apart from the comment 'one howse onelye' of Barton Blount and a gloss on the ambiguous status of Brampton: 'a church wherein ys christenings buryings and weddinges and ys appropriate unto the deane of Lincolne and he ffyndethe the curate and hathe all feystes'. Brampton, Whittington and Wingerworth were all treated as parishes independent of Chesterfield, a reflection of their autonomy in practice rather than their precise legal position.<sup>5</sup> The other parish appropriated to the dean of Lincoln early in the middle ages in which the status of the constituent chapelries was open to question was Ashbourne; here Mapleton is treated as a parish whereas the census returns figures for Alsop en le Dale, Hognaston and Parwich as chapelries of Ashbourne. Other ambiguities are discussed in the notes to the table. The only deanery in which the parishes do not fit neatly into one of the two categories already mentioned was Repton, where a third status of 'Churches or chappells havinge cure without Institucion or Induction' is included, containing the mother church of Repton and the constituent chapels of its large and early parish.

The order in which the parishes appear in Table 1 is that adopted by Daniel and Samuel Lysons in *Magna Britannia* (1817), which is probably the most careful and authoritative source for the purpose. It has never been easy to establish the exact number of ancient parishes in a particular county and for Derbyshire, as elsewhere, various totals have descended through the local literature. The Lysons' list is complete, even to the extent of including parishes which lay mostly outside the ancient county, and is conservative in allowing autonomous chapelries the status of independent parishes; Whittington and Mapleton achieve this distinction whereas Brampton and Wingerworth do not, so that in this respect the arrangement of the list differs from that of 1563.

The most widely accepted multipliers for converting sources such as the 1563 census which enumerate households not individuals into estimates of aggregate population lie in the range 4.5-5.0. Thus it would probably be safe, for example, to suggest a population for the parish of Alfreton of 350-400 but unwise to state categorically that the total was 380, or the product of some other single multiplier. It is important also to remember, especially in those parts of Derbyshire where settlement was scattered rather than concentrated in nucleated villages, that the number of households given is for the parish as a whole and not any particular community. This problem is especially serious in the large Peak District parishes and those divided into numerous chapelries or townships, but even for a medium-sized parish containing only one church (such as Alfreton) some account must be taken of the way in which the population was divided between the main settlement and outlying hamlets and farms.<sup>6</sup> The number of people living in the small market 'town' of Alfreton itself in 1563 may have been less than 350.

The general accuracy of the census no doubt varied from parish to parish, so that ideally the figure for any particular community should be combined with other information available for the parish, rather than taken in isolation and given the

Table 1 Derbyshire in the diocesan census of 1563

Parish	Acreage	House-holds	Ratio of Acres/ House-holds	Parish	Acreage	House-holds	Ratio of Acres/ House-holds
Alfreton	4,570	80	57	Doveridge	4,369	62	70
Appleby <sup>a</sup>	2,748	—	—	Dronfield <sup>s</sup>	6,018	207	29
Ashbourne <sup>b</sup>	6,843	238	29	Dore	5,082	—	—
Alsop en le Dale	1,467	9	163	Holmesfield	4,552	53	86
Hognaston	1,350	17	79	Duckmanton with Sutton	4,302	41	105
Parwich	3,081	30	103	Duffield <sup>t</sup>	10,032	353	28
Ashover	9,099	—	—	Belper	2,700	102	26
Dethick & Lea	1,403	—	—	Heage	2,278	54	42
Aston on Trent	1,780	53	34	Turnditch	975	30	33
Bakewell <sup>c</sup>	8,550	173	49	Eckington	6,934	231	30
Ashford <sup>d</sup>	4,217	54	78	Killamarsh	1,601	63	25
Baslow	7,971	82	92	Edensor <sup>u</sup>	3,807	54	71
Beeley	2,944	24	123	Edlaston	1,263	18	70
Buxton <sup>e</sup>	1,513	—	—	Egginton	2,293	41	56
Chelmorton	3,625	53	68	Elmton	2,772	—	—
Great Longstone	4,930	60	82	Elvaston	2,303	60	38
Monyash	3,001	33	91	Etwall	3,434	42	82
Taddington	3,855	60	64	Eyam	4,241	55	77
Barlborough	3,268	82	40	Glossop <sup>v</sup>	11,308	190	60
Barrow on Trent <sup>f</sup>	1,940	64	30	Hayfield & Mellor <sup>w</sup>	20,568	195	105
Twyford	1,658	33	50	Church Gresley <sup>x</sup>	5,510	46	120
Barton Blount	1,170	1	1,170	Kirk Hallam	1,706	27	63
Beauchief Abbey <sup>g</sup>	780	—	—	West Hallam	1,334	27	49
Beighton	2,999	81	37	Hartington <sup>y</sup>	24,160	417	58
Fenny Bentley	976	17	57	Hartshorne	3,500	36	97
Blackwell	1,668	31	54	Hathersage <sup>z</sup>	11,522	120	96
Bolsover <sup>h</sup>	5,441	113	48	Stoney Middleton	1,124	30	37
Bonsall	2,289	84	27	Heanor <sup>aa</sup>	5,496	118	47
Boylestone	1,305	31	42	Heath	1,608	49	33
Bradbourne <sup>i</sup>	2,788	26	107	Hope <sup>bb</sup>	37,211	280	133
Atlow	1,219	15	81	Fairfield <sup>cc</sup>	3,920	80	49
Ballidon	1,910	16	119	Horsley	2,746	34	81
Brassington	4,021	61	66	Denby	2,356	44	54
Tissington	2,258	44	51	Ault Hucknall	4,221	54	78
Bradley	2,357	15	157	Hulland Ward <sup>dd</sup>	1,400	—	—
Brailsford	4,170	41	102	Hulland Ward Intakes <sup>ee</sup>	454	—	—
Osmaston	1,192	20	60	Ilkeston	2,457	72	34
Breadsall	2,219	56	40	Kirk Ireton	2,228	61	37
Church Broughton	2,228	58	38	Kedleston	972	12	81
Calke <sup>j</sup>	720	—	—	Kniveton	1,962	—	—
Carsington	1,116	18	62	Kirk and Meynell Langley	2,441	36	68
Castleton <sup>k</sup>	9,985	97	103	Langwith	1,444	24	60
Chapel en le Frith	9,800	200	49	Longford	6,469	72	90
Chellaston	816	25	33	Lullington	2,919	35	83
Chesterfield <sup>l</sup>	11,381	351	32	Mackworth	3,246	53	61
Brampton	7,920	112	71	Allestree	1,075	34	32
Wingerworth	2,907	56	52	Mapleton	795	15	53
Chilcote <sup>m</sup>	1,320	—	—	Marston on Dove	4,138	71	58
Clowne	1,919	55	35	Matlock	4,513	80	56
Crich <sup>n</sup>	6,072	242	25	Melbourne	3,463	64	54
Croxall	3,300	17	194	Morley	1,686	25	67
Cubley	2,370	20	119	Smalley	1,578	36	44
Marston Montgomery	2,471	28	88	Morton <sup>ff</sup>	2,728	65	42
Dalbury	1,172	17	69	Mugginton	5,166	63	82
Dale Abbey <sup>o</sup>	1,760	—	—	Norbury and Roston	2,207	72	31
Darley	7,003	96	73	Snelston	2,072	38	55
Derby St. Alkmund <sup>p</sup>	1,927	74	26	South Normanton	1,879	33	57
Quarndon	962	14	69	Norton	4,630	—	—
Derby All Saints	—	194	—	Ockbrook	1,563	35	47
Derby St. Michael	—	30	—	Mickleover	2,361	55	43
Alvaston	1,355	20	68	Findern	1,628	20	81
Derby St. Peter <sup>q</sup>	—	107	—	Littleover	1,491	20	75
Osmaston & Boulton	1,722	37	47	Packington <sup>gg</sup>	3,093	—	—
Derby St. Werburgh	665	102	7	Peak Forest <sup>hh</sup>	5,026	—	—
Derby Hills <sup>r</sup>	310	—	—	Pentrich	3,839	32	120

Table 1—continued

Parish	Acreage	House-holds	Ratio of	Parish	Acreage	House-holds	Ratio of
			Acres/ House-holds				Acres/ House-holds
Pinxton	1,223	30	41	Stanton by Bridge	1,271	24	53
Pleasley	3,193	60	53	Stapenhill	3,347	31	108
Radbourne	1,923	22	87	Cauldwell	1,040	13	80
Ravenstone	1,086	33	33	Staveley	6,546	130	50
Repton	4,797	116	41	Great Barlow	3,335	53	63
Bretby	1,760	25	70	Stretton en le Field <sup>kk</sup>	1,796	35	51
Foremark	1,990	22	90	Sudbury	3,603	42	86
Measham <sup>ii</sup>	1,578	72	22	Sutton on the Hill	3,232	44	73
Newton Solney	1,440	38	38	Swarkestone	853	23	37
Smisby	972	22	44	Thorpe	1,710	25	68
Ticknall	1,767	42	42	Tibshelf	2,400	34	71
Sandiacre	1,191	31	38	Tideswell	5,935	113	53
Sawley	3,783	36	105	Wormhill	4,584	66	69
Breaston	1,448	37	39	Trusley	1,076	11	98
Risley	1,147	52	22	Walton and Rosliston	3,443	42	82
Wilne	2,068	34	61	Weston on Trent	2,000	48	42
Scarcliffe	3,772	36	105	Whittington	1,491	44	34
Scropton	3,248	28	116	Whitwell	5,079	67	76
Shirland	2,493	34	73	Willington	1,193	3	398
Somersal Herbert	697	10	70	North Wingfield	10,687	68	157
Spondon <sup>jj</sup>	3,089	116	27	South Wingfield	3,269	37	88
Chaddesden	2,060	52	40	Winshill <sup>ll</sup>	1,150	—	—
Stanley	1,031	—	—	Wirksworth <sup>mm</sup>	13,298	470	28
Stanton by Dale	1,491	24	62	Youlgreave <sup>nn</sup>	10,852	182	60

The symbol — indicates that a figure is not available or cannot be calculated.

*Sources:* Number of households from British Library, Harl. MS. 594; acreage from William White's *Derbyshire Directory* (1857); list of parishes from Daniel and Samuel Lysons, *Derbyshire* (Magna Britannia, V, 1817), xi-xvii; see also J. Charles Cox, *Notes on the Churches of Derbyshire* (1875-9) for details of parochial geography. See text for further discussion of methods.

#### Notes

- <sup>a</sup> Part of the parish is in Leicestershire.
- <sup>b</sup> Includes townships of Ashbourne, Clifton & Compton, Hulland, Newton Grange, Offcote & Underwood, Sturston and Yeldersley, but not Hulland Ward or Hulland Ward Intakes, which were extra-parochial.
- <sup>c</sup> Includes townships of Bakewell, Over & Nether Haddon, Harthill, Hassop, Great Rowsley and Brushfield; the other townships have been placed in chapelries following White's Directory.
- <sup>d</sup> Includes township and chapelry of Sheldon, for which there is no separate return. Cox, *Churches*, ii. 112 suggests that if Sheldon is not to be considered parochial it should be regarded as dependent on Ashford.
- <sup>e</sup> The population of Buxton may perhaps be included in the figure for Fairfield, pa. Hope (cf. note <sup>cc</sup> below).
- <sup>f</sup> Includes Sinfin and Arleston but not Sinfin Moor, which was extra-parochial.
- <sup>g</sup> Extra-parochial.
- <sup>h</sup> Includes Glapwell, not separately enumerated.
- <sup>i</sup> Includes Lea Hall and Aldwark.
- <sup>j</sup> Extra-parochial.
- <sup>k</sup> Includes Edale, where the chapel dates only from the seventeenth century.
- <sup>l</sup> Includes Chesterfield, Brimington, Tapton, Calow, Hasland, Newbold, Temple Normanton and Walton.
- <sup>m</sup> Chapelry in Derbyshire in the parish of Clifton Campville, Staffs.
- <sup>n</sup> Includes Tansley and Wessington in the figure for acreage.
- <sup>o</sup> Extra-parochial.
- <sup>p</sup> Includes Little Eaton, Little Chester and Darley Abbey in the figure for acreage.
- <sup>q</sup> The number of households presumably includes Normanton chapelry, which is not separately enumerated.
- <sup>r</sup> Extra-parochial.
- <sup>s</sup> Includes Dronfield, Coal Aston, Unstone and Little Barlow in the figure for acreage.
- <sup>t</sup> Acreage includes Hazelwood, Shottle, Windley and Holbrook.

Table 1—*continued*

- u Acreage includes Pilsley township and extra-parochial liberty of Chatsworth.
- v Acreage includes the townships of Glossop, Charlesworth, Chunal, Dinting, Hadfield, Padfield, Simmondley and Whitfield. Cf. note <sup>w</sup> below.
- w The census enumerates 107 households in Hayfield chapelry and 88 in Mellor chapelry. It has proved impossible to divide the acreage of the combined townships of Beard, Ollersett, Thornsett & White between the two chapelries, which were partly in each at this date.
- x The surprisingly small population of this parish should be noted in conjunction with the remarkably high figure for Measham (pa. Repton), since part of the combined township of Donisthorpe & Oakthorpe in the parish of Church Gresley lay in Measham chapelry and it is possible that all the households were returned under Measham.
- y The census enumerates 257 in Hartington and 160 in Earl Sterndale chapelry but it has proved impossible to obtain a separate figure for the acreage of the chapelry, which lay in the township of Hartington Middle Quarter.
- z Acreage includes the chapelry of Derwent.
- aa Acreage includes Shipley township and the ecclesiastical district of Codnor & Loscoe, but not Codnor Park, which was extra-parochial.
- bb Acreage includes all the townships of the medieval parish but not the chapelry of Fairfield or the extra-parochial liberty of Peak Forest.
- cc This remarkably high figure, only a little less than the 84 households enumerated in 1801, may perhaps include Buxton (pa. of Bakewell), for which there is no return under Bakewell.
- dd Extra-parochial.
- ee Extra-parochial.
- ff The acreage includes Brackenfield.
- gg Most of the parish is in Leicestershire.
- hh Extra-parochial.
- ii Cf. above note <sup>x</sup>; the high figure for the number of households may include some in the township of Donisthorpe & Oakthorpe in the parish of Church Gresley.
- jj It has been arbitrarily assumed that the number of households refers to Spondon only and does not include Stanley; had the acreage of Stanley been added to that of Spondon the ratio in the final column would still be under 40.
- kk Includes the chapelry of Willesley, for which no separate return of households was made.
- ll Township in Derbyshire in the parish of Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire.
- mmm The acreage is for the entire medieval parish; the census does not give separate returns for Alderwasley and Cromford chapelries.
- nn The acreage is for the entire medieval parish; the census does not give separate returns for Elton and Winster chapelries.

---

elevated status of modern census statistics. It is unlikely that the enumerators had much difficulty in establishing which houses they were to include, since by the sixteenth century parish boundaries were very old features in the administrative landscape deeply ingrained in parishioners' minds through the incidence of tithes. Likewise, the definition of a 'household' probably did not present a sixteenth-century incumbent or churchwarden with the same problems as those which since 1841 have afflicted the compilers of the census. In 1563 a household was doubtless that group of kin which normally lived together under one roof, with or without servants, so that labourers lodging in a farmhouse would be included in their master's household while those living in cottages nearby would be households in their own right. The main determinant of thoroughness was probably the enthusiasm with which the incumbent either undertook or supervised the census. At one extreme, the accurate enumeration of Barton Blount, Alsop en le Dale or some other decayed rural parish in the south-west of the county would hardly have required much effort; by contrast the minister of Chapel en le Frith seems to have settled for a round-figure estimate as an alternative to the unattractive task of individually counting the scattered farms and small hamlets of his large and hilly cure. On the other hand, there are parishes more populous than Chapel where the enumerator either thought it prudent to give his informed guess the appearance of accuracy by avoiding a multiple of ten or else actually conducted a house-by-house

survey. Thus Ashbourne, Chesterfield, Crich, Duffield, Eckington and Hartington all have a superficial look of accuracy about them, even if Glossop, Hope and Wirksworth may be somewhat rougher estimates. For the smaller parishes, especially those in the south of the county where most of the houses lay on either side of one village street, there seems no reason to doubt that the figures are not broadly reliable. The same is probably true of the Derby parishes. There are no obvious clerical errors in the return which would produce utterly improbable aggregate estimates, although a fuller examination of individual parish returns alongside other sources might reveal discrepancies.

It is hardly possible here to go further into the detailed population history of particular parishes and may perhaps be of more general interest to look at the relative density of population in different parts of Derbyshire. By calculating the ratio of acres to households one avoids the problem of converting the original returns into aggregate population estimates without looking at other evidence and yet can produce data that enable parishes to be compared one with another. This ratio has been calculated (as far as possible) for every parish in the sixteenth-century county and the data mapped in Figure 1. As a further hedge against giving a false impression of precision from what can only be approximate figures, only three population densities have been included on the map. These were chosen by a process of trial and error in an effort to distinguish heavily from thinly populated regions and at the same time leave a middle ground. Maps showing two and four densities were drafted and rejected, either because they suggested too sharp a contrast between different parts of the county or because the final picture was too confused. From the data in Table 1 it would of course be possible to produce maps with densities other than those in Figure 1.

By the nature of the original returns, Figure 1 is not without its limitations. A heavy concentration of population in one community in a large and otherwise thinly populated parish would distort the ratio for the whole parish, as may have happened in Ashbourne and Duffield. The same might well be said of Chesterfield, although the chapelry of Whittington, well outside the medieval borough, also falls into the most heavily populated region of the county, or of Wirksworth, but here the neighbouring parish of Kirk Ireton also has a similar density. Despite these problems, the map is of interest, not merely as an illustration of some very obvious features in the economic and social structure of sixteenth-century Derbyshire but also as a means of drawing attention to points which might bear further investigation.

It is hardly surprising to find that the north-west and south-west were the most thinly populated regions of the county at this date. These were two contrasting regions, in one case the bleak moorlands of the High Peak which, apart from the modern growth of population in Glossop, have always been the most thinly settled part of Derbyshire, in the other the lush, lowland pasture land between Derby and Ashbourne which in the eleventh century had included much of the county's arable. Since Domesday the arable had contracted and the population with it, leaving a region which contains most of the deserted village sites yet located in Derbyshire and the only one so far excavated.<sup>7</sup> The other concentration of thinly populated parishes lay south of the Trent, between Lullington and Bretby, which again had been a net loser of population since Domesday. In addition to these areas scattered parishes throughout the county were equally thinly settled, emphasising that by national standards Derbyshire was still a very lightly populated county. The gritstone moorlands west of Chesterfield, as well as some of the coal measures parishes in both Scarsdale and Morleston and Litchurch contained well over 60 acres for every household.

Between this region and that of relatively dense settlement, Figure 1 shows an intermediate zone which includes much of the eastern coalfield and some of the parishes between Derby and the Trent, a region of mixed farming and possibly one in which rural industry was expanding in the second half of the sixteenth century. The other concentration of moderately populous parishes is on the northern half of the limestone Low Peak, around Hartington and Bakewell, but including also Tideswell and Chapel

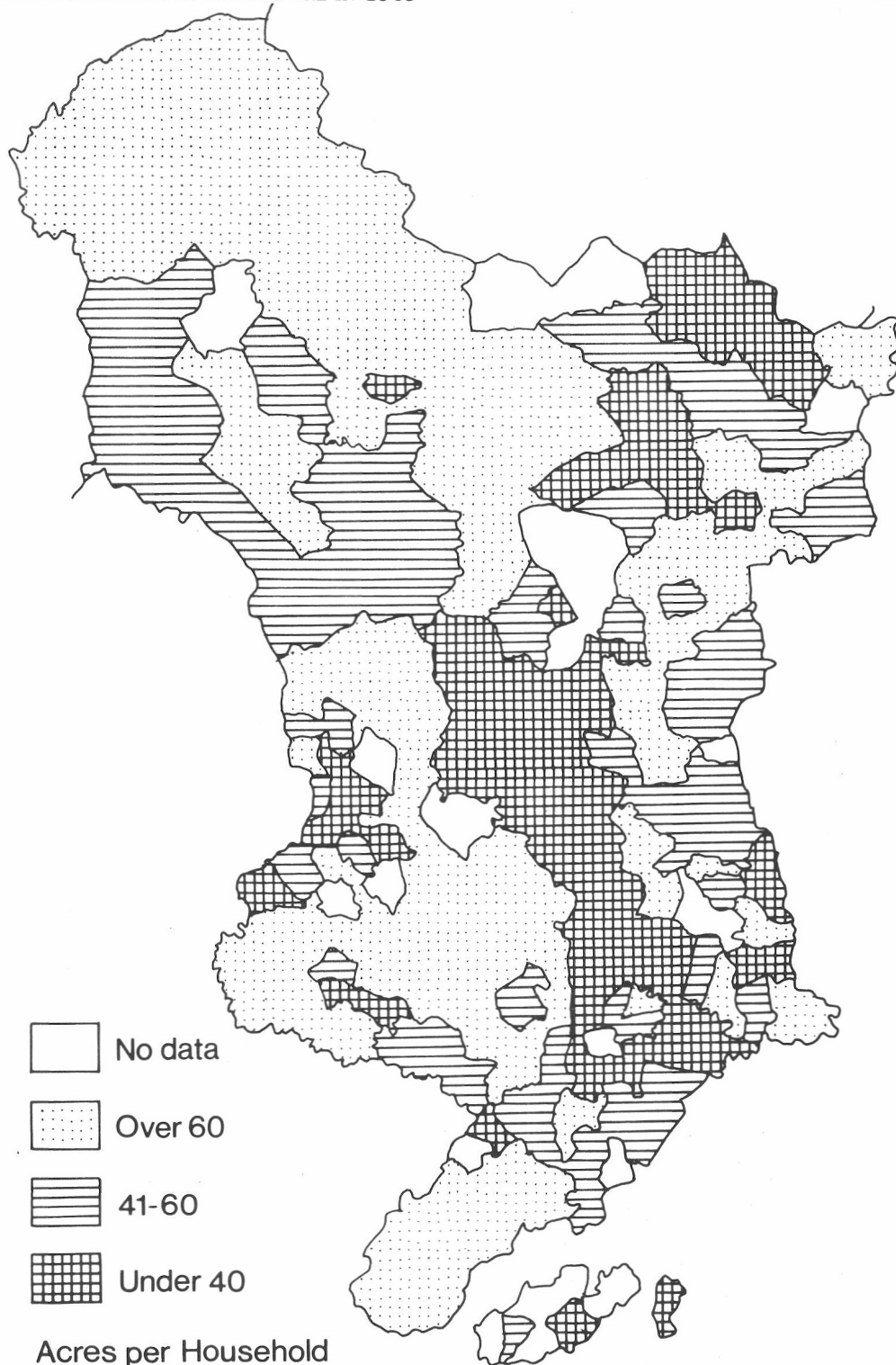


Fig. 1 The Population of Derbyshire in 1563

en le Frith, whereas the southern end of the limestone, around Brassington and Parwich, was more thinly populated. The figures for Bakewell parish may be partly distorted by the relatively dense population in the town itself, although adjacent communities with separate returns have similar densities. Insofar as its history has been explored in this period, the Low Peak appears to have been a region of sheep farming combined with lead-mining, which evidently sustained a greater population than regions to the north or south.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, there are those parishes, almost all in the eastern half of the county, with less than 40 acres per household. The Derby parishes and several close to the town fall into this category, as does Chesterfield, including the separately enumerated hamlet of Whittington, and a string of parishes from Beighton to Clowne, relatively close to Sheffield. Further south lay Ilkeston, in the Erewash valley coalfield, and Measham, in the small mining district straddling the Leicestershire-Derbyshire border. North of Derby the concentration of population extended further than the immediate environs of the town up the Derwent as far as Belper and the larger parish of Wirksworth. In both Duffield and perhaps also part of Wirksworth (as in Ashbourne to the west) the low ratio of land to households may not have been a feature of the entire parish but must reflect concentrations in the two towns of Ashbourne and Wirksworth and in some of the larger rural hamlets. Even so, the broad base of dense population stretching unbroken from Derby to Wirksworth is striking.

The identification of the main concentrations of populations is possibly the most interesting feature of Figure 1. Derbyshire had few towns in the middle ages; only Derby was a fully fledged independent borough, while Chesterfield, although a chartered borough with twelfth-century origins, remained partly under seigneurial control throughout the middle ages and afterwards. The early history of the secondary urban settlements at the head of the northern and western wapentakes—Ashbourne, Wirksworth and Bakewell—is less well defined, as is that of Bolsover and Castleton, the two boroughs which owed their existence to an adjacent royal castle, while that of the relatively large number of chartered market villages is even more obscure.<sup>9</sup> The 1563 figures reveal the expected concentrations of population in these small towns but also suggest a concentration in parishes which did not contain chartered markets, much less boroughs. In the south-east this density of population may perhaps be seen as a nascent 'Greater Derby' region of suburban parishes owing their prosperity to the proximity of the county town, but what of Eckington and its neighbours in the north-east, Crich in mid-Derbyshire and Stoney Middleton in the Peak?

The most obvious common factor in the more densely populated rural parishes is surely the likely presence of industry on a sufficient scale to encourage population growth outside the older medieval market centres. Figure 1 is in part a graphic illustration of the phenomenon in Tudor Derbyshire of 'industry in the countryside', which is now attracting increasing attention elsewhere.<sup>10</sup> Leaving aside Derby, Chesterfield, Wirksworth and Ashbourne, where there were markets and trade, the parishes shaded darkest on the map are all those where it is reasonable to postulate the existence of small-scale industry alongside farming, whether it be predominately arable or pastoral. In Stoney Middleton, as in other parts of the Low Peak with moderately dense population, it was presumably lead-mining and smelting and perhaps also lime-burning; elsewhere metalworking and coal-mining seem the obvious possibilities. The extreme north-east of Derbyshire formed an outlying part of the Hallamshire cutlery and edge-tool industry, which is well documented in Eckington and neighbouring parishes in later centuries. Had there been a return from Norton in 1563 a similar density of population might have been apparent. In the Derwent valley north of Derby there is evidence from the middle ages down to the early nineteenth century of iron-working in Belper, Duffield and neighbouring hamlets on the Derwent, as well as further west in Duffield Frith. There was a forge at Makeney which survived until the



late eighteenth century and provided raw material for nailmaking, a domestic craft especially associated with Belper. Rather less is known of coal-mining in this period in Derbyshire but it is possible that the high concentration of population in Ilkeston owes something to an expansion of the industry, while the same may also be true of Measham.<sup>11</sup> Around Derby itself domestic metalworking may again have been important in stimulating growth but here one would expect to find a rather wider range of trades, as well as intensive cultivation of the land to provide food for the townspeople.

The other region of the county which appears to have been most densely populated is around Wirksworth and Crich. The evidence from Wirksworth is inconclusive, because a single figure is given in the census for a wide area, much of it thinly populated even today, but it is striking that in the adjacent parishes of Kirk Ireton and Bonsall a similar ratio of acres to households is evident. Wirksworth had a market in the middle ages and was in addition the site of an important early church. It was also the main centre of the lead industry, both as a market and the seat of the principal lead-mining court, and the town has the character, topographically although not institutionally, of a medieval borough.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps it is to be expected that the surrounding rural area, including Bonsall and Kirk Ireton and possibly some other nearby villages, should be relatively densely populated by the mid-sixteenth century, a population which presumably lived by a combination of farming, lead-mining, lead-smelting, lime-burning and possibly hand-loom weaving. Very much the same conditions may have prevailed in Crich, which lies off the limestone proper but was one of the outlying centres of the lead industry.

What of the towns of Elizabethan Derbyshire? The census is complete as far as the main urban or quasi-urban settlements are concerned and so it is possible to work out rough estimates of their population. The obstacles to such a calculation are that some of the Derby parishes had suburban chapelries not separately enumerated in the census, while Chesterfield, Wirksworth, Ashbourne and Bakewell were all the centres of large parishes of which the town was only one small part not singled out in the returns, so that any estimate must try to distinguish the town from its rural hinterland and cannot be based directly on the number of households in the parish as a whole. For Derby 507 households are listed in the town's five parishes, excluding those of the chapelries which have separate figures, which points fairly clearly to a population of between 2,000 and 2,500, emphasising Derby's position as the main urban settlement in the county but only a small town by national, or even regional, standards. No other town in Derbyshire was more than half the size of Derby, although when figures are worked out for the ten market towns listed by John Speed in 1610 (Table 2) they are of some interest.<sup>13</sup> Probably the only means of distinguishing town from country in these large upland parishes is to make the arbitrary assumption that the proportion of the population living in the town, which generally formed its own township for civil purposes, was the same in 1563 as in 1801, when the census published returns by township.<sup>14</sup> This at least makes possible rough estimates of the size of the smaller towns and until contrary evidence is produced it seems reasonable to proceed on this basis.

TABLE 2  
Estimated population of Derbyshire market towns in 1563

Derby	2,000-2,500	Chapel en le Frith	480-530
Chesterfield	1,000-1,200	Bolsover	450-500
Wirksworth	1,000-1,100	Dronfield	450-500
Crich	650-750	Tideswell	450-500
Ashbourne	600-650	Alfreton	350-400
Bakewell	550-600		

Source: See Table 1 above; cf. text, pp. for method of calculation.

The most striking feature of Table 2 is that Chesterfield, instead of being clearly the second largest town in the county, appears no bigger, and possibly even slightly smaller, than Wirksworth. Apart from its importance in the lead trade we know virtually nothing of Wirksworth in this period by which to judge whether it is right that it should be equated with Chesterfield, which has always been assumed to be the second largest town in Derbyshire and whose history is now being revealed.<sup>15</sup> It is not even possible in this case to compare 1563 with 1676, since Wirksworth is one of the parishes missing from the Compton Census.<sup>16</sup>

After Chesterfield and Wirksworth come Bakewell and Ashbourne, two other settlements to which the term borough was applied at times in the middle ages but which lack the clearer institutional identity of Chesterfield.<sup>17</sup> Both appear to have had about 600 inhabitants at this date and Ashbourne may have been slightly the larger of the two. Neither, however, was any larger than Crich, which has a fair-sized market place and where a market was revived, rather than founded, in 1810. No medieval market grant is known, however, nor does the township appear in Speed's list of 1610.<sup>18</sup> Its population in 1563 was probably about 700, more than either Bakewell or Ashbourne. There are, of course, a number of parishes in the census with a total population much greater than any of these places, such as Glossop, which may have had 2,000 inhabitants, or Eckington, with perhaps 1,000; the problem is identifying substantial quasi-urban concentrations. Once one drops below the level of Ashbourne and Bakewell a number of communities appear with a population of around 500, including Chapel en le Frith, Bolsover, Belper, Dronfield, Duffield and Tideswell, all of which (except Belper and Duffield), appear in Speed's list of market towns. Conversely, there were numerous villages with medieval market grants whose population was below 500 at this date, as was that of Alfreton, the smallest market centre in Speed's list.

The general conclusion seems to be that after Derby, Chesterfield and Wirksworth stand out as distinctly urban settlements and Ashbourne, Bakewell and Crich may be regarded as small market towns, even if it is not absolutely clear that Crich had a market at this date. The fact that of this group only Chesterfield emerged unambiguously from the middle ages as a borough and was finally incorporated in 1598 is irrelevant to considerations of population and economic importance, which did not depend on administrative or institutional status, as the example of Wirksworth illustrates. Similarly, the fact that Bakewell and Ashbourne were at the centre of extensive parishes and were both occasionally called boroughs did not necessarily make for a greater population than villages such as Staveley or Eckington, both of which were larger than many of the smaller market centres. Economic considerations such as a flourishing market or some nascent industrial growth produced new concentrations of population away from the older urban and semi-urban settlements of the middle ages, characterised by their market grants, burgage tenure and possible replanning. Although these generalisations are unsupported by detailed local research, they at least illustrate the value of simple statistics in highlighting nodal points in the county's economy and the relative importance of different communities within it.

#### REFERENCES

- <sup>15</sup>The best account of the 1563 returns remains Joan Thirsk, 'Sources of information on population, 1500-1760', *Amateur Historian*, 4 (1958-60), 132-3. For Lincolnshire see C. W. Foster (ed.), *The state of the church*, (Lincoln Record Society, 23, 1925-6), 441-63, and Joan Thirsk, *English peasant farming*, (1957), 10. The original returns are in British Library, Harleian MSS. 594, 595 and 618.
- <sup>16</sup>The most substantial work on local social and economic history is I. S. W. Blanchard, 'Economic change in Derbyshire in the late middle ages, 1272-1540', (Unpublished University of London Ph.D thesis, 1967), (Blanchard), which has an appendix (470-3) on the population of the medieval county. See also D. M. Holly, 'Derbyshire', in H. C. Darby and I. S. Maxwell (ed.), *The Domesday geography of Northern England*, (Cambridge, 1962), (Holly), 278-329. There is nothing comparable for later periods. On population see J. C. Cox, 'A religious census of Derbyshire, 1676', *Derbyshire Archaeological Journal* (D.A.J.), vii (1885), 31-6.

- <sup>3</sup>British Library, Harleian MS. 594, ff. 156–60 (photocopies available in the Derbyshire Record Office; cf. D. & S. Lysons, *Derbyshire*, (Magna Britannia, 5, 1817), (Lysons), xii, for the ecclesiastical geography of the county.
- <sup>4</sup>Thirsk, *Amateur Historian*. I am indebted to Miss Jane Isaac of the Lichfield Joint Record Office for confirming the lack of local duplicates and for drawing my attention to the list of benefices of 1602 among the muniments of the dean and chapter, D30 A11, printed by J. C. Cox, 'An Elizabethan clergy list of the diocese of Lichfield', *D.A.J.*, vi (1884), 157–80.
- <sup>5</sup>J. M. Bestall, *Early and medieval Chesterfield*, (Chesterfield, 1974), 34–7.
- <sup>6</sup>The earliest one-inch map of Derbyshire by P. P. Burdett (1767), is probably a reliable guide to pre-industrial settlement in the county.
- <sup>7</sup>For the medieval geography of the county see Holly and Blanchard.
- <sup>8</sup>Blanchard, and the same author's *The estates of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1485–1540*, (Derbyshire Record Series, 3, 1967).
- <sup>9</sup>B. E. Coates, 'The origin and geographical distribution of markets and fairs in medieval Derbyshire', *D. A. J.*, lxxxv (1965), (Coates), 92–111; Philip Riden, 'The origin of the new market of Chesterfield', *D.A.J.*, xcvi (1977), (Riden), 5–15; Blanchard, 315–346.
- <sup>10</sup>Sybil Jack, *Trade and industry in Tudor and Stuart England*, (1977).
- <sup>11</sup>Cf. David Hey, *The rural metalworkers of the Sheffield region*, (Leicester, 1972); V. C. H. *Derbyshire*, ii (1907), 353, 358–9, 362; Frank Nixon, *The Industrial Archaeology of Derbyshire*, (Newton Abbot, 1969), 252–3, 266.
- <sup>12</sup>Blanchard, 337–341; Lysons, 293.
- <sup>13</sup>Printed on the reverse of his map of the county of 1610.
- <sup>14</sup>Printed for Derbyshire by Lysons, xxiii–xxxiv.
- <sup>15</sup>J. M. Bestall and D. V. Fowkes (ed.), *Chesterfield wills and inventories, 1521–1603*, (Derbyshire Record Society, 1, 1977).
- <sup>16</sup>J. C. Cox, *D.A.J.*, vii (1885), 31–6, and Lysons, 293, quote a population for Wirksworth *parish* in 1547 from the chantry certificate of 1,000 houseling people which possibly suggests an aggregate figure of about 1,500 people in all. The 1,563 return of 470 households implies a rather greater total population.
- <sup>17</sup>Blanchard, 337–42; Coates and Riden.
- <sup>18</sup>Lysons, xviii and 90; cf. Speed.