CRISIS IN LANCASHIRE:

A SURVEY OF THE 1720S DEMOGRAPHIC CRISIS

by

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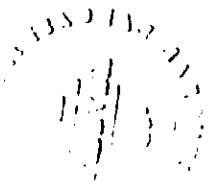
A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirement of the degree of MA (by Research) at the University of Central Lancashire.



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STUDENT DECLARATION

I declare that while registered as a candidate for the research degree, I have not been a registered candidate or enrolled student for another award of the University or other academic or professional institution.

I declare that no material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award and is solely my own work.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines a suspected demographic crisis in Lancashire in the latter years of the 1720s utilising evidence from a wide selection of parish registers and a number of contemporary accounts. Lancashire has proved to be an excellent county to study this crisis given its diverse topographic and economic characteristics, and a division of the county into four regions enhances the understanding of the incidence of crisis. Previously this crisis had been unexplored in Lancashire, with the regional studies conducted in the midlands and to the east of the country. Glimpses of crisis were evident in the forewords of the transcriptions of the parish registers by the Lancashire Parish Register Society and from contemporary accounts. Thus a full study of the parish registers would enhance the knowledge of the crisis in Lancashire. During the undertaking of this study an article considering the experience of the Lancashire crisis was published, which has provided a number of suppositions which this study explores in greater detail.

In considering the data provided by the parish registers, the study explores a number of observations; a subsistence caused by harvest failures and disease, with the countryside being greatly affected. That the experience of crisis was socially selective in which the older members of the community formed the majority of the burials and that the poor and vulnerable were hardest hit. Consideration of the experience of crisis is best explored through the review of one community that recorded exceptionally high levels of mortality and had not only detailed registers but a record of the poor accounts.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Demographic crisis was a frequent event in early modern England with countless episodes of high mortality in individual communities. This high death rate was determined by a variety of factors including harvest failures and disease. A poor harvest, could potentially result in famine or famine-related diseases.[1] Disease was ever-present, and ranged from deficiency and endemic diseases to the epidemic diseases of plague, typhus and influenza.[2] Epidemics of this nature could sweep through a community wreaking devastation in a matter of weeks. Endemic diseases were particularly problematic in towns, with regular upsurges in mortality experienced. The majority of the population was susceptible to the influx of disease, with only the wealthy being able to potentially escape crisis through leaving the community when epidemics broke out.

Historians and writers have charted the frequent episodes of crisis, assessing contemporary evidence provided by diaries and reports and analysing the burials recorded in the multitude of available parish registers and the Bills of Mortality. Demographic history has emerged as a specialist study of the population utilising parish registers, censuses and pre-census population listings. Despite its critics, Wrigley and Schofield's colossal study has greatly aided the understanding of our population history through the analysis of parish registers.[3] In addition to this a variety of regional and parish studies have been published which provide detailed accounts of specific episodes of high mortality which often attempt to understand the cause of crisis.[4]

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[1] E. A. Wrigley & R. S. Schofield, 'The Population History of England 1541-1871. A reconstruction' (Cambridge, 1981), p. 1; A. Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England' (Liverpool, 1978), p. 1; L. Clarkson, 'Death, Disease & Famine in Pre-Industrial England' (Dublin, 1975), pp. 1-2

[2] Clarkson, 'Death, Disease & Famine', pp. 39-58

[3] E. A. Wrigley & R. S. Schofield, 'The Population History of England 1541-1871' (Cambridge, 1981)

[4] C. D. Rogers, 'The Lancashire Population Crisis of 1623' (Manchester, 1975); J. Healey, 'Socially selective mortality during the population crisis of 1727-1730: Evidence from Lancashire', Local

Dobson refers to the latter years of the 1720s as the last demographic hiccup of early modern England when burials exceeded baptisms, with parishes recording twice the number of burials to baptisms.[5] A number of regional studies highlight these years as one of increased mortality, and interestingly the previously expected north-west/south-west divide ceased to be a feature of crisis.[6] For Lancashire, Healey's study provides an initial base for review of the crisis, suggesting that its impact was socially selective.[7] The studies cited a number of causes of this crisis ranging from disease to a subsistence crisis, and whilst this study will not consider in any great depth the cause of crisis, it will consider these conclusions.[8] This study sits within the regional and parish studies, detailing the experience of Lancashire during the last years of the 1720s and considering one parish's experience through an in-depth study.

The primary aim of this study is to analyse the 1720s crisis in Lancashire, detailing the characteristics of the crisis; where and when it occurred and whom it affected. This will be achieved through a review of the topographical characteristics along with the longevity and seasonality of crisis at a parish-by-parish level. Consideration of the results will additionally consider the view that the crisis was socially selective, largely affecting the older, vulnerable sections of society. The study is primarily based on the evidence provided by parish registers, of which a good proportion of are in existence

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Population History, 81 (2008); A. J. Gritt, 'Mortality Crisis and Household Structure: An Analysis of Parish Registers and the Compton Census, Broughton, Lancashire, 1667-1676', Local Population Studies (2008); J. Virgoe, 'Causes of death in a rural south-west Lancashire community in the late eighteenth century', Local Population Studies (2005); C. Galley, 'An exercise in Dade parish register demography: St. Olave, York, 1771-1785', Local Population Studies (2005); A. Gooder, 'The Population Crisis of 1727-30 in Warwickshire', Midland History (1972)

[5] M. J. Dobson, 'Contours of death and disease in early modern England' (Cambridge, 1997),, p. 69, 106-110

[6] Gooder, 'The Population Crisis of 1727-30 in Warwickshire'; D. Chambers, 'The Vale of Trent 1670-1800' (Econ. Hist. review Supplement, 1957),reprinted in Population in History; D. E. C. Eversley, A survey of the population in an area of Worcestershire, Population Studies, 10 (1957); Wrigley & Schofield, 'The Population History of England', pp. 681-2

[7] Healey, ' Evidence from Lancashire'

[8] Gooder (1972), Chambers (1957), Eversley (1957)

for the period. Additional evidence is gleaned from contemporary accounts in the form of a diary and an autobiography, as well as the Overseers of the Poor Accounts book for Woodplumpton.

The study is presented over six chapters; with Chapter Two reviewing the literature surrounding population change and demographic crises in the early modern period. It considers a variety of causes of crisis in England from disease, often the culprit in the south east of the country, to the subsistence crises and famine noted in the north-west counties of Lancashire, Cumberland and Westmorland. Finally, the chapter reviews the literature on the 1720s crisis, including the recent study of Lancashire by Healey. Chapter Three introduces Lancashire detailing the topographical, demographic, economic and religious characteristics that make the county a distinct and appropriate choice for the review of the 1720s crisis. The chapter considers the sources and methods to be utilised throughout the study.

Chapters Four presents the results of the county-wide survey of Lancashire demonstrating the scale and severity of crisis across the sample parishes. The chapter then considers the location of high mortality to determine whether topography was a determinant of crisis. Finally, the chapter reviews the supposition that the Lancashire crisis was in fact one of subsistence. Chapter Five utilises the detailed records of Woodplumpton in central Lancashire to consider the socially-selective elements of age, gender, occupation and social status in the experience of crisis. A final section reviews the community's coping mechanisms and recovery post crisis, thus showing the impact of crisis. Chapter Six draws all the evidence together to consider the potential causes of crisis and review and conclude the questions raised throughout the study.

Chapter Two: Demographic Change and Mortality: Historiography

This chapter outlines the literature concerned with demographic change and mortality in early modern England. The chapter is divided into three main sections; the national context of demographic change including discussion on how and why population increased in the eighteenth century. The second section identifies local mortality crises in England throughout the early modern period, with specific reference to local crises during the early decades of the eighteenth century. The last section will focus directly on the 1720s crisis detailing its main features and potential causes.

Population Change in the Eighteenth Century

The early modern population of England continues to be the cause of some debate amongst historians. Indeed, the transitional eighteenth century has generated numerous conflicting interpretations regarding the causes of population growth, with large variations in estimates and questionable reliability of sources. Debate began as early as the mid eighteenth century with Brakenridge suggesting that the population had fallen since the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Rev. Richard Forster challenged this, criticising Brakenridge's interpretation and methodology.[9] Controversy continued throughout the eighteenth century, mainly due to the inadequacy of contemporary population statistics. Despite its flaws, the first census of 1801, along with the information requested by Rickman regarding Anglican baptisms, marriages and burials, concluded that the population of England had in fact increased during the eighteenth century, with a marked increase in population from the 1740s.[10]

Malthus' Essay, published 1798, significantly contributed to the debate on the country's population and provided an initial understanding of English population

[9] D. V. Glass, 'Numbering the People: the eighteenth-century population controversy and the development of census and vital statistics in Britain' (London, 1978), pp. 11-2
[10] E. A. Wrigley, The Growth of Population in Eighteenth Century England: A Conundrum Resolved, Past & Present (1983), p. 127

history. [11] The Malthusian system identified positive and preventative checks which controlled population growth and was based on a potentially limitless population increase kept in check through the ability to provide sufficient food (and therefore linked to real wages), which in turn contributed to increased mortality.[12] At this level, Malthus' system is a reasonable theory and aspects of his theory in terms of a link to subsistence crises experienced in the early modern period and thus will be considered within the scope of this study.

Historians from the early twentieth century have recognised that the Church of England Parish Registers did not record all baptisms, burials and marriages (and certainly not all births and deaths) and therefore data collected from such registers required alteration to provide useable demographic data.[13] Recognition of this has resulted in various forms of multipliers and alternative data from lists of communicants and tax records. Brownlee and Talbot Griffith's population estimates produced in the early twentieth century from Parish Registers Abstracts, although subject to disagreement and criticism, provide population totals for England and Wales. The estimates show a small increase from 1700 to 1750, followed by a sharp increase from 1750.[14] The vast amount of disagreement for estimates occurs during the early decades for the eighteenth century, with a wide range of figures setting the population between 4.7 million and 5.7 million.[15] This discrepancy in population estimates for the beginning of the eighteenth century presents difficulties in establishing the change and nature of the population.

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[11] T. R. Malthus, 'An Essay on the Principle of Population, as it Affects the Future Improvement of Society, with Remarks on the Speculations of Mr. Godwin, M. Condorcet and Other Writers' (London, 1798), p. 71, 82

[12] A. Hinde, 'England's Population' (London, 2003), pp. 82-7

[13] M. W. Flinn, The Population History of England, 1541-1871, The Economic History Review (1982), p. 443

[14] G. S. L. Tucker, English Pre-Industrial Population Trends, The Economic History Review (1963), p. 207

[15] Wrigley & Schofield, 'The Population History of England 1541-1781', p. 577

The work produced by Wrigley and Schofield through the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure could certainly be described as a watershed for English demography. The two major publications, '*The Population History of England 1541-1781: a reconstruction*' and '*English Population History from Family Reconstruction 1580-1837*'[16] have been the result of detailed study of English parish registers and extensive work on back projection and family reconstruction. For population totals the publications have provided two major contributions; firstly, the data from parish registers have produced annual totals for population, unlike the data produced by Rickman and others, which are based on decadal results. Secondly, Wrigley and Schofield have comprehensively charted England's population from the mid sixteenth century onwards, thereby enabling both long and short term trends to be identified.

The statistics produced by Wrigley and Schofield from parish registers confer with Rickman's earlier conclusion on the population controversy; the population of England did indeed *increase* between the Glorious Revolution and the mid eighteenth century. The statistics, along with earlier population estimates from Brownlee, Talbot Griffith, Ohlin, Rickman, Finlaison and Farr show the slow rise in population during the first half of the century and then the sharp increase from the 1750s.[17] What is striking about the data is that despite the differing figures for population estimates, particularly in the early eighteenth century, the trend for the second half of the century is primarily the same - a sharp upturn in growth.

[16] E. A. Wrigley, & R. S. Schofield, 'English Population History from Family Reconstruction 1580-1837' (Cambridge, 1997), p. 546
[17] Wrigley & Schofield, 'The Population History of England 1541-1781', pp. 144-6

With the confirmation of an increase in population during the 'long' eighteenth century questions regarding why population changed have been posed.[18] What demographers now seek to answer is why the population increased; was it due to a change in mortality or fertility rates or a combination of the two? The traditional view centred round the theory of demographic transitions developed in the early twentieth century. This theory identified four stages of population change; starting with the acceptance that both the birth and death rate in pre-industrial society was high. This fact ensured equilibrium within the population; resulting in a constant or slightly varying total population. Demographers suggest that with economic improvements and improved living standards, which occurred from the late seventeenth century, the mortality rate fell, yet the fertility rate remained constant. This facilitated an excess of births over deaths, resulting in an immediate increase in population. With continued economic growth and prosperity the fertility rate levelled off, to balance once more with mortality, thereby creating a new equilibrium for an increased population.[19] McKeown continues further with this theory concluding that population growth is solely due to a reduction in mortality and that only small improvement in economy and living standards were enough to allow the population to increase significantly.[20]

The theory of demographic transition has been debated as strongly by twentieth century historians as the population controversy in the eighteenth century. The data produced by the Cambridge Group through family reconstruction and back projection has posed an alternative view, that fertility was the primary determinant in population change.[21] Wrigley and Schofield identified two distinct periods for both marriage, including fertility, and mortality during the long eighteenth century; 1640-1710 and

[18] The 'long' Eighteenth Century covers the period c.1680- c.1820, Wrigley & Schofield, 'Family Reconstruction 1580-1837', p. 546
[19] M. Drake, 'Historical Demography: Problems & Projects' (O.U., 1974), pp. 18-9
[20] T. McKeown, 'The Modern Rise of Population' (London, 1976), p. 35
[21] Wrigley, 'Population Growth in the Eighteenth Century'. p. 131

1710-1870 for marriage and 1710-1750 and 1750 onwards for mortality.[22] Studying mortality, fertility and nuptiality independently of one another, the Cambridge Group observed that birth rates increased from the early eighteenth century, yet mortality remained high until the mid eighteenth century. Krause, writing in the 1950s, also queried the acceptance that the mortality rate dropped to allow an increase in population and made a further suggestion that economic prosperity actually increased the birth rate due to the capability of couples to marry younger, thereby potentially increasing the number of children produced.[23] Hinde suggested that the reduction in mortality, although important, was not a deciding factor in population change, with only a weak link between crisis mortality and population growth as periods of slow growth occurred when crises were infrequent.[24] For recently, Hatcher has raised concerns over Wrigley and Schofield's view that fertility and marriage was the dominant factor in population change, suggesting that a much more subtle and complex model of population was at play.[25]

Family reconstruction exercises show an increase in marriage during the eighteenth century, with the average age of females at first marriage falling from twenty-six years to twenty-three years.[26] Wrigley and Schofield suggest that the reduction in age at first marriage, along with the increase in incidences of marriages, enabled excess births over burials, resulting in population growth. There are two main arguments against these conclusions regarding age at marriage: whether the change in age at first marriage is significant enough to alter fertility rates and whether the age at first marriage dropped or actually increased. McKeown doubts that the reduction of age at first marriage from twenty-six years to twenty-three years was enough of a

[22] Wrigley & Schofield, 'The Population History of England', pp. 161-2
[23] Drake, 'Historical Demography: Problems & Projects', p. 19
[24] Hinde, 'England's Population', pp. 97-8
[25] J. Hatcher, 'Understanding the Population History of England, 1450-1750', Past and Present (2003), p. 89
[26] Wrigley, 'Population Growth in the Eighteenth Century', p. 131

change to increase fertility. McKeown's estimates would require a change of at least five years to show even a modest change in fertility, suggesting that reduction of five years for the age at first marriage would increase the average number of children born by just one child.[27]

Razzell actually argues against the estimates produced by Wrigley and Schofield, suggesting that the methodology of family reconstruction requires careful evaluation. Information from marriage licences from parishes in Kent, London, Nottinghamshire, Suffolk and Yorkshire produce different estimates for age at first marriage. The average age of first marriage in the late seventeenth century produced from the marriage licences is significantly lower that Wrigley and Schofield' estimate by family reconstruction; 23.56 years compared to 26.2 years.[28] This difference becomes more significant when mean age at first marriage for women in the 1840s, after civil registration was introduced, was around 25 years.[29] These figures alter the direction of age at first marriage completely, concluding that the age increased, not decreased during the long eighteenth century.

The vast amounts of literature available on demographic change, specifically during the transitional eighteenth century give varying and often conflicting conclusions on how and what influenced population change. However, even the current studies have highlighted the need for further research into population change. Wrigley and Schofield stress that there is still much to be investigated specifically with regards to the interpretation of data.[30] Razzell argues for the need for further research into local censuses, parish registers and other contemporary sources before explanations of

[27] McKeown, 'The Modern Rise of Population', p. 38
[28] P. Razzell, 'The Growth of Population in Eighteenth-Century England: A Critical Reappraisal', The Journal of Economic History (1993), p. 751
[29] Razzell, The Growth of Population in Eighteenth-Century England, p. 752
[30] Wrigley & Schofield, 'Family Reconstruction 1580-1837', p. 550

population change can be made.[31] Data produced from parish registers for the early eighteenth century will enhance the understanding of demographic change and perhaps provide tentative conclusions regarding the importance of mortality crises in population growth in early modern England.

Mortality Crises in Early Modern England

This section is intended to highlight the diseases and causes of mortality prevalent during the early modern period and to discuss trends and patterns of mortality. Frequency of crises is high throughout the period with episodes approximately every generation. Lancashire crises studied between 1557 and 1638 identify peaks in mortality every ten to thirty years.[32] The frequency, as well as the occurrence of heightened mortality in different areas during different intervals prevents detailed discussion on all regions of England thus examples of major episodes of crisis will be discussed. General trends and patterns provide a suitable division within the early modern period, pre and post 1700. Whilst not discounting the countless periods of crisis mortality, this section will draw upon two well documented episodes of crisis; 1597-98 and 1623-25, followed by a review of the 1720s crisis.

Plague was the most common cause of death in England until the last half of the seventeenth century and was a constant presence in Europe from the middle of the fourteenth century to the end of the eighteenth century.[33] The first and most severe outbreak of plague occurred in Europe throughout the years 1347 to 1351, which most historians agree was the result of pneumonic plague.[34] Black Death entered England through the southern ports and rapidly spread to Oxford, London, Kent and

[31] Razzell, 'The Growth of Population in Eighteenth-Century England', p. 769
[32] W. G. Howson, Plague, poverty and population in parts of north-west England 1580-1720, Lancashire and Cheshire Historic Society, 112 (1961), pp. 33-4.
[33] V. J. Knapp, 'Disease and its impact on modern European history' (New York, 1989), p. 16
Howson, 'Plague, poverty and population', p. 34
[34] Knapp, 'Disease and its impact on modern European history', p. 26

East Anglia in the spring of 1349.[35] The outbreak continued to spread throughout England finally reaching Scotland by the end of 1349. Plague generally affected the towns where conditions were filthy and congested, however it could easily affect and devastate villages and hamlets. In total, estimates of population loss was between twenty and fifty per cent for England between 1347 and 1351.[36] Plague continued to devastate parishes, particularly urban centres and the southern counties of England, and features heavily in causes of crisis. Communities often lost a great proportion of their population during plague outbreaks; however studies of the communities suggest that they recovered swiftly with vacant houses and occupations being filled by those outside the immediate area.[37]

National statistics produced by the Cambridge group have identified several episodes of crisis mortality, noting 1557-9 as the most severe across England with a crude death rate of 64.84 per thousand for the harvest year 1558/9.[38] This episode of mortality was not only exceptionally high but affected between thirty-two and thirty-nine percent of the parishes under observation.[39] For Lancashire, Howson admits that there are limited parish records for this period but notes that evidence available shows a widespread and lethal crisis which he suggests was the result of three bad harvest years from 1556.[40] Suggesting an alternate cause of high mortality, Axon notes that plague affected Liverpool, Manchester and other Lancashire towns as well as being present in Chester.[41] The south of the country was also experiencing crisis,

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[35] S. Scott & C. Duncan, 'Return of the Black Death' (Chichester, 2005), pp. 35-7
C. Hibbert, 'The English : a social history 1066-1945' (London, 1987), p. 33
[36] J. Kelly, 'The Great Mortality. An intimate history of the Black Death' (London, 2005), pp. 11-2
Scott & Duncan, 'Return of the Black Death', p. 44
Hibbert, 'The English : a social history', p. 34
[37] T. S. Willan, Plague in perspective; the case of Manchester in 1605, Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 132 (1983 for 1982), pp. 29-40
Scott & Duncan, 'Return of the Black Death', pp. 44-5
[38] Wrigley & Schofield, 'The Population History of England', p. 333
[39] Hinde, 'England's Population', p. 95
[40] Howson, 'Plague, poverty and population', p. 33
[41] W. E. A. Axon, Chronological notes on the visitation of plague in Lancashire and Cheshire, Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society, 12 (1894), pp. 58-60

albeit from perhaps different causes, with mention of influenza.[42] Dearth is noted for 1555 and 1556 which may have been an important contributing factor in heightened mortality.[43]

Famine and harvest fluctuations had a direct impact on the population in the early modern period. Andrew Appleby, in his studies of demographic crises and economic change in the north-west confirmed that famine was a reality in the northwest during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with two famine periods identified; 1597-98 and 1623.[44] Appleby's study of Cumberland and Westmorland has charted the movement of crisis, identifying that increased mortality started from late 1596 and continued, regardless of seasons, through to 1598. Appleby considered typhus as a possible cause of mortality, as it strikes in the winter months, and also plague, which occurs during the summer and autumn seasons. However, he concluded that the mortality levels were consistent throughout the period, suggesting that epidemics such as plague and typhus were not the main causes of mortality. Harvest records for the years 1594-1597 identify successively bad harvests, which in the north, could have resulted in dearth and possible famine. Appleby considers the harvest failures to be the primary cause of mortality for the 1597 through to the summer of 1598, when plague is reported within the county.

An in-depth study of Penrith in Cumberland for the period 1597-8 has provided additional evidence of crisis mortality in the north of England at the end of the sixteenth century. Scott, Duncan and Duncan note that bubonic plague is the accepted cause of crisis in Penrith, although their paper concludes that anthrax was

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[42] C. Creighton, 'A History of Epidemics in Britain, Vol2: From the extinction of the plague to the present time' (Cass, 1965), p. 304
[43] C. W. Chalklin, & M. A. Havinden, eds, 'Rural Change and Urban Growth' (London, 1974), p. 57
[44] J. Walter, & R. Schofield, eds, 'Famine, disease and the social order in early modern society' (Cambridge, 1991), p. 2
A. Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England', p.147

a more probable cause of death mainly due to the speed of infection and differing seasonal occurrence to accepted plague patterns.[45] The study confirms Appleby's conclusion that a severe famine preceded the outbreak of plague and makes note that the north of England suffered from food shortages during 1597 which has caused difficulties in separating deaths from various causes.[46] It was suggested that the disease spread from the market town of Richmond in the North Riding of Yorkshire and progressed along trade routes, to towns in the north including Penrith.[47]

Studies conducted throughout Northern Europe concur with Appleby and Scott that famine, with resultant disease, was evident. The northern European countries of Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Scotland and England experienced a rise in mortality during this period with starvation being reported.[48] Contemporary accounts in England confirm famine conditions within the country; Privy Council discussions being recorded on the possibility of transporting grain to distressed neighbouring parishes, however the scarcity of food supplies was too widespread to enable surpluses to be distributed.[49] Staffordshire noted evidence of famine in some but not all parishes with written accounts citing starvation as a cause of death. [50] Additionally, Colyton, a large parish in Devon consisting of a small market town and smaller hamlets, experienced a doubling of burials for the years 1596-7 although no firm conclusion on cause of crisis has been suggested.[51] Appleby stresses that parishes experiencing high mortality during this episode were exceptional south of

[45] S. Scott, C. J. Duncan, & S. R. Duncan, The Plague in Penrith, Cumbria , 1597/8: its causes, biology and consequences, Annals of Human Biology, 23 (1996), p. 2, 7-9
[46] Scott et al., 'The Plague in Penrith', p. 12
[47] Towns affected in 1597 included Newcastle, Durham, Dernton, Richmond, Kendal, Penrith, Carlisle, Appleby and Darlington. Scott et al., 'The Plague in Penrith', p. 1, 11
[48] Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England', p. 133
[49] Note from the Privy Council for February 1597, "The complaint of scarcitie is so generall as we do hardly finde any countie so well stoared as to be able to releeve their neighbors", Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England', p. 142
[50] Chalklin, & Havinden, 'Rural Change and Urban Growth', p. 57
Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England', p. 134
[51] Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England', p. 135

the river Trent, however such examples do continue to show that famine could occur in these areas.

A north south divide across the country has been observed with arable regions, such as the south-east, economically rich with dense networks of small prosperous towns, yet subject to frequent epidemics. Subsistence crisis was rare due to good grain supplies. The pastoral and remote regions, such as the north-west, were prone to harvest failure and starvation, but were often unaffected by outbreaks of disease.[52] This divide is also evident on a regional level with mortality being linked with geographical location, simply, that some areas are healthier than others. Dobson's study of the counties of Kent, Essex and Sussex, having various economic bases and differing types of land, including wet marshlands, chalk uplands and clay wood-pasture regions concluded that the type of land and economy greatly affected the mortality of the parish.[53] This split is most evident in the regional crisis period of 1623-25, in which high levels of mortality was recorded in a limited number of parishes. [54]

Several regions of England appeared to suffer greatly during the years 1623 to 1625, although from two very separate causes. Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire were affected in the early years of the 1620s with an increase in burials during winter and early spring of 1623. Additionally, burials in County Durham and Yorkshire were also higher than average with at least two thirds of parishes experiencing increased mortality.[55] Nationally, 1622 is noted as a year of dearth with resultant high grain prices. A request for assistance was made from Scotland in June 1623 and English Privy Council reports in December 1623 note the continuation of high grain prices in

[52] Wrigley & Schofield, 'The Population History of England 1541-1781', pp. 677-9
[53] Dobson, 'Contours of death and disease', pp. 53-5
[54] Hinde, 'England's Population', p. 96
[55] Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England', p. 147

the North and Western regions of England, confirming Appleby's conclusion that the north continued to suffer from dearth during 1623.[56] Appleby's study of Cumberland and Westmorland during these years show a rise in burials over winter and early spring 1623, ruling out a plague outbreak, which generally strikes during the summer and autumn months.

A multitude of causes of crisis including starvations, typhus, dysentery and smallpox have been cited for the north-west.[57] Roger's study of Lancashire in 1623 explored the suggestions made by Creighton, Howson and other historians through aggregative analysis of surviving parish records. The results confirmed that crisis levels of mortality were evident in the region, although some parishes in south-west Lancashire hardly recorded any increase.[58] The crisis appeared in two waves, the first in 1622 and the more severe second in 1623, both lasting several months and occurring in the winter and spring months with a lull during the summer months between May and September.[59] The seasonality and length of crisis has ruled out many of the existing causes of death; plague can be ruled out due to the reduction in burials during the warm summer months, additionally, dysentery is not a plausible explanation as it too occurs during the summer months. Rogers finally concludes that famine and associated famine fevers are the primary cause of death in Lancashire in 1623.[60] A recorded drop in conceptions, decreased marriages and general economic depression gives an indication of the effects of crisis and the delay in recovery in the community, somewhat different to short-lived crises.[61]

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[56] Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England', pp. 125-6
[57] Creighton, 'A History of Epidemics in Britain', pp. 72-4
Howson, 'Plague, poverty and population', p. 33
[58] Rogers, 'The Lancashire Population Crisis of 1623', p. 10, 25
[59] Rogers, 'The Lancashire Population Crisis of 1623', p. 13
[60] Rogers, 'The Lancashire Population Crisis of 1623', pp. 26-7
[61] A.J. Gritt, 'Mortality Crisis and Household Structure: An Analysis of Parish Registers and the Compton Census, Broughton, Lancashire, 1667-1676', Local Population Studies (2008), pp. 40-1

Dobson notes that crisis was experienced in the northern counties of England and Scotland citing a severe famine with resultant typhus due to the effects of starvation. Outbreaks of typhus were noted in south-east England during the winter months of 1623 but Dobson suggests the summer months were particularly healthy throughout the region. Only in 1624 is epidemic disease evident in the south-east with reports of dysentery, typhus and plague and an increase in burials for the twelve month period. Unlike the north of England, the worst year of crisis for the south-east was 1625 with outbreaks of plague devastating towns and a burial rate of over one and half times than average. Dobson identifies 1625 has one of the worst years of mortality for Kent and Essex, being the most severe in the London environs for both counties.[62] Towns such as Ashford and Chelmsford suffered greatly from the plague outbreak with 140 and 241 burials recorded for 1625 respectively. Plague was additionally evident in London, with orders preventing goods and people from London entering various towns in Essex and Kent. Localised plague continued through to 1626 along with reports of smallpox and an unidentified ague which escalated the already high levels of mortality.[63] Additionally, crisis mortality is evident throughout southern England with parishes in the south-east midlands and south-east regions including Buckinghamshire with plague noted in late 1624 and 1625.[64]

Demographic Crisis in the late 1720s

A reduction in crisis mortality is noted from 1650, indicating a general stabilisation in incidences of crisis mortality with the period after 1700 being specifically 'impressive' in light of the growing population, which would have been a reason for increased

[62] Dobson, 'Contours of death and disease', p.381
[63] Dobson, 'Contours of death and disease', pp. 390-1
[64] J. Skinner, 'Crisis Mortality' in Buckinghamshire 1600-1750, Local Population Studies, 28 (1982), pp. 67-9; Wrigley & Schofield, 'The Population History of England', p.676-7

mortality.[65] From the mid sixteenth century mortality patterns begin to shift from the familiar north/south divide, with famine and its associated fevers disappearing as a major feature for the north of England. However susceptibility to infectious disease was still great throughout the country and crisis mortality continued to affect parishes across the country.[66] Despite this 'impressive' decline in crisis mortality, crude death rate data records a three star crisis for the harvest years 1727/8 to 1729/30.[67] The crisis period of 1727-30 has one of the highest crude death rates at forty-two deaths per thousand with over twenty-eight percent of parishes experiencing crisis.[68] The crisis did not conform to the established pattern with the south east counties of Kent, Essex and Sussex being affected by crisis as well as the northern counties of Lancashire and east Yorkshire.[69] Dobson refers to this period as the last demographic hiccup of early modern England as burials exceeded baptisms, with over ten per cent of parishes recording twice the number of burials to baptisms between the late seventeenth century and the mid eighteenth century.[70] The high rate of mortality does not appear localised, with parishes throughout a central band of England recording incidences of crisis. Local studies have indicated a band of mortality from Lancashire to Warwickshire spreading south east into Leicestershire, Bedfordshire and central East Anglia.[71]

The regional studies published focus on the midlands and south east counties of Warwickshire, Worcester, Nottingham, Kent, Sussex and Essex. Gooder conducted a survey of twenty-three Warwickshire parishes for the decade 1721-30. He confirms

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[65] Wrigley & Schofield, 'The Population History of England', pp. 650-1
[66] Gritt, 'Mortality Crisis and Household Structure'; Virgoe, 'Causes of death in a rural south-west Lancashire community in the late eighteenth century'; Galley, 'An exercise in Dade parish register demography'
[67] The three star crisis represent a death rate of 30 per cent or above, two star crisis represents between 20 and 30 per cent and a one star crisis between 10 and 20 per cent. Wrigley & Schofield, 'The Population History of England', p. 334
[68] Hinde, 'England's Population', p. 95
[69] Wrigley & Schofield, 'The Population History of England', p. 684
[70] Dobson, 'Contours of death and disease', p. 69, 106-110
[71] Wrigley & Schofield, 'The Population History of England', pp. 681-2

that in eighteen out of the twenty-three parishes surveyed, burials exceeded baptisms with the later years of the decade showing the highest levels of mortality.[72] Three immediate observations made for the period 1727-30 are; the longevity of the crisis, an increase in annual mortality totals for the county and the spread of the crisis with all Warwickshire parishes being affected between 1727 and 1730.[73] The length and severity of the mortality crisis in the later years of the 1720s are also evident in the Vale of Trent, with the years 1724, 1726 and 1728 showing as peaks on a 'single mountain of mortality'.[74] Additionally, what is clearly unusual is the lack of comment by the incumbents who recorded the information in the parish registers. Often short notes were placed in the registers, perhaps noting an unusual or sudden death and generally noticing increased mortality caused by epidemics.[75]

The Warwickshire deaths were widespread, with little contrast between the worst months and the lower months, which perhaps explains why there are no comments within the registers. Other studies conducted, including Eversley's survey of population in Worcestershire refer to the quinquennium 1725-30 as the only period in the eighteenth century when burials exceeded baptisms. In this study the burial rate almost doubles from 35.06 per thousand for the period 1720-24 to 65.92 for 1625-29.[76]

What is clear from local studies is the existence of widespread crisis mortality during the last years of the 1720s, what is apparently unclear is the cause of such a crisis. Revisiting previous crisis periods across the country during the early modern period does not provide any obvious comparisons, quite simply previous crises tended to be

[72] Gooder, 'The Population Crisis of Warwickshire', p. 1
[73] Gooder, 'The Population Crisis of Warwickshire', pp. 2-3
[74] Chambers,' The Vale of Trent 1670-1800', pp. 330-31.
[75] Smallpox, plague, 'pestilent fever' or accidents were often noted in the parish registers with smallpox being recorded in Warwickshire parish registers in the first half of the eighteenth century. Gooder, 'The Population Crisis of Warwickshire', p. 3
[76] Eversley, 'A survey of the population in an area of Worcestershire' , p. 267

much shorter in length, between one and two years.[77] Not only is the actual length of crisis unique, the observation finds little contrast between the 'worst' months and lower months of crisis, which once again differs from other known epidemic crises.[78] This observation along with the lack of information from the parish registers leads Gooder to conclude that heightened mortality was due to a number of causes. [79]

Creighton, who is often looked to for causes of crises, discusses epidemic fevers for the years 1726-29, with London suffering from outbreaks of pestilential fevers and a newly termed 'hysteric' fever.[80] Short's investigation of market towns and country parishes during the Eighteenth century also cites fever as a cause of the series of mortal years.[81] His conclusion is drawn from comments by doctors and epidemiologists across England who describes fevers of a typhus nature and also the nerve, hysteric or 'putrid' fevers described in London. Eversley and Chambers, both writing in the late 1950s make different conclusions on the cause of death. Eversley is satisfied with smallpox as the cause of crisis referring to 'independent evidence on this smallpox epidemic in local sources, which cannot here be discussed'.[82]

This suggestion has particular flaws for which Chambers draws on a wide range of information to discuss the possibility of the 'gin-age' affecting mortality, along with adverse weather conditions, famine, fevers and smallpox. Chambers refers to other European studies such as Professor Heckscher in Sweden which accepted the notion that food supply with linked to mortality, however noting that the harvest

[77] The majority of crises investigated, such as 1597-98 and 1623-25 lasted between one and two years, often with much shorter periods of crisis for individual parishes.
[78] Gooder, 'The Population Crisis of Warwickshire', p. 7
[79] Gooder, 'The Population Crisis of Warwickshire', p. 7
[80] Creighton, 'A History of Epidemics in Britain', p. 66
[81] Creighton, 'A History of Epidemics in Britain', p. 71
[82] Eversley, 'A survey of the population of Worcestershire', p. 267

failures at the end of the 1720s hardly raise Sweden's death rate.[83] The lack of definite correlation of harvest failure and increased mortality leads Chamber's to conclude that famine, and with it excess gin consumption, did not make a parish vulnerable to disease; an epidemic could devastate a community on its own.[84] Based on the evidence from Creighton and Short, Chambers considers that the cause of crisis was a multitude of fevers, although firmer conclusions were difficult because of lack of specific evidence for the Vale of Trent.[85]

Gooder suggests an alternate cause, concluding that harvest failures were the primary cause of crisis detailing the poor harvests of 1725 through to 1727. Gooder links high grain prices to levels of subsistence crisis although admitting that additional local peaks could have been caused by localised infections. The suggestion of a subsistence crisis is evidenced by contemporary doctors who described how 'the labouring and poor people, who used a low diet....., died; many of whom probably wanted the necessary assistance of diet and medicine'[86]. Additionally he observed that richer people were not seized with any of these diseases at this time. However, it is important to stress that people were not necessarily dying from starvation, but the result of infections that devastated a relatively defenceless community.[87]

A further article, published whilst this study has been undertaken, reviews Lancashire's experience of the 1720s crisis. Healey's article reviews the previously cited causes of disease and subsistence crisis and progresses the debate further with the suggestion of a 'socially selective crisis'. Healey discounts Gooder's subsistence crisis and considers disease to be the dominant factor of crisis, albeit

[83] G. Utterstrom, 'Some Population Problems in pre-industrial Sweden' The Scandinavian Economic History Review (1955), p. 155
[84] Chambers, 'The Vale of Trent 1670-1800', p. 29
[85] Chambers,' The Vale of Trent 1670-1800', p 29
[86] Creighton, 'A History of Epidemics in Britain', p. 73
[87] Gooder, 'The Population Crisis of Warwickshire', p. 10

focusing on particular social groups and geographical regions.[88] This socially selective crisis is the main focal point of Healey's study, with a conclusion that the most vulnerable members of the community were hit hardest during the crisis. Parish location was additionally a determining factor, with a north/south divide for the county, and the countryside being more severely affected. Lastly, consideration to the age of those dying was reviewed, and following comments that the elderly were primarily affected, Healey tentatively concludes that evidence presented in his study would support that premise.[89]

In considering Healey's article a number of areas for review within this Lancashire study can be raised. The notion that the crisis might be attributed to a subsistence crisis, whilst discounted by Healey is expressed strongly by Gooder. Therefore further consideration of this must be undertaken within the scope of this study. The conclusion of four separate peaks of crisis within a lengthy period of increased general mortally is mirrored across the majority of the study and is a distinctive feature of this crisis. Healey's division of Lancashire is somewhat misleading in terms of the physical landscape of the county. Perhaps this division is based primarily on economic characteristics, but therefore ignores the diverse landscape of Lancashire. Lancashire's diverse characteristics are of importance when considering the experience of crisis and will be a theme of the county wide study. One point that Healey considers in terms of landscape is Stout's comment that increased mortality was felt more severely in the plain country rather than in the towns, leading to the conclusion that mortality was higher in rural areas.[90] Stout's comments warrant further discussion in the context of the geographical features of the county, review of the parish data and Healey's mis-understanding of the phrase 'plain country'.

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[88] Healey, 'Evidence from Lancashire' , pp. 59-61
[89] Healey, 'Evidence from Lancashire', pp. 62-71
[90] J. Harland, ,' The Autobiography of William Stout of Lancaster 1655-1752' (London, 1967), p. 201 Healey, 'Evidence from Lancashire', pp. 65

The experience of the community in terms of who was affected is certainly interesting with consideration that crisis affected the older parishioners and the vulnerable. Healey's use of the parish registers; Overseers of the Poor Accounts and contemporary evidence does allow a detailed review of which social or demographic groupings were affected. However the methodologies utilised are limited and thus open for debate. Review of the age groups affected during the crisis will be considered through the parish registers, as Healey conducted, with additional information provided by wills and probate evidence along with a range of family case studies. The evidence relating to the social groupings, in which the vulnerable parishioners were hardest hit, certainly is debatable in terms of the evidence utilised and how the social groupings are devised. Within this study, one parish is studied in depth allowing more thorough conclusions on who was affected to be made.

To summarise, crises were frequent events during this period, with a variety of suggested causes of crisis. This knowledge will assist in the elimination of causes of crisis for 1720s Lancashire and provide a context for this study. The study will consider the elements of Healey's socially selective crisis as well as the potential effects upon and recovery of Lancashire communities.

Chapter Three: Lancashire in early eighteenth century and sources and methods.

Having reviewed a selection of mortality crises across England in the early modern period and established population growth the purpose of this chapter is to detail Lancashire in the early eighteenth century and introduce the sources and methods to be utilised within the study. The chapter is divided into three distinct sections. Geographical, demographic, economic and religious characteristics of Lancashire will be considered initially to pose a number of suppositions. Secondly, the wide range of sources will be listed, highlighting their limitations and uses in demographic study. The final section will detail the methods by which the Lancashire crisis will be studied, drawing on other regional and parish studies.

Lancashire in the early eighteenth century – geographical, demographic, economic and religious characteristics

Lancashire is a diverse county which encompassed a vast area of the North-West region; from the Mersey to the northern towns of Furness and Cartmel including the coast of Morecambe Bay. The county extended eastwards, through the emerging cities of Liverpool and Manchester to the Pennine Hills and moorland bordering the West Riding of Yorkshire.[91] The landscape changes swiftly from the woodland fells and craggy cliffs of north Lancashire, merging with the dramatic Lake District to the coastal marshes and moss lands of west Lancashire.[92] The east of the county is a patchwork of moorland, upland farming and drumlin fields leading to the Pennines.[93] South Lancashire consists of the Lancashire coalfield and lowland farmland, meeting again the coastal plain land and moss lands of south-west Lancashire.[94]

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[91] J. K. Walton, 'Lancashire: A Social History, 1558-1939' (Lancaster, 1987), p. 1
[92] F. Walker, 'Historical Geography of Southwest Lancashire before the Industrial Revolution' (Manchester, 1939), pp. 1-2, 145-8
[93] J. Swain, 'Industry before the Industrial Revolution' (Manchester, 1986), pp. 1-4, 34
[94] Walker, 'Southwest Lancashire', pp. 1-2, 145-8

Given the variations of Lancashire, it is prudent to divide the county into distinct regions in order to consider how the differing landscapes impact on the experience of crisis and whether specific parishes were more liable to experience crisis given their location. This division is; north Lancashire[95], central Lancashire including the Fylde coast[96], south-west Lancashire[97] and east Lancashire[98] including the surrounding parishes of Manchester. Central and south-west Lancashire approximately correlate to areas of low-lying land with roughly similar economic situation. North and east Lancashire share mainly upland and on occasion remote landscapes with industrial developments primarily but not exclusively in east Lancashire. These four regions will be utilised throughout the study to confirm the location and severity of crisis in the county. As geographical variations are known determinants of crisis the various characteristics are of importance in reviewing the county wide data.[99]

Defoe's tour of England in the 1720s gives an indication of the landscape of Lancashire, describing the towns of Liverpool and Manchester, located on low-lying flat lands, separated by the coalfields of Wigan and Ashton-under-Lyne. Liverpool grew in dominance due to the River Mersey, emerging as an important dock for food supplies and other trading.[100] Manchester, being described as the 'greatest meer

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[95] Bentham; Bolton le Sands; Broughton in Furness; Claughton; Gressingham; Halton; Hawkshead; Heysham; Lancaster; Over Kellet; Pennington; Tatham; Thornton in Lonsdale; Torver; Tunstall; Urswick; Warton; Whittington

[96] Bispham; Broughton; Garstng; Goosnargh; Lytham; Penwortham; Pilling; Poulton-le-Fylde; St Michaels; Walton le Dale; Woodplumpton

[97] Altcar; Aughton; Billinge; Chorley; Croston; Formby; Hale; Halsall; Hindley; Leigh; Leyland; Liverpool Childwall; Liverpool Walton on the Hill; Melling; Newchurch on Culcheth; North Meols; Prescot; Rainford; Rivington; Rufford; Sefton; St Helens; Upholland

[98] Ashton under Lyne; Church Kirk; Deane; Denton; Downham; Great Harwood; Manchester Blackley; Manchester Didsbury; Manchester Gorton; Middleton; Mitton; Newton Heath; Radcliffe; Rochdale; Todmorden

[99] Wrigley & Schofield, 'The Population History of England 1541-1871', pp. 677-9
Dobson, 'Contours of death and disease', pp. 53-55

[100] D. Defoe, 'A tour thro' the whole island of Great Britain, divided into circuits or journies', (with introductions by G. D. H. Cole and D. C. Browning) (1974), pp. 188-92 and 255-70
Nicholas Blundell makes reference to the import of corn into Liverpool between June 1728 and May 1729. F. Tyrer, ed, 'The great diurnal of Nicholas Blundell of Little Crosby, Lancashire Vol 3 (1720-1728)' Lancashire and Cheshire Record Society, p. 230

village in England'[101], with an estimated population of over fifty thousand in 1720, and was considered a centre of manufacture with potential for further growth.[102] Geographically the parishes to the west and south of Manchester are mainly low-lying, with either coal field or peat moss bases and generally consisted of poor agricultural land dominated by moorland or mosses.[103]

Moving westwards to the parishes of central and south-west Lancashire, the landscape was dominated by an abundance of flat plains, ideal for farming, with abundant mosses. Geographically, these areas of low-lying land formed the Lancashire plain, which when drained provided fertile agricultural land. Although drainage was a massive undertaking during this period with much of the land yet undrained.[104] The Fylde coast along with an extension along the coastal fringes of north Lancashire would be included in the plain, although with a less profitable quality of land[105] Travellers noted that these moss-lands were virtually impassable except during the exceedingly dry seasons.[106] Northwards, a number of western parishes, notably Heysham and Warton, shared similar geographical traits as central and south-west Lancashire. The majority of the northern parishes are agriculturally limited highland with narrow strips of arable land situated along the Pennine and Cumbrian valley floors. The parishes of east Lancashire are perhaps the most varied in terms of landscape, with both upland areas and low-lying mosses and coalfields and supporting dual economies.[107]

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[101] Defoe, Letter 10, pp. 188-92, 255-70
[102] Defoe, Letter 10, pp. 188-92, 255-70
[103] R. Millward, 'Lancashire, An Illustrated Essay in the History of the Landscape' (London, 1955), p. 17
[104] A. J. Gritt, 'Making Good Land from Bad: The Drainage of West Lancashire, c.1650-1850', Rural History, 19 (2008), pp. 2-4
[105] R. Johnson, ed,' The Geomorphology of north-west England' (Manchester, 1985), pp. 178-82; J. A. Taylor, 'The Relation of Crop Distributions to the Drift Pattern in South-West Lancashire', Transactions and Papers, 'Institute of British Geographers', 18 (1952), p. 77
[106] Defoe, Letter 10, pp. 188-92 and 255-70
C. Morris, ed,' The Illustrated Journeys of Celia Fiennes c.1682-1712' (London, 1982), p. 163
[107] A. J. Hart, 'The Textile Industry in Early Eighteenth Century Lancashire' (MPhil Thesis, University of Central Lancashire, 1999), p. 80

Lancashire's population mirrored the national trend, albeit with small variations, including a greater increase in population of between 13 and 60 per cent from the 1690s, although this population growth was not uniform with only modest growths in a number of south-west parishes.[108] Healey settles on an estimated population of 225,000, and this figure will be utilised for this study.[109]

Demographic increase was an important factor in the development of industrial Lancashire in terms of the occupation shift from agriculture towards industry.[110] The poor standard of agricultural land in east Lancashire may have forced smallholders into dual economies of farming and weaving.[111] Much of the population growth occurred in south Lancashire, encompassing the growing towns of Manchester and Liverpool along with a growing network of neighbouring smaller towns, with the population shifting into Lancashire as economic development attracted migrants. [112] However, the majority was the result of natural increase rather than immigration from neighbouring counties and was spread through the countryside.[113] This is strengthened with Wadsworth and Mann's comment of a 'thickening of population over the countryside, particularly in the manufacturing districts', but it has been stressed that Manchester and Liverpool developed industrially rather than as urban centres.[114] The identification of the areas that experienced growth in the early

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G. H. Tupling, 'The Economic History of Rossendale' (Manchester, 1727), p.163
[108] C. B., Phillips & J. H., Smith, 'Lancashire and Cheshire from AD1540' (London, 1994), pp. 66-7
A. J. Gritt, Thesis, 'Aspects of agrarian change in South-West Lancashire C. 1650- 1850' (PhD Thesis, University of Central Lancashire,. 2000), p. 50
[109] Phillips & Smith, 'Lancashire and Cheshire', pp. 66-70; Healey, 'Evidence from Lancashire', p. 59
[110] Hart, 'The Textile Industry', p. 2, 86
[111] Walton, 'Lancashire', p.62
[112] A. Crosby, 'A History of Lancashire' (Preston, 1998), p. 61
P. J. Corfield, 'The Impact of English Towns 1700-1800' (Oxford, 1982), pp. 10-11
[113] Gritt, 'Aspects of agrarian change', p. 56
Walton, 'Lancashire', p65
[114] A. P. Wadsworth, & J Mann, 'The Cotton Trade and Industrial Lancashire, 1600-1780' (Manchester, 1965), p.311
J. Stobart, In Search of Causality: A Regional Approach to Urban Growth in Eighteenth-Century England, Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography, 82 (2000), p. 153

eighteenth century might give some indication of why a specific parish was affected by crisis.

The economic structure of the county will be explored in terms of wealth, agriculture and industry and will impact in the study in two ways; a parish's coping mechanisms in time of crisis and whether the dominance of either agriculture or industry factored in the experience of crisis. In the seventeenth century, Lancashire was amongst the poorest counties of England as measured by its tax assessments with at least twenty-five per cent or above of its population unable to pay the hearth tax in 1664.[115] This increased to over forty per cent in areas of Furness and in a diagonal belt from north-west Lancashire south easterly to Salford Hundred.[116] Lancashire's wealth was based on land and agriculture with the indigenous woollen and linen industries providing by-occupations for smallholders.[117]

North Lancashire was predominantly an agricultural region with a mixture of arable and pastoral farming undertaken by small landholders.[118] Pastoral farming was dominant with crops generally being grown for domestic use and cattle being sold to pay rents, taxes and provide any further foodstuffs and goods.[119] The lower lying lands enjoyed more diversity due to larger quantities of arable land and a marginally warmer climate, although grains were often of a poor quality compared to other areas of the country, possibly due to the continuously used land.[120] Industries were evident in north Lancashire, providing for local and domestics needs, although in decline

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Walton, 'Lancashire', p. 65
[115] Swain, 'Industry before the Industrial Revolution', pp. 1-2
[116] J. D. Marshall, 'Lancashire' (Manchester, 1974), pp. 45-6
[117] Marshall, 'Lancashire', p. 34
Wadsworth & Mann, 'The Cotton Trade and Industrial Lancashire', p. 4
[118] Hart, 'The Textile Industry', pp. 31-80
[119] Mourholme, 'How it was: a North Lancashire parish in the seventeenth century' (Carnforth, 1998), p. 33;
Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England', p. 39
[120] Appleby, Famine in Tudor and Stuart England,' p. 38, 43

within our period and included the Westmorland woollen industry[121] North Lancashire shall be considered primarily in relation to the suggestion of a subsistence crisis as, along with neighbouring Cumberland and Westmorland, this region had been affected by poor harvests and famines in previous centuries.[122]

The parishes of central Lancashire form part of the low-lying land within the county, and were primarily engaged in pastoral farming with a small number of specialised well established textile industries including sail-cloth making in Kirkham.[123] These parishes can be considered alongside the parishes of south-west Lancashire, who share similar geographical characteristics with the addition of the coalfields which provide a variation of occupations with coal mining and related activities being evident along with a mixture of agriculture and textiles.[124] A number of the central and south west parishes were virtually devoid of industrial activities with agriculture and its supporting trades being the dominant occupations.[125] The lack of industry did not necessarily mean that the parishes were economically poor with the potential for increased wealth as demand for foodstuffs increased. [126] Although the perceived lack of internal communications and trade networks, under-developed markets meant that many considered these areas backward and inaccessible. However, this was in reality only in exceptional circumstance and generally there was a functional internal network.[127] The combination of the economic structure, geographical characteristics

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[121] Walton, 'Lancashire' pp. 22-3
[122] Gooder,' The Population Crisis of 1727-30 in Warwickshire'. p10
Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England', p. 38, 43
[123] F. Singleton, 'The Flax Merchants of Kirkham', The Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 126 (1977) pp.73-108
Wadsworth & Mann, 'The Cotton Trade and Industrial Lancashire', pp. 173, 211, 277-8, 305
[124] Hart, 'The Textile Industry', pp. 31-80
Gritt, 'Aspects of agrarian change', pp. 66-7
[125] Gritt, 'Aspects of agrarian change', p. 67
A. Crosby, 'Penwortham in the Past' (Preston, 1988), p. 79
A. J. Gritt, 'Mortality Crisis and Household Structure: An Analysis of Parish Registers and the Compton Census, Broughton, Lancashire, 1667-1676', Local Population Studies (2008), p. 44
[126] Philips & Smith, 'Lancashire and Cheshire', p. 80
[127] Walker, 'Southwest Lancashire', p. 146
Gritt, 'Aspects of agrarian change', pp. 60-11

and the perceived remoteness will provide ideal case studies in whether isolation was indeed protection from disease.

East Lancashire as a region is divided occupationally with dual economies of agriculture, a declining worsteds industry and emerging textile industry, including a number of specialisms.[128] South-east Lancashire was considered to be primarily textile dominant, although it is noted that Manchester and environs was only in the earliest beginnings of transition. Other well established textile industries were evident including a well established woollen and linen manufacturing industry, dating back to the mid seventeenth century. [129] The cotton and linen industries experienced the greatest growth, dominated by domestic weavers and spinners often working as family units throughout the scattered settlements of south Lancashire, stretching as far north as Blackburn and east as Oldham.[130] The 'putting out system' was firmly established from the end of the seventeenth century and greatly increased throughout the eighteenth century as younger sons of the gentry became merchants and exploited the opportunities of the increasing domestic demand for cotton goods.[131]

Schwarz's article on economic change in north-east Lancashire details the changing emphasis between agriculture and industry during the long eighteenth century, concluding that trade and industry had replaced agriculture as the main source of

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A. J. Gritt, 'The Operation of lifeleasehold in south-west Lancashire 1649-97', The Agricultural History Review, 53 (2005), p.3

[128] Hart, 'The Textile Industry', p. 80
Tupling, 'The Economic History of Rossendale', p.163
Wadsworth & Mann, 'The Cotton Trade and Industrial Lancashire', pp. 173, 211, 277-8, 305
J. A. Aikin, 'A Description of the Country from Thirty to Forty Miles round Manchester' (Newton Abbott, 1795 reprinted 1968), p.302-3
Walton, 'Lancashire', p.61

[129] Walton, 'Lancashire', pp. 20-35 & 60-83
Phillips & Smith, 'Lancashire and Cheshire', p.88

[130] S. Hylton, 'A History of Manchester' (Chichester, 2003), p. 68
Walton, 'Lancashire', p.61
Phillips & Smith, 'Lancashire and Cheshire', pp.90-1

[131] Walton, 'Lancashire', p.62

employment by the early nineteenth century. These changes were evident in the 1720s, although more pronounced from the mid eighteenth century.[132] Evidence from the parish registers notes textiles as a dominant occupation in the early eighteenth century in Oldham and Rochdale, although this figure might be under-represented dependant on the importance placed on type of occupation.[133] Additionally it should be stressed that involvement in the textile industry was not about external employment, but often an additional source of income completed within a domestic setting. The changing and diversity of east Lancashire's occupational structure will support the review of the county wide data as to whether geographical or occupational factors contributed to the experience of the 1720s.

Lancashire's existing transportation of goods was either by sea (generally on coastal vessels) or by road with regional, national and even international trade recorded from the port of Liverpool.[134] Existing roads supported industrial and commercial traffic.[135] Figure 3.1 details the road network of the early seventeenth century and clearly shows links between the emerging towns of the south, as well as the main road to Preston, Lancaster and the north. The remaining roads, though unmarked, were a network of lanes and tracks connecting villages and markets.[136]

It is interesting to note that the main routes are generally sited on land over 100 feet and that there is a distinct lack of routes for the low-lying lands in the west of the county. Crosby notes that roads sited on mossland, even where fully drained, were subject to collapse and disrepair due to the peat base with many complaints recorded

[132] S. Schwarz, 'Economic Change in North-East Lancashire, c. 1660-1760, Historic Society of Lancashire & Cheshire Transactions, 144 (1994), pp. 64-5, pp. 69-70
[133] Walton, 'Lancashire', p34-5
[134] Gritt, 'Aspects of agrarian change', p. 62
[135] E. Pawson, 'Transport and Economy The Turnpike Roads of Eighteenth Century Britain' (London, 1977), p. 312
A. Crosby, 'Leading the Way, A History of Lancashire's Road' (Preston, 1998), pp. 87-8
[136] Millward, 'Lancashire', p. 104

for the south west and west Lancashire.[137] Further east, problems were recorded for road networks over the moorland of Rossendale, mostly connected to the ownership and therefore maintenance of the road or concerned with making previously informal pathways into formal roads.[138]

The quality of the road network is debatable with both differing opinions from Celia Fiennes and Defoe on their travels along with a multitude of court petitions detailing the state of disrepair, with the worst examples often confined to the local roads in west and central Lancashire.[139] However, despite the numerous examples of complaints regarding the roads, Crosby argues that the lateness of the Turnpike Trusts in Lancashire is perhaps indicative of the suitability of the existing road network in supporting the traffic.[140] In addition to the road networks, work was being undertaken to create waterways in the south of the county, notably the River Douglas in 1720 and the Mersey-Irwell in 1721, in which towpaths and locks were constructed to enable flat bottomed boats to move goods such as coal and salt.[141]

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[137] Crosby, 'Leading the Way', pp. 64-5
[138] Crosby, 'Leading the Way', p. 65
[139] Morris, 'Journeys of Celia Fiennes', p. 163
Defoe, Letter 10, pp. 188-92 and 255-70
L.R.O., QSB 1/17/30, L.R.O., QSB 1/50/32, L.R.O., 1/114/74 cited within Crosby, 'Leading the Way', pp. 59-60
M. C. Higham, The Mottes of North Lancashire, Lonsdale and South Cumbria', Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, 91 (1991), pp. 26-7
[140] Turnpike Trusts were evident in Lancashire from 1724 with a section of the London – Manchester road A6, followed in 1725 by an Act to create a road between Prescot and Liverpool. A total of 7 Turnpikes were granted by 1750.
Pawson, 'Transport and Economy', p. 142, 338, 312
Millward, 'Lancashire', p. 104
Crosby, 'Leading the Way',, pp. 87-8
[141] Phillips and Smith, 'Lancashire and Cheshire', pp. 82-8

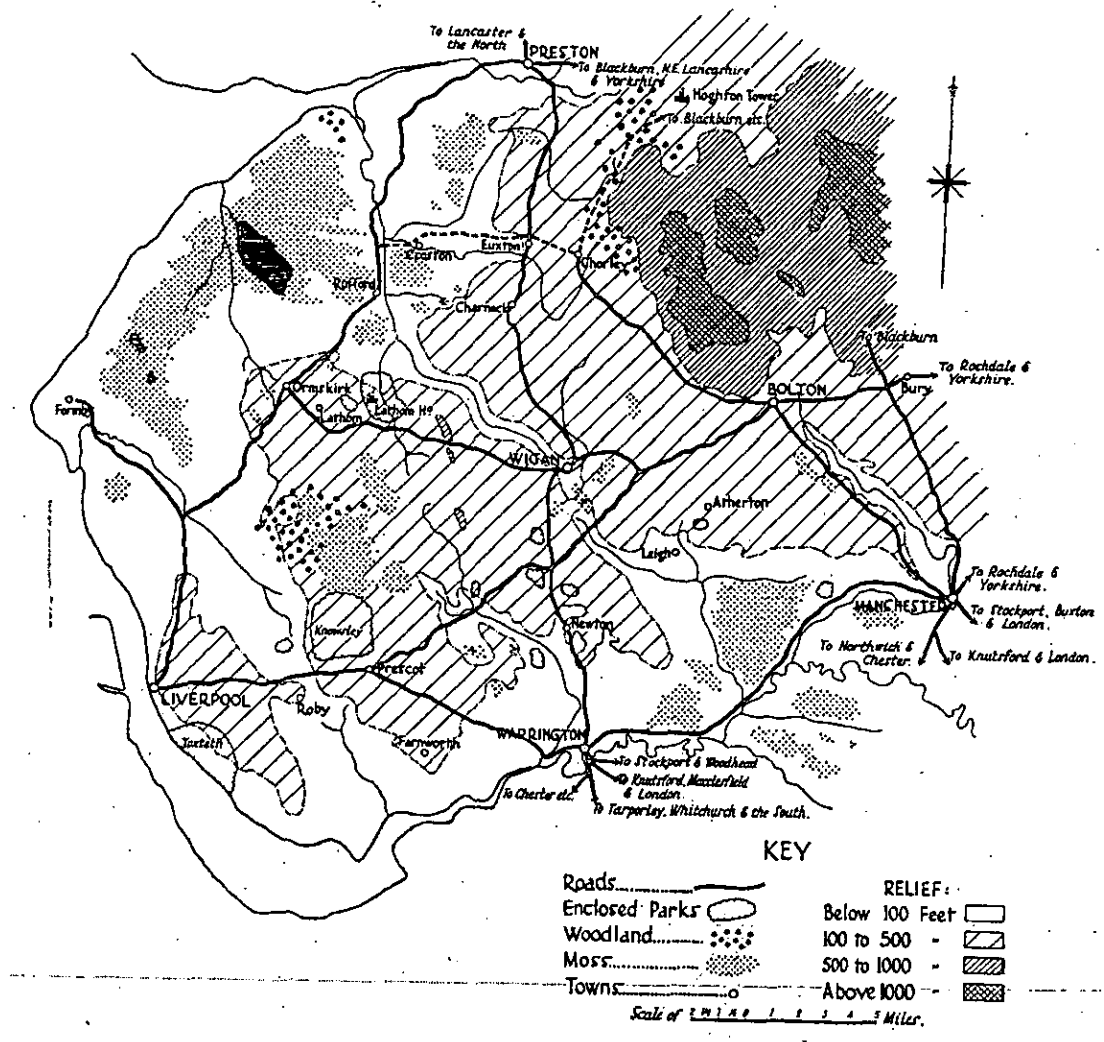

Figure 3.1: Map of the roads in south west Lancashire prior to the Eighteenth Century
Source: F. Walker, *Southwest Lancashire*, p. 83

Having established the level of infrastructure and the usage of the network consideration can be given to the importance of these forms of communication in relation to the transmission of disease. Location, including the distance to major roads or towns, increased the likelihood of crisis, with case studies detailing the spread of disease through established trade routes.[142] On the flip side, remoteness

[142] S. Scott, C. J. Duncan, & S. R. Duncan, The Plague in Penrith, Cumbria , 1597/8: its causes, biology and consequences, Annals of Human Biology, 23 (1996), p. 2
Wrigley & Schofield, 'Family Reconstruction 1580-1837', pp. 677-9

did not necessarily protect a community from increased mortality with the potential for subsistence crises or the quick devastation from a new strain of disease brought to the community by a traveller.[143] Thus in reviewing the data consideration of location in terms of distance to towns and major trade routes is essential to judge whether the crisis 'travelled' via these networks or whether remoteness did in fact provide protection for communities.

Authority and religion in Lancashire might be described as being multi layered, subject to change with limited central power and real power held through a complex structure of county magistrates, corporations and the landowning gentry. [144] The most notable family were the Earls of Derby who held the lieutenancy, although in reality their power and influence had waned by this point following changes in both the monarchy and government.[145] Corporations dominated the major towns of Preston, Lancaster, Liverpool and Wigan controlling trading and merchants and thus more dominant than the landowning gentry, despite various attempts to alter the balance of power during this period.[146] Elsewhere, local power was firmly in the hands of the country magistrates and Justices of the Peace, although significant influence was brought to bear from the landowners, specifically the Earls of Derby, and additionally merchants and professionals who were beginning to have some sway.[147]

Religiously, Lancashire was a melting pot of dissent, with both Roman Catholics and Protestant nonconformists being present in significant numbers with the established

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[143] Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England',, p. 147
Walter & Schofield, 'Famine, disease and the social order in early modern society', p. 2
[144] Phillips & Smith, 'Lancashire and Cheshire', p.121
Walton, 'Lancashire', pp. 82-8
[145] Walton, 'Lancashire', pp. 82-3
[146] Walton, 'Lancashire', p. 87
[147] Walton, 'Lancashire', p.88

church struggling for loyalty.[148] Reasons for this lack of parochial control were due to the lack of qualified clergy, who were often ill-educated and expected to cover large parishes on a meagre salary. This situation did not begin to improve until the mid eighteenth century, thus leaving opportunities for non conformists.[149]

Lancashire remained a predominantly Roman Catholic county following the reformation and accounted for approximately one quarter of the county population in the early eighteenth century. Estimates given for the 1640s was around 9,000 recusants rising to over 20,000 by the late eighteenth century, although this is probably due to immigration rather than population increase and were primarily based in the west and south of the county.[150] Many prominent Lancashire families remained Catholic with significant local influence consistent throughout the period and tended to co-exist with the Anglican population and suffered minimal persecution.[151]

On the opposite spectrum, Lancashire was home to a variety of Protestant dissenters including the Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists and Quakers. Puritans had largely disappeared after the Glorious Revolution.[152] The Protestant dissenters were equal in number to the Roman Catholics with Lancashire's population being second only to that of Essex.[153] Geographically, these groups were based in the south of the county, predominately in the emerging industrial areas of Manchester, Bolton, Bury and Rochdale. Outside of the south, Presbyterians were present around Lancaster and Furness, with a Quaker presence throughout Lancashire including Kendal,

[148] C., Webb, 'Religion in Lancashire, 1603 – 1640' (MPhil Thesis, University of Central Lancashire, 1993), p. 214
[149] Webb, 'Religion in Lancashire', pp. 216-8
[150] Walton, 'Lancashire', p.91
[151] Webb, 'Religion in Lancashire', pp. 241-5
Walton, 'Lancashire' p.92
[152] Walton, 'Lancashire', p.92
[153] E.A. Rose, 'Methodism in South Lancashire to 1800', Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society 81 (1982), p.67

Knowsley and the Fylde coast.[154] Halley further notes that these areas were the strongholds of Protestant dissenters but from the early eighteenth century groups could be found throughout Lancashire and in traditionally Catholic areas.[155]

In summary, Lancashire is a diverse county in terms of geographical and economic characteristics, with a distinguishable county split between the often remote agricultural north and west and the emerging industrial south. Religiously these areas were distinct with Roman Catholicism remaining dominant in the traditional and often isolated parishes of the west and a variety of Protestant dissenters including Independents and Quakers, predominantly located to the south of the county.

The review of Lancashire's demographic, topographical and economic structure in the early eighteenth century has formed a number of hypotheses that may be considered within the study. The topographical characteristics are a known factor in demography and thus will be the basis of the county wide study, dividing the county into distinct regions to review the incidence and severity of crisis. The varying economic structures will enable consideration whether those inhabitants who lived in the sparsely populated countryside suffered more than those situated in the better connected with an increased population towns. This will address both Healey's supposition of a north and south divide as well as review the evidence that supports Gooder's subsistence crisis conclusion. Much of this will be discussed within the county wide data chapter.

An in-depth case study will allow a review of the experience of the crisis at parish level, enabling consideration of the socially selective elements of age, gender,

[154] N. Morgan, 'Lancashire Quakers and the establishment 1760-1830' (Halifax, 1993), p.16
[155] R. Halley, 'Lancashire: its Puritanism and Nonconformity' (Manchester, 1867), p.29

occupation and social status. Furthermore the data will aide the understanding of coping mechanisms and recovery post crisis.

Sources

Parish registers form the basis of the study, all of which are located at the Lancashire Record Office as printed sources.[156] All registers are from Anglican churches, as non conformist registers are not available for this period. Of the surviving data a total of sixty-eight Lancashire parishes were satisfactorily complete to be included in the study.[157] Registers were in existence across the county, encompassing a variety of economic and geographical situations, which is vital to gaining understanding of the crisis. Lancashire's variety of religious denominations should not pose major implications within this period as despite the Act of Toleration, 1689 which enabled protestant dissenters, with the exception of Quakers, to register their meeting houses and worship in their own manner, the use of individual burial grounds was limited and a significant number are evident within the Anglican registers. Additionally, with the requirement of a burial in woollen cloth certificate, the appearance of non conformists in the established church was commonplace.[158] Finally, on a practical note, burials needed to take place promptly following death, and thus many dissenters had no option other than to be buried within the established Church.

Parish registers do have a number of limitations which have been discussed at great length by demographic historians. Limitations include physical defects such as missing years and damage as well as incompleteness owing to the failure of the incumbent to record burials correctly or errors made during transcription and collation. These issues are noted by Schofield who admits that although quality

[156] All registers printed by the Lancashire Parish Register Society
[157] See Appendix 1 for a full listing of parishes.
[158] Chambers, 'The Vale of Trent 1670-1800', p.19 ; Eversley, 'A survey of the population in an area of Worcestershire', p.256

control of the transcriptions was attempted wherever possible, the data will undoubtedly contain some errors. However, it is suggested that these errors are unlikely to be frequent or significant enough to vitiate the use of the data for demographic analysis.[159] In terms of the recorded data, it should be stressed that a baptism is not a birth and likewise a burial is not a death. Thus there will always be a degree of under-registration, specifically in terms of baptisms where local customs, increased postnatal mortality and even distance from the parish church may have impacted on the instances of baptisms.[160] Burials are less of a concern as the majority of deaths resulted in a burial except during times of severe crisis such as plague or if religious issues prevented burial within the established church.[161]

A number of contemporary accounts will be considered within the study to gain firsthand knowledge of the experience of crisis. Two Lancashire sources are available; William Stout's autobiography and Nicholas Blundell's diary.[162] Stout's autobiography was published in 1851 having been previously serialised within a newspaper. The introduction claims that the whole of Stout's writings have been included in the autobiography. However it is unclear of when Stout wrote the passages which begs questions of reliability. The accounts are primarily an account of his early life, being apprenticed to a grocer and ironmonger in Lancaster following his father's death. During this time Stout became a Quaker, following in the footsteps of his master and after completing his apprenticeship purchased a shop in Lancaster. The autobiography spans Stout's lifetime and details the family's finances, their illnesses, trade, local and national events and general happenings in the area, with a dominant religious overtone. The account details the crisis in north Lancashire and

[159] R. Schofield, 'Parish register aggregate analyses' (LPS, 1998), p. 8
[160] Chambers, 'The Vale of Trent', p.19; Rogers, 'The Lancashire Population Crisis of 1623', p. 17
[161] Eversley, Worcestershire, p.256
Scott & Duncan, 'Return of the Black Death', p. 200
[162] Harland, 'Autobiography of William Stout, of Lancaster'
Tryer, 'Nicholas Blundell'

provides a basis for Healey's conclusion that the country suffered more than the towns.

Nicholas Blundell was part of the gentry class in Lancashire and was a landholder in Little Crosby, south-west Lancashire. During his lifetime Blundell was an avid diarist noting the comings and goings of staff, relations and the community at large, detailing payments made for goods and services as well as his wife's visits to family and acquaintances. The diary records weather and crop conditions each month and the health of the community. All of which is of great interest when reviewing the potential socially selective crisis. The diary gives a wider account of those afflicted by illness as well as a variety of treatments, thus may shed more light on whether social status was a determinant factor of crisis. Unfortunately, the diary finishes in January 1728 and therefore omits the majority of the crisis, although information from the review of 1727 makes it clear that the parish was beginning to experience heightened mortality.

The Overseers of the Poor Accounts are a record of outdoor relief as prescribed by the 1601 Act and operated at parish level.[163] For the study an excellent account book is in existence for Woodplumpton in central Lancashire and will be used to detail the experience of the poor members of the community.[164] The account book is divided into the four Quarters and details monies allocated. One limitation of the records is that there is no record of those who applied for relief and were unsuccessful, which would give some indication of the level of need experienced within the parish.

Wills, probate records and inventories provide a wealth of information relating to charitable donations, religious preambles, occupation structure, population crises and

[163] Walton, 'Lancashire', p.42
[164] Overseer's of the Poor Account Book, Woodplumpton 1700-1815, PR2693/2 Lancashire Record Office

family and kinship relationships.[165] Limitations for the sources are well documented including the social selectivity of wills with only a small percentage of the population leaving wills. Additionally, by law married women were prohibited from writing wills unless by agreement of their husband, thus surviving records are generally swayed towards relatively wealthy men. However, the wills, probate and inventories do provide supplementary evidence within this study.[166] An interesting premise which will provide contrast to Healey's socially selective crisis is that during other known crises that the bequeathing of goods altered dependant on the cause of crisis.[167]

The1767 Return of Papists provides evidence of known Roman Catholics and works best when reviewing a parish that has a high concentration of Catholics.[168] Returns for Woodplumpton are listed with a total of 280 recusants, detailed in surname groupings, relation to the head of household, age, occupation and time resident in the parish.[169] Considerations when analysing the data includes definition of households and listed occupations as the distinction of many occupations are often blurred and thus can be troublesome for county wide scrutiny.[170] Despite these limitations the data will help provide evidence of economic and social change in the community in the decades following crisis.

Methodology

The county wide chapter will review the parish registers to chart and map the crisis. Additional evidence will come from contemporary writers to consider the experience of crisis including whether subsistence crisis was likely. Roger's methodology will be utilised, including the use of a twenty year period collated on an annual and monthly

[165] T. Arkell, N. Evans, & N. Goose, eds, 'When death do us part, understanding and interpreting the probate records of early modern England' (Hertfordshire, 2000), pp. 50-65
[166] Scott & Duncan, 'Return of the Black Death', pp. 111-2
[167] Arkell, Evans, & Goose, 'When death do us part', p. 200
[168] E. S. Worrall, ed, 'Returns of the Papists, 1767, 2 volumes', (Oxford, 1989)
[169] Worrall, 'Returns of the Papists, 1767', pp. 134-5
[170] Gritt, 'Aspects of agrarian change', p. 279, 284

basis to establish a normal figure of burials. This method confirms the duration and severity of crisis in the county. The parish register listings identified an excess of one hundred and sixty parishes for the early decades of the eighteenth century, of which a total of sixty-eight parishes contained sufficient data for the study.[171] The final sixty-eight parishes were selected as they contained at least fifteen complete years. Appendix A details all the parishes utilised and indicates any parishes that have missing data, although it should be noted that only a minority of these registers had missing data.[172] For the small number of parishes with missing data it will be possible to correct the data by employing the method of inter or extrapolation. The annual data will be sorted into the four previously detailed regions; north, central, east and south west and will be presented as a percentage of increased mortality. This mapping will enable review of geographical variations of crisis and the movement of crisis across Lancashire.

The chapter on Woodplumpton will outline the geographical, economic and religious characteristics of the parish. The study will primarily utilise parish registers to summarise the extent of crisis, detailing both the annual and monthly burials and establishing seasonality, thus excluding a selection of causes of crisis. The socially selective crisis angle will be explored in terms of age, gender, occupation and social status of those affected. Sources will include the parish registers, Overseers of the Poor Accounts and wills, probate and inventory information. The Overseers of the Poor Accounts book will establish normal rates of relief and identify any short term variances. The wills, probate and inventories are much more subjective, but will enhance the small number of family reconstructions that have been recorded, and indicate wealth and distribution of goods to family and the extended community. The parish registers, Overseers of the Poor Accounts and 1767 Return of Papists listing

[171] A total of 76 parishes for the period 1719-38 were transcribed from the parish register transcripts; the remaining eighty plus registers were incomplete and therefore not collated.
[172] A total of 56 registers collated contained data for all period to be studied.

will go on to investigate the impact of crisis on the parish and enable supposition in relation to post crisis recovery. The use of the Returns is somewhat limited as it was created forty years following crisis and only includes known recusants, however the inclusion of occupation and the length of residency will provide insight into the post crisis family and economic structure.

Chapter Four: Lancashire in Crisis

Introduction

The literature review has explored a number of mortality crises during the early modern period and confirmed crisis for the 1720s. Various causes have been cited with fevers, subsistence crises and smallpox being the leading contenders. The purpose of this chapter is to consider and discuss the county-wide data collated from the available parish registers. The chapter will be divided into four sections. The first section will establish the scale and severity of crisis across the sample parishes. The second section will review the supposition that the rural districts suffered more than the towns and whether there is indeed a clear north/south divide of crisis. The third section will explore the age profile of those dying during the crisis. The final section will test Gooder's conclusion that the excess mortality was the consequence of a subsistence crisis.

Crisis in Lancashire

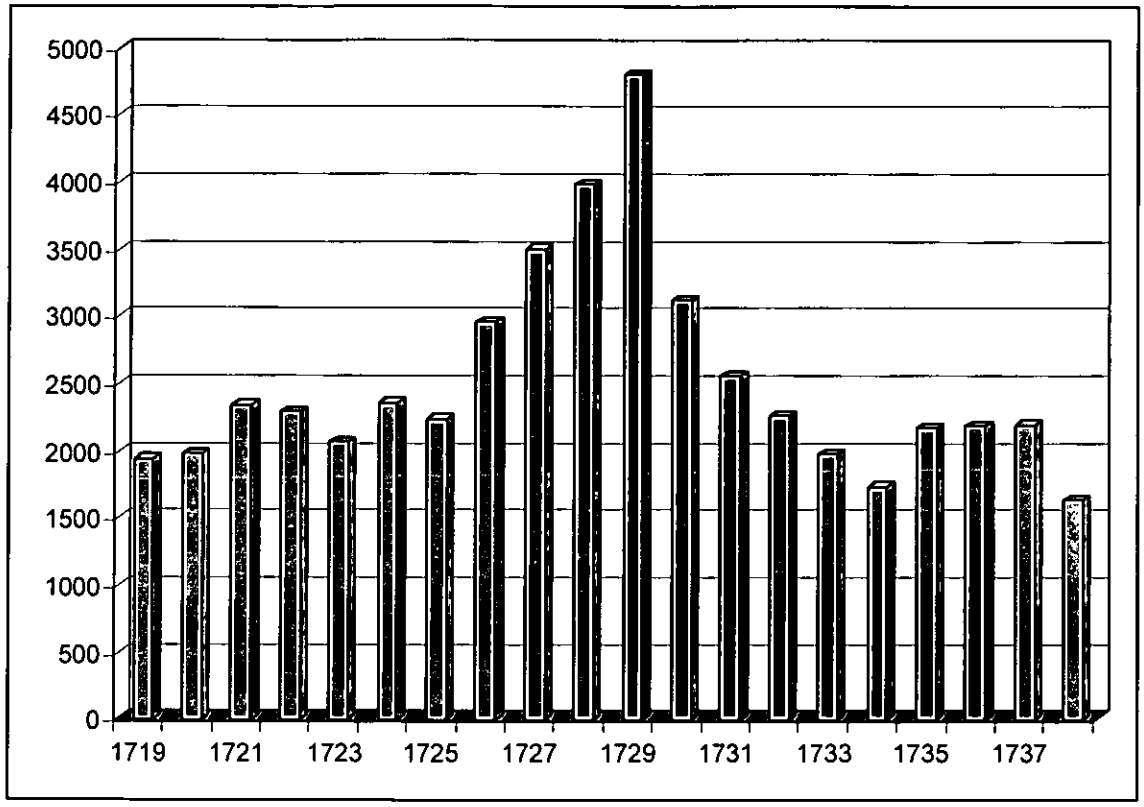
Current literature identifies Lancashire as a county affected by crisis, with a wealth of primary sources including parish registers and diaries. Data collated from the surviving parish registers identifies a total of 68 parishes that were satisfactorily complete to be included in the study. All but three parishes experienced increased mortality for the period 1727-1730, with 21 experiencing 'crisis mortality'.[173]

The total number of burials for the whole period is just over 50,000 with a total of 14,340 burials during the four years of identified crisis. Using the actual number of deaths per year of the non crisis years it is possible to show that an *extra* 6,684 deaths were due to crisis. Utilising Healey's population estimate of 225,000 for

[173] Wrigley and Schofield's definition of crisis mortality is twice the average number of deaths.
R. Schofield, '"Crisis Mortality"', Local Population Studies, , (1972), pp. 10-22
M. Drake, ed, 'Population Studies from Parish Register' (Matlock, 1982), p. 103

Lancashire in 1730, approximately three per cent of the population died as a result of crisis.[174]

Figure 4.1 Total annual burials for Lancashire sample parishes, 1719 -1738



Source: See appendix 1 for list of parishes and references

Figure 4.1 details the annual burials for 1719-1738 inclusive and clearly shows a dramatic increase for 1727-1730. From the annual totals, excluding the suspected years of crisis, the average number of burials for the sample parishes is a little short of 2,200 per annum. The years 1719-1725 stay close to this average, as do the years 1733-1738. Increased mortality starts from 1726 with a moderate increase during that year increasing considerably in 1727, peaking in 1729, and then swiftly decreasing from 1730, to reach average levels by 1733. In contrast with the studies conducted for Warwickshire and the Vale of Trent, Lancashire does not appear to suffer from

[174] Phillips & Smith, 'Lancashire and Cheshire', pp. 66-70; Healey, 'Evidence from Lancashire', p. 59

increased mortality between 1724-5, although a more detailed study at parish level may show some local increase. As with other studies, the parish registers fail to note any cause of crisis although a small number do make reference to increased burials, including the Woodplumpton registers which records that, 'Buried this Present Year, 1728, at Woodplumpton an 155 persons, many more than ever was known before'.'[175]

For this study the county has been sub-divided into north[176], central[177], south-west[178] and east[179] regions, detailed in Table 4.1. This method enables us to aggregate parishes in order to investigate the sub-regional experience of crisis. Figure 4.2 details the township map of Lancashire and indicates location and severity of crisis. Crisis is clearly evident in the west and south of the county, with the majority of the 'crisis mortality' parishes being located in those regions. Heysham, located within north Lancashire and the small number of parishes in east Lancashire experiencing high levels of mortality share similarities with the low-lying parishes of central and south-west Lancashire. In contrast the far north Lancashire parishes experience much less crisis with between 25 and 50 per cent increased mortality and a number of parishes that have no increased levels of mortality. The remote parishes of east Lancashire additionally have lower levels of mortality with only the parishes surrounding Manchester having significant levels of burials.

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[175] The Registers of Woodplumpton, Part II, 1659-1784, Lancashire Parish Register Society, Lancashire Record Office, p. 145

[176] Bentham; Bolton le Sands; Broughton in Furness; Claughton; Gressingham; Halton; Hawkshead; Heysham; Lancaster; Over Kellet; Pennington; Tatham; Thornton in Lonsdale; Torver; Tunstall; Urswick; Warton; Whittington

[177] Bispham; Broughton; Garstng; Goosnargh; Lytham; Penwortham; Pilling; Poulton-le-Fylde; St Michaels; Walton le Dale; Woodplumpton

[178] Altcar; Aughton; Billinge; Chorley; Croston; Formby; Hale; Halsall; Hindley; Leigh; Leyland; Liverpool Childwall; Liverpool Walton on the Hill; Melling; Newchurch on Culcheth; North Meols; Prescot; Rainford; Rivington; Rufford; Sefton; St Helens; Upholland

[179] Ashton under Lyne; Church Kirk; Deane; Denton; Downham; Great Harwood; Manchester Blackley; Manchester Didsbury; Manchester Gorton; Middleton; Mitton; Newton Heath; Radcliffe; Rochdale; Todmorden

Table 4.1: Regional split of Lancashire parishes and chapelries

Central Lancashire	Parish Nos.	South West Lancashire	Parish Nos.	North Lancashire	Parish Nos.	East Lancashire	Parish Nos.
Pilling	19	North Meols	37	Hawkshead	1	Downham	25
Garstang	20	Rufford	38	Torver	2	Mitton	27
Bispham	21	Croston	39	Broughton in	3	Great	29
Poulton-le-	22	Chorley	40	Furness		Harwood	
Fylde		Halsall	41	Pennington	4	Altham	31
St Michaels	23	Formby	44	Urswick	5	Church Kirk	34
Goosnargh	24	Aughton	45	Warton	6	Todmorden	36
Woodplumpton	26	Upholland	46	Whittington	7	Rivington	42
Broughton	28	Hindley	47	Tunstall	8	Rochdale	43
Lytham St	30	Altcar	49	Thornton in	9	Radcliffe	48
Annes		Sefton	54	Lonsdale		Deane	51
Penwortham	32	Melling	55	Over Kellet	10	Middleton	52
Walton le Dale	33	Rainford	56	Bentham	11	Blackley	53
Leyland	35	Billinge	57	Bolton le	12	Newton	58
		Walton on	60	Sands		Heath	
		the Hill		Gressingham	13	Ashton	59
		St Helens	61	Tathom	14	under Lyne	
		Newchurch	62	Halton	15	Gorton	63
		in Culcheth		Claughton	16	Denton	66
		Prescot	64	Heysham	17	Didsbury	67
		Childwall	65	Lancaster	18		
		Hale	68				
		Leigh	50				

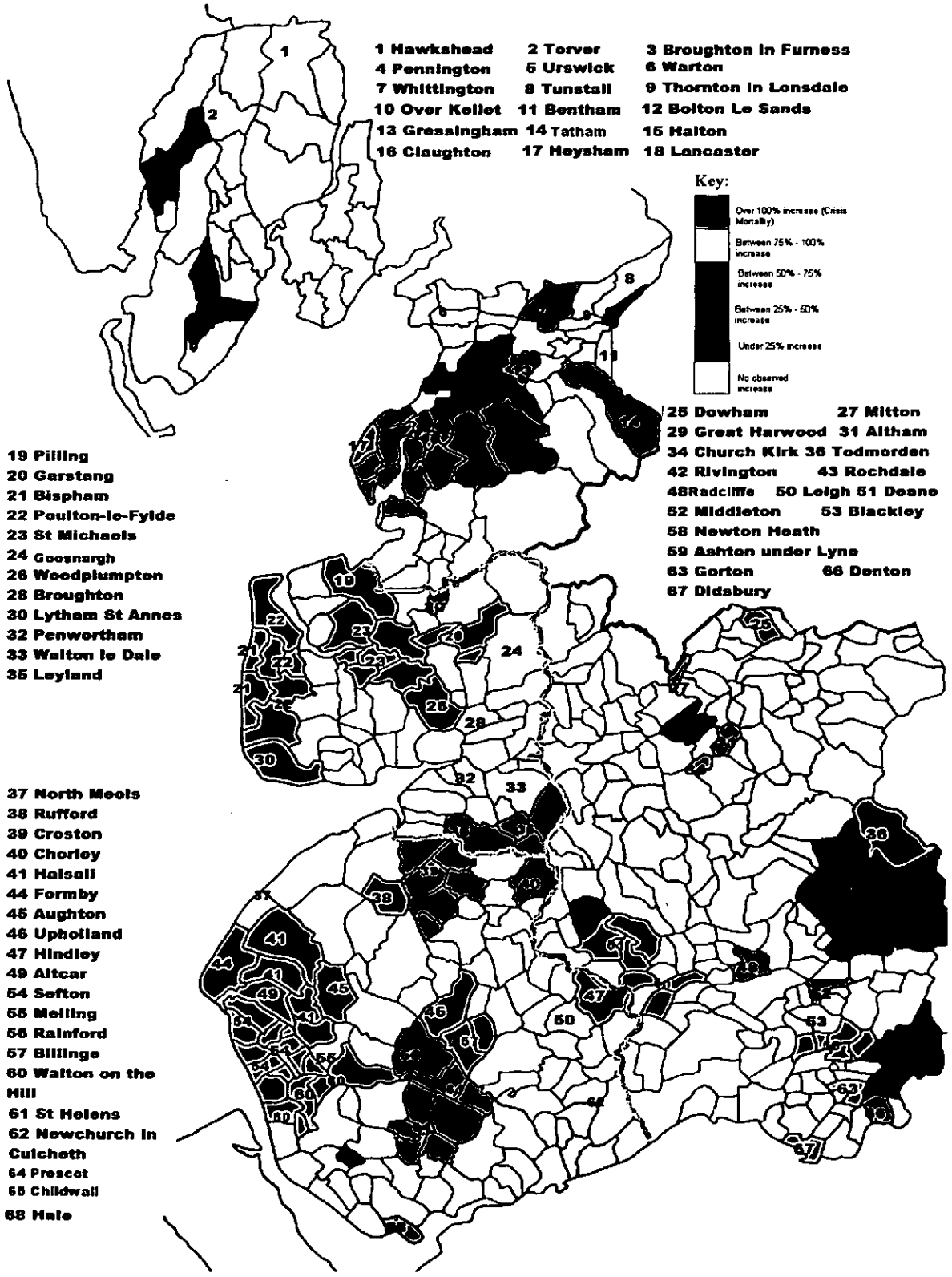


Figure 4.2 Township map of Lancashire detailing the increases of mortality during crisis

Note: Base map courtesy of Alan Crosby and the Friends of Lancashire Archives

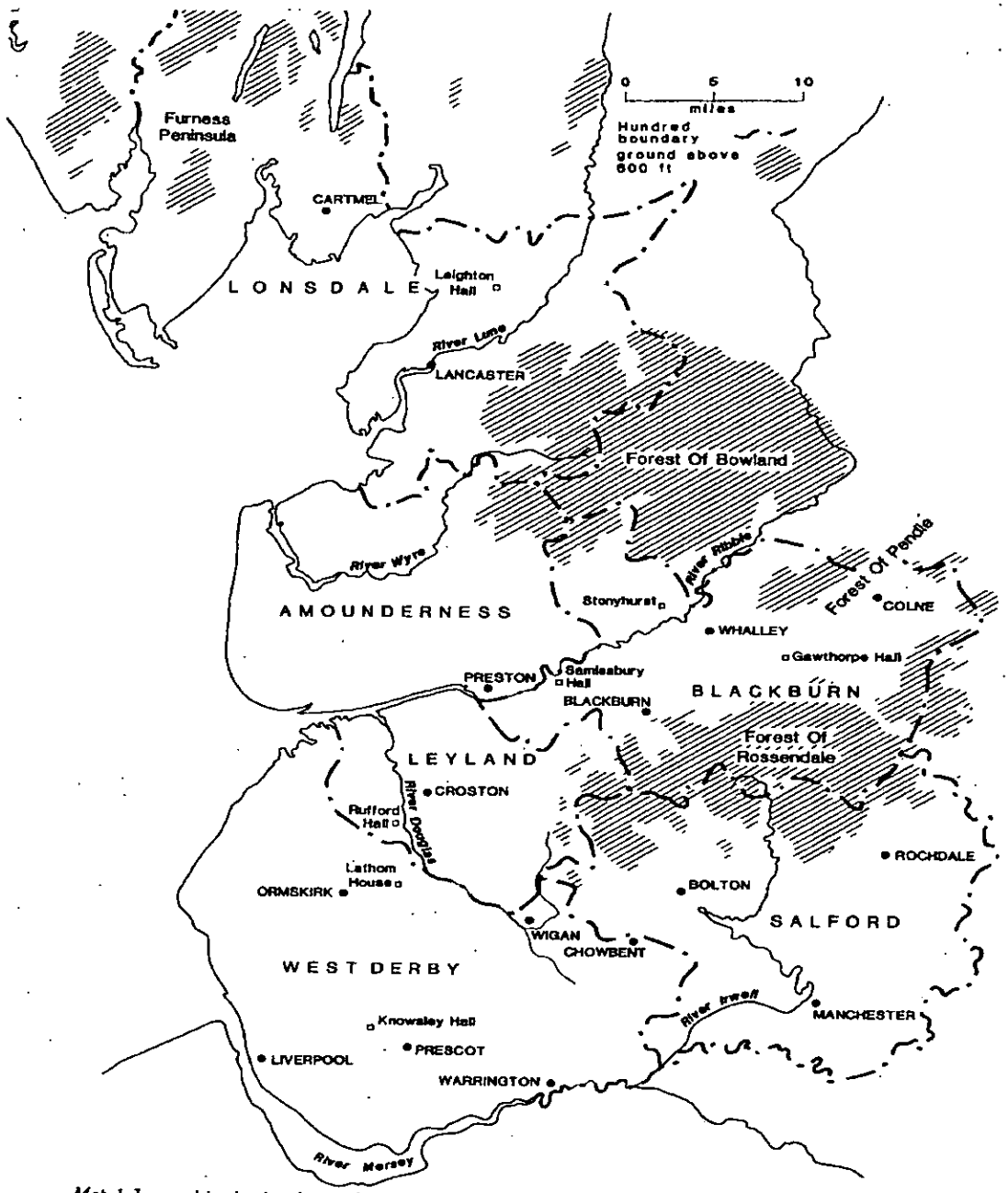
Geographical variations of crisis

In terms of geographical variations one contemporary writer notes that mortality was felt more greatly in the plain country than the towns.[180] This account, along with Healey's division of the county leads to a conclusion of a north south divide of crisis. Two themes will be considered; Healey's division of Lancashire and the interpretation of Stout's account.

Healey's divisions for the parish data is through a north south Hundreds split; with Lonsdale, Amounderness and Blackburn as the north and West Derby, Leyland and Salford as south Lancashire. Figure 4.3 details the administrative boundaries of the hundreds. These hundreds encompass vast areas of land with an eclectic mix of geographical variation. Salford hundred has two distinct landscapes with the low-lying coal fields and mosses surrounding Manchester and the upland parishes bordering the Pennines.[181] Within the northern split, Amounderness is strikingly different both economically and geographically to Lonsdale and Blackburn, being situated on low-lying land with agriculture as the main occupation. Amounderness would perhaps be better suited with south-west Lancashire given the shared geographical characteristic of the Lancashire plain. Likewise, differences are apparent between West Derby, Leyland and Salford, both geographically and economically with the emerging cotton regions surrounding Manchester. Thus Healey's division is too simplistic and ignores the differences across Lancashire which suggests that his conclusion of a north south divide for the Lancashire crisis is not wholly accurate.

[180] Harland, 'William Stout', p. 201.
[181] Millward, 'Lancashire', p. 17; Walker, 'Historical Geography of Southwest Lancashire', pp. 1-2, 145-8

Figure 4.3 Lancashire in the sixteenth century: towns, topography and administrative boundaries

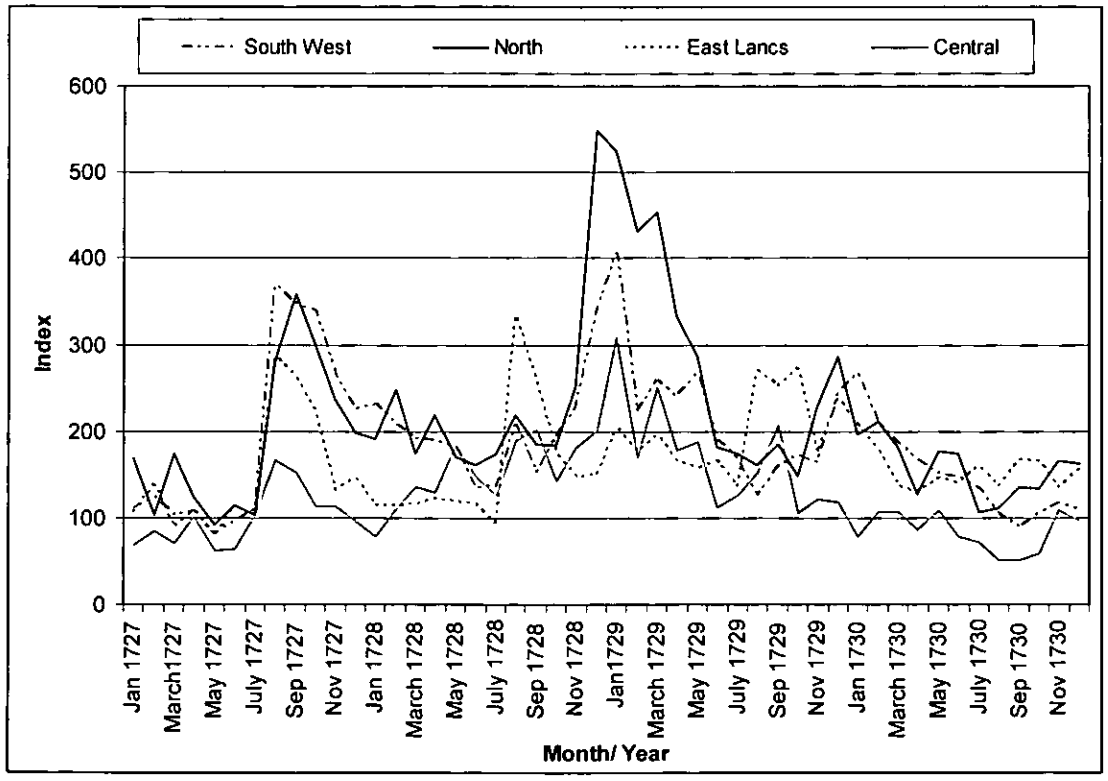


Map 1 Lancashire in the sixteenth century: towns, topography and administrative boundaries.

Source: Walton, *Lancashire*, ix

The four regions of north, central, east and south-west provide a better division to consider the experience of crisis, being based on geographical characteristics. Figure 4.3 charts the four regions as an index to allow for different population and size of individual parishes.[182] Additionally, the monthly index is based on the average number of burials of that specific month, thereby reducing the possibility of identifying increases which may be a typical increase for that parish or region.

Figure 4.4 Regional Monthly Index



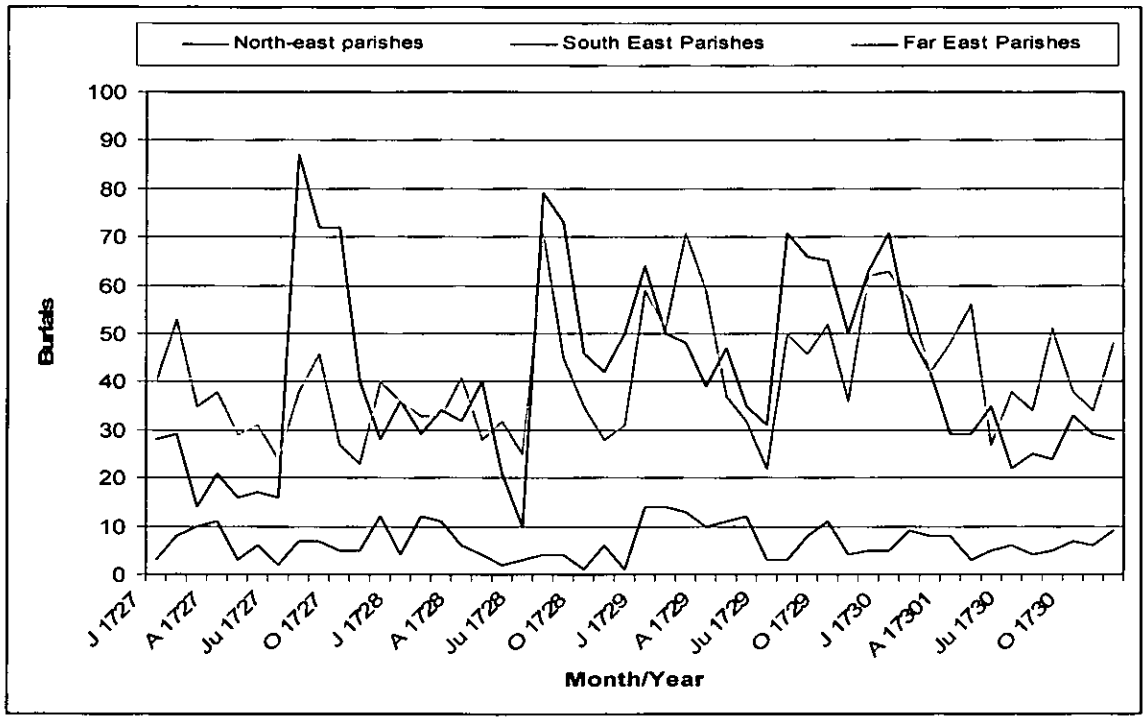
Source: Sample parish data

All regions suffer several peaks of crisis throughout the period, with shared experiences across three of the four regions: central, south-west and the north. Additionally, the peaks occurred over an already significantly increased level of

[182] Gritt, 'Mortality Crisis and Household Structure: Broughton', p. 47

mortality, with monthly burials remaining approximately twice the average number of burials, a pattern that has already been noted in other regional studies.[183] The onset of crisis affects all regions, beginning in summer 1727, and remaining high until the arrival of winter. Increased mortality rumbles on for central and south-west with twice as many burials over the winter months, not returning to a normal level until summer 1728.

Figure 4.5: Burials for the East Lancashire region



Source: Sample parish data

Whilst experiencing the same onset of crisis in autumn 1727, East Lancashire experienced a different pattern of mortality in 1728. Given the variety of parishes under the umbrella of east Lancashire this region has been further sub-divided as shown in Figure 4.5. Parishes in the north-east of the region did not experience such high mortality throughout the crisis years, with the parishes bordering the Pennines

[183] Gooder, 'The Population Crisis of 1727-30 in Warwickshire', p. 1; Chambers, The Vale of Trent 1670-1800, pp. 330-31.

and moving south towards Manchester experiencing four separate peaks of crisis; summer 1728 and 1729, winter 1729 and 1730. The southern parishes, which include the Manchester parishes, suffer severely, particularly during the summer peaks, which is perhaps suggestive of a communicable disease spreading via the trade routes and within market towns.[184]

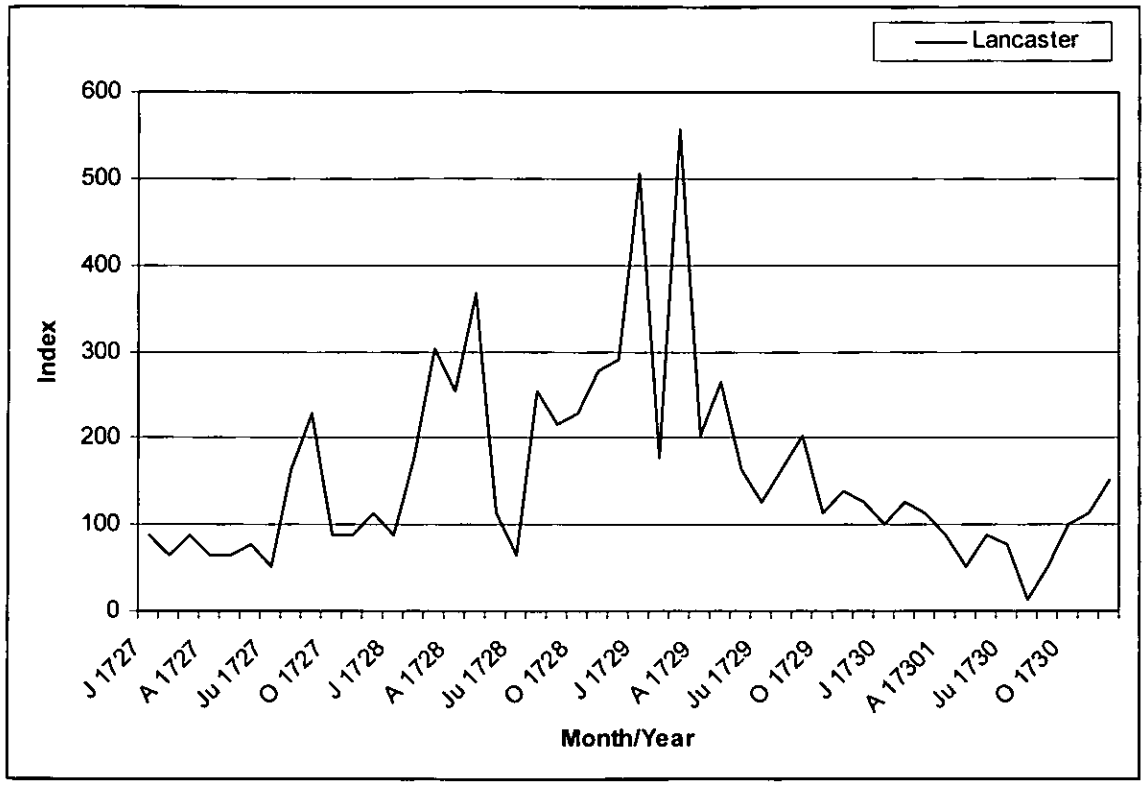
In returning to the whole county, the major peak of crisis occurs in the winter months of 1728/9 when the central, south-west and north regions experience unprecedented peaks of mortality. This peak lasted for between a few weeks and up to four months in the case of central Lancashire. The north suffers from more than twice the number of burials, although the crisis only lasted a matter of weeks before returning to a much lower level of burials. Finally, a much smaller peak of crisis is recorded for the last six months of 1729, stretching into the early months of 1730 for the central and south-west region.

The four mortality peaks over an already increased level of mortality, concur with Healey and the other regional studies for elsewhere in the country. However, with reference to Healey's north/south divide it is appropriate to consider a different divide based primarily on altitude. It is clear that the incidences of mortality centre mainly on the low-lying lands of central, west and south Lancashire, with three out of the four peaks being present. East Lancashire experienced three peaks of crisis, mainly during the summer months, perhaps indicative of a different cause of mortality. The upland and often most remote areas of the county did not experience the peaks of crisis, with a number of the parishes recording average burials.

[184] Scott & Duncan, 'Return of the Black Death', pp. 35-7, 105
Scott, Duncan, & Duncan, 'The Plague in Penrith, Cumbria, 1597/8', p. 1, 11

This divide can be further considered in terms of the contemporary account by Stout in which he writes that 'It was a very sickly summer (1728), and great mortality in the plain country, much more than in the towns; and burials were double this year to what they were last year.[185]

Figure 4.6 Index of Lancaster parish burials, 1727-30



Source: Sample parish data

In referring directly to the Lancaster records, expressed as an index of burials in Figure 4.6, three peaks of high mortality are evident; July – October 1727, February – June 1728 and January – March 1729. Thus recording high mortality for summer 1728 is not strictly accurate and the following greater increase of mortality in early 1729 is omitted which perhaps challenge the reliability of the autobiography. Perhaps Stout is actually referring to 1727 in which a summer peak is evidenced, which would

[185] Harland, 'William Stout', p. 201.

also link with other Lancashire accounts for 1727 in which it is noted that 'from May till the End of this Year, abundance died'[186].

Further analysis of the term 'plain country' is required. As previously described, the Lancashire plain is an area of low-lying land primarily centred in south-west Lancashire with extensions along the coastal regions of Lancashire.[187] If Stout is actually referring to the whole Lancashire plain then a different understanding emerges. The northern extension of the Lancashire plain are the parishes west of Lancaster, namely Heysham and Morecambe. Data for Heysham is included within the county study and is in fact the only parish in north Lancashire to record crisis mortality levels. Assuming that Stout would have knowledge of events in the wider region, it is feasible that the reference encompasses not only Heysham but the other plain parishes of central and south-west Lancashire. Thus it is reasonable to conclude that Stout was referring to the plains of Lancashire, rather than simply 'countryside', which again correlates with the county data.

Taking into account this additional evidence with its revised interpretation it is feasible to conclude that the Lancashire crisis primarily affected the lower lying parishes located in the west and south of the county. These areas were hardest hit during the four peaks of crisis, with a clear record of crisis mortality on the Lancashire plain and coastal areas. The higher land of the north and east regions were least affected, with a number having either no observed crisis or limited increased mortality.

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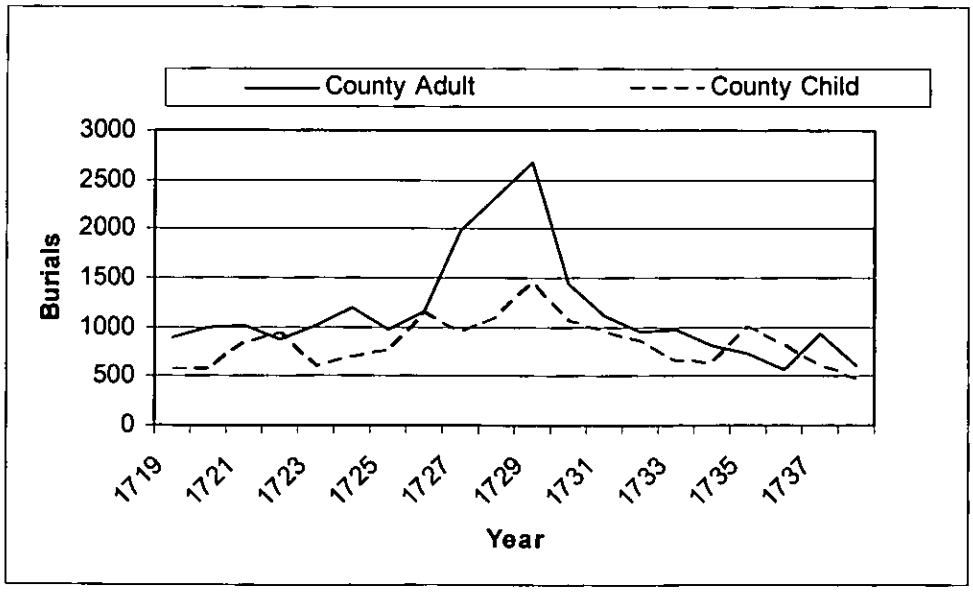
[186] Tyrer, Nicholas Blundell', p. 230

[187] R. H. Johnson, 'The Geomorphology of north-west England' (Manchester, 1985), pp. 178-82

Socially Selective Crisis: Age

In considering who were most affected by crisis, Healey argues strongly for a 'socially selective crisis' in which age was a determinant in the experience of crisis.[188] The Lancashire data does not detail the ages of those buried during crisis therefore a method of collating adult and child burials has been utilised. As with other studies, the definition of a child is an entry that states 'son' or 'daughter' of and any single name or wife or widow is defined as an adult.[189] Clearly this method does have limitations including the possibility of adults being classed as children purely because they are listed as a son or daughter, perhaps because they are still financially dependant on their parents or still live within the family home. However, it is considered that for every child that gets counted as an adult there will be an opposite classification elsewhere in the data.[190]

Figure 4.7 Annual burials 1719-1738: adult/ child



Source: Sample parish data

[188] Healey, 'Evidence from Lancashire', pp. 62-3; Tyrer, 'Nicholas Blundell', p. 230

[189] Rogers, 'The Lancashire Population Crisis of 1623', pp. 14-5; Gritt, 'Mortality Crisis and Household Structure: Broughton', p. 47

[190] E. A. Wrigley, ed, 'An Introduction to English Historical Demography from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century' (London, 1966), p.71

The county wide data shown in Figure 4.7 indicate that the crisis was effectively an 'adult' crisis with the increase in adult burials being evident throughout the years 1727 to 1730. Child burials do fluctuate slightly during this period with the data highlighting that the very end of the crisis period in 1729/30 was particularly mortal for children. This data however only confirms that adult burials were higher than those of children during the crisis period, it does not indicate that older adults were most affected and this evidence is simply not available within the county wide study. An in-depth review of a parish with supporting family reconstruction and additional sources of evidence would give a limited indication on who was affected during the crisis. Such a study will be undertaken through the review of Woodplumpton in chapter four, in which limited family reconstruction along with a small number of wills can provide suggestive, if partial, evidence on the experience of crisis.

Subsistence crisis

The cause of crisis in Warwickshire is noted as being famine fevers due to poor harvests. Gooder's conclusion relies heavily on the evidence of high food prices caused by a series of poor harvest along with contemporary evidence from doctors who described how 'the labouring and poor people, who used a low diet....., died; many of who probably wanted the necessary assistance of diet and medicine'.[191]

Appleby details criteria for subsistence crises which include evidence of a dramatic rise in mortality spread across a number of parishes, correlation between market prices and mortality, a high proportion of infant and child deaths and with contemporary accounts of want, misery and dearth. Additionally, fewer conceptions should be evident within the baptism records, all other epidemic diseases ruled out

[191] Gooder, The Population Crisis of 1727-30 in Warwickshire, p. 10; Creighton,' A History of Epidemics in England, II', p. 73

with no contradictory evidence against famine as a cause of crisis.[192] Dramatic crisis mortality has already been established within the study with over four times the average number of burials at the height of crisis. Again, as previously stated crisis was widespread throughout the country and commenced simultaneously in the summer of 1727 and again in the winter of 1728/9. Thus there is a basis for consideration of a subsistence crisis.

Limited data in terms of food prices is available from Stout's autobiography and is supported with general information by Blundell for the south of the county. Lancaster prices detail a cheap and plentiful potato harvest in 1726 and 1727 with a doubling of prices in 1728, with a further 100 per cent increase by January 1729, which is the height of the mortality crisis. By the autumn of 1729 potato prices dropped to 4 shillings a load and returned to 1726/7 prices by 1730. Wheat and other grains also doubled in price during the crisis, again returning to normal by 1730.[193] In south-west Lancashire Blundell notes that much damage was done throughout England during 1727 due to thunder and lighting resulting in a small corn harvest, with increased mortality for the latter half of the year.[194] Evidently poor harvests continued in south-west Lancashire with continued scarcity throughout 1728 and 1729 requiring imports of grain.[195] Additional information of importance is Stout's comment of a decline in the linen industries which reduced wages and thus reduced the amount of food that could be purchased. This in combination with increased food prices would have caused hardship for large numbers of the poor.

In considering the mortality patterns for Lancashire it is interesting to note that north Lancashire does not suffer such an increase in mortality in the summer of 1727,

[192] Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England', pp. 116-8
[193] Harland, 'William Stout', pp. 111- 7
[194] Tyrer, 'Nicholas Blundell', p. 230
[195] Tyrer, Nicholas Blundell, p. 230

although burials do increase by around 50 per cent, which correlates with the normal food prices cited by Stout. In contrast, Blundell's account of a small corn harvest in 1727 and the dramatic increase in mortality from late summer 1727 may satisfy Appleby's criteria. However, Blundell's account states that increased burials began from May 1727, prior to the poor harvest, and generally a pause between the first harvest failure and increased mortality would be expected.[196] Poor harvests and resultant high food prices continued through 1728 and 1729, as did the increased mortality. However the pattern of high mortality commencing in the latter months of the year with a decrease in the early summer months due to normally decreased food prices is not evident. Thus the correlation of food prices to burials is not sufficiently close to confirm subsistence crisis.

Continuing with Appleby's criteria, the adult/child ratio detailed in Figure 4.8 confirms that the 1720s crisis was primarily an adult crisis with child burials remaining generally stable. The stability of child deaths does not correlate with the expected experience during a subsistence crisis, thus this evidence is suggestive of a different cause of crisis.

Previous studies of accepted subsistence crises can be used as a benchmark. In terms of location, famine was most common in the upland remote areas of the region due to limited land suitable for agriculture, lack of economic opportunities and its remoteness.[197] North Lancashire is such a region in which limited crops were grown due to the landscape, with a limited economic base, one which in the early eighteenth century was actually in decline.[198] In times of economic and agricultural depression there would be a reduction in the buying power of the poor as food prices

[196] Tyrer, 'Nicholas Blundell', p. 230; Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England', p. 114
[197] Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England,' p. 17, 48-9, 94
[198] Walton, 'Lancashire', pp. 22-3

increased with no adequate alternative food available, thus only basic foodstuffs such as beans and oats could be purchased.[199]

Other areas of Lancashire should theoretically fair better in times of poor harvests as a greater diversity of crops were grown. In addition, food stuff might be transported to the locality via established trade routes as noted by Blundell.[200] Therefore it would seem logical that north Lancashire would not only experience crisis at an earlier point but would potentially suffer the most.

The evidence for Lancashire is clearly contradictory to this supposition with north Lancashire escaping the majority of the crisis with a 50 per cent increase of burials. Additionally, some of the most remote parishes actually record no observed crisis throughout the study period.[201] Given this data there is little evidence to support the notion of a subsistence crisis.

Finally, there is some evidence against subsistence crisis. Chambers concluded that disease in the form of epidemics rather than famine due to poor harvests and an increased population.[202] This is strengthened by Healey's study that cites a variety of contemporary comments from across the country each describing a great sickness and fevers of differing types which could be typhus or influenza.[203] Typhus is certainly a potential cause given the similarities with the crisis of 1587-8 in which winter mortality was prevalent amongst the adult population and considers typhus, with

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[199] J. Drummond & A. Wilbraham, 'The Englishman's Food, A History of Five Centuries of English Diet' (London, 1958), p. 88

[200] Tyrer, 'Nicholas Blundell', p. 230

[201] Hawkshead, Torver and Tunstall

[202] Talbot Griffith writes of 'the period of decreasing population in the third decade of the eighteenth century....in the gin-drinking period and the decrease (of population) was due to a rising death rate'. Talbot Griffith, 'Population Problem in the Age of Malthus' (Cambridge, 1926), p. 22
Chambers, 'The Vale of Trent 1670-1800', p.29

[203] Healey makes reference to the writings of Clifton Wintringham and William Hillary who were based in Yorkshire as well as the diary entries for Lancashire by Nicholas Blundell and William Stout. Healey, 'Evidence from Lancashire', pp. 60-1

underlying famine as the cause of crisis.[204] Additionally, other studies have concluded that smallpox was the cause of crisis in the 1720s.[205] This supposition has many problems given that the disease is widely recognisable, is not mentioned in the registers, and affects children more than adults.[206] The varied conclusions all suggest that there may be other causes of crisis thus Appleby's requirements for subsistence crisis cannot be met.

Summary

This chapter firstly established crisis in Lancashire during the years 1727-30, with crisis peaks recorded for summer 1727, winter 1728/9 and 1729/30. The majority of Lancashire parishes were affected by high increases of burials during the crisis period, with only a small number of parishes escaping crisis altogether. Consideration of the geographical aspects of the crisis has led to a conclusion that the low-lying parishes of central, west and south-west Lancashire were most affected. These parishes are part of the Lancashire plain, which supports Stout's account that the plain country more than the towns were affected during crisis.

In considering whether this crisis was indeed socially selective, the evidence does suggest that the crisis was primarily an 'adult' crisis, although further consideration of actual age of death can only be considered through detailed review of the registers. This will be explored in more depth within the Woodplumpton study. The evidence put forward concerning subsistence crisis has been considered against Appleby's criteria with a lack of firm evidence to support Gooder's conclusion, especially given the lack of crisis in the northern remote parishes that would have been most susceptible to famine. It is evident that both the poor harvest and a decline in the

[204] Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England', pp. 105-6
[205] Eversley, 'A survey of the population of Worcestershire', p. 267
[206] Clarkson, 'Death, Disease & Famine in Pre-Industrial England', p.41
Rogers, 'The Lancashire Population Crisis of 1623', Appendix II, p. 32

economy as noted by Stout was experienced, and that this must have impacted greatly on the community, especially the poor who had little surplus to absorb price fluctuations. This experience will be explored in greater detail through the evidence for Woodplumpton.

Chapter Five: Woodplumpton, a chapelry in crisis

This chapter will consider the experience of crisis at local level to enable consideration of the socially selective elements of age, gender, occupation and social status as well coping mechanisms and recovery post crisis. Having established that the majority of crisis mortality occurred in the western, low-lying parishes of Lancashire, the identification of detailed registers for the early eighteenth century and additional Overseers of the Poor Accounts for Woodplumpton in central Lancashire makes the chapelry an ideal case study. The chapter will be divided into five sections. The first section will provide background on Woodplumpton, detailing its topographical, social and economic characteristics. The second section will review the crisis in Woodplumpton, detailing the peaks of crisis and its seasonality. The third section will consider the first aspect of Healey's socially selective crisis in terms of the age of those dying. The fourth section will continue with this theme, considering whether the vulnerable members of the community were indeed the hardest hit. The final section will review the aftermath of crisis in terms of the community's coping mechanisms and its recovery.

Woodplumpton

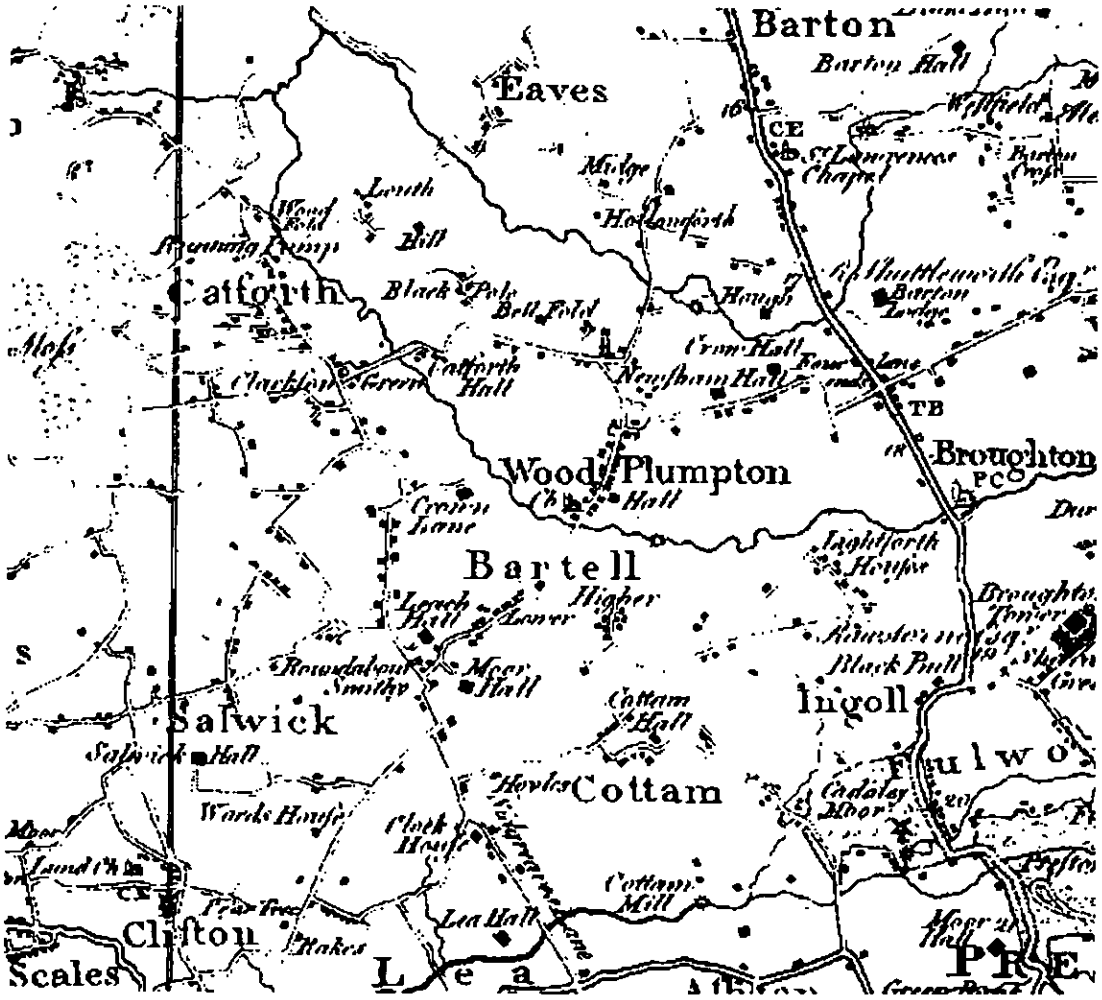
Woodplumpton was a large, sparsely populated chapelry about four miles northwest of Preston. Woodplumpton has excellent registers, complete for the first half of the eighteenth century with no obvious under-registration.[207] An Overseers of the Poor Accounts book is also available which details names and monies allocated within each quarter of the chapelry.[208] The chapelry consisted of four quarters; (Wood)Plumpton, Catforth, Bartle and Eaves covering a total acreage of nearly 5,000 acres. St. Anne's, a chapelry of St Michaels (on Wyre), served not only

[207]The Registers of Woodplumpton, Part II, 1659-1784, Lancashire Parish Register Society, Lancashire Record Office

[208] PR2693/2 Woodplumpton Overseers of the Poor Records, Lancashire Record Office

Woodplumpton but parishioners from the neighbouring settlements of Hollowforth in Newsham; Ingol; Cottam; Barton; Broughton and Lea.[209] Figure 5.1 shows the locations of the four quarters and the settlement patterns within them 45 years after the crisis. The chapelry consisted of clustered houses with the largest settlements being Woodplumpton, displaying a main street with the Church and Hall to its south, and Catforth. Bartell is split into two hamlets, Lower Bartle by Leach Hall and Higher Bartell to the west. Eaves is the most remote of the four quarters and was only sparsely populated.

Figure 5.1 Yates's Map, 1786



Source:
http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~genmaps/genfiles/COU_Pages/ENG_pages/lan.htl accessed September 2009

[209] W. Farrer, (ed.), The Victoria County History, 'Townships: Woodplumpton', A History of the County of Lancaster, Volume 7 (Lancaster, 1912), p. 285
The Registers of Woodplumpton, Part II, 1659-1784, Forward

Woodplumpton lies approximately 100 feet above sea level, reducing to 50 feet to the north. The soil type is clay, with an abundance of ponds and wet land, although there is an absence of moss land, which is to be found in neighbouring parishes. Information from the Victoria County History states that the chapelry in the early twentieth century was largely in pasture, which is typical of parishes in this region of Lancashire.[210] The altitude might suggest a low level of healthiness, although this is generally only true for the low lying marshlands.[211] On the other hand, the lack of either water or road traffic, with the main road to the north being situated in the neighbouring parish of Broughton, may have protected the community from communicable diseases brought by travellers or their cargo.[212]

A tentative population can be established through counts from the Visitation Returns to the Bishop of Chester along with the first census counts. The return of 1676 notes a total of 646 inhabitants, including 46 'Popish recusants' and three Dissenters. Later returns cite a total of 969 inhabitants including 268 papists and 15 Dissenters/Quakers for 1755 and 281 papists in 1767.[213] The figures given in the returns must be used carefully and could be significantly lower in terms of population, or at least religious accuracy. As discussed at county level, Lancashire retained a significant Roman Catholic population, primarily located in the west of the county.[214] Protestant non-conformity was evident in the manufacturing districts of south Lancashire with other clusters specifically in the far north and south-eastern areas of Lancashire.[215] There must have been a small number of dissenters in or around Woodplumpton as a license was granted to Roger Kitchen in 1689 to allow his home

[210] Farrer, 'The Victoria County History', p. 285; Hart, 'The Textile Industry', p. 80
[211] Dobson, 'Contours of death and disease', pp. 103-8
[212] Dobson, 'Contours of death and disease', p. 104
[213] Farrer, 'The Victoria County History', p. 285; Worrall, 'Returns of Papists 1767', pp. 134-5
[214] Walton, 'Lancashire', p. 91
[215] Morgan, 'Lancashire Quakers', p.16'; Halley,' Lancashire: its Puritanism and Nonconformity', p. 29

to be a place of worship for non-conformists.[216] Considering the returns for the late seventeenth century 46 Roman Catholics and three Dissenters is certainly on the low side especially given the increase to 268 papists in the second half of the eighteenth century. Evidence of a Roman Catholic presence is found through a variety of sources including landowner listings and parish registers as well as the presence of the Cottam Chapel, sponsored by the Haydock family.[217] The second return is certainly more accurate, with approximately a third of the population declaring themselves Catholic and is comparable with the Compton Census of 1676 for Broughton with 91 recusants to 257 conformists.[218] The non-conformist figure could still be short, although these denominations are much more prominent in other areas of Lancashire.

The census return of 1801 gives a figure of 1197 people living within the township of Woodplumpton. It should be recognised that the area in which the counts are being based might alter between the ecclesiastical chapelry and the township of Woodplumpton, although evidence from the census and the Victoria County History detailing the size of the township and parish offer similar figures of 4580 acres for the parish in 1912 and 4722 acres for the township in 1851.[219] Given the consideration of both national and county population trends including a greater increase for parts of

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[216] *Hist. MSS. Com. Rep. Xiv, App. Iv, 232* cited in Farrer bill (eds.), 'The Victoria County History', p5

[217] R. Sharpe France, ed, 'The Registers of Estates of Lancashire Papists, 1711-88, volume 1' (Lancashire and Cheshire, 1945), pp. 6-7
John Baine buried 1727 listed as a supposed Roman Catholic Priest, Child of Mary Latus, baptised by a Romish priest in 1727. Both examples recorded in The Registers of Woodplumpton, Part II, 1659-1784, LPRS 103; J. Gillow,' The Haydock Papers: a glimpse into English Catholic Life' (London, 1888), pp. 53-6, 76

[218] Gritt, 'Mortality Crisis and Household Structure: Broughton', p. 42

[219] W. Farrer, (ed.), The Victoria County History, 'The Parish of St Michael-on-Wyre', A History of the County of Lancaster, Volume 7 (1912), pp. 260-7; Census of Great Britain, 1851. Population tables. I. Numbers of the inhabitants in the years 1801, 1811, 1821, 1831, 1841 & 1851. England and Wales. Division VIII. - North western counties, comprising Cheshire and Lancashire. (HMSO, 1852)

Lancashire from the 1690s it is feasible that the population in the 1720s was closer to the figure of 969 stated in 1755.[220]

A tentative occupational structure of Woodplumpton has been possible through review of the baptism registers, wills and the 1767 Return of Papists listing. All sources have their limitations, mainly due to the lack of requirement to record occupational data, although it is thought that around four per cent of parishes at any one time record this data.[221] In addition to this baptism registers will only contain a limited number of the community's male population thus producing under-registration from certain occupations such as servants who are generally young and single.[222] Equally, the data ignores those men who have completed their families, are yet to marry or are widowers. Wills can provide a balance to the baptism registers as they tend to record older men who may have established occupations.[223] Yet in this vein they are incredibly socially selective given that the majority of wills were written by the wealthy, with the poor being significantly under-represented.[224] The number of wills made by women was relatively low at around 25 per cent, primarily made by widows, as married women were prevented from making wills by law.[225] Additionally minors, the disabled and criminals were equally prevented from making wills.[226] Finally, the 1767 Return of Papists listing is an appropriate source for Woodplumpton given the high number of known Catholics, thus providing an indication of occupations.

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[220] Phillips & Smith, 'Lancashire and Cheshire', pp. 66-7
[221] P. H. Lindert, 'English Occupations, 1670-1811', Journal of Economic History, 40 (1980), pp. 456-7
[222] P. Glennie, 'Distinguishing Men's Trades': occupational sources and debate for pre-census England, Historical Geography Research Series, 25 (1990), p30
[223] Arkell, Evans & Goose, 'When death do us part', pp. 45-6
[224] Glennie, 'Distinguishing Men's Trades', p. 34
Arkell, Evans & Goose, 'When death do us part', p. 44
M. Zell, 'The social parameters of probate records in the sixteenth century', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, 57 (1984), pp. 107-13
[225] A. L. Erickson, 'Women and Property in early modern England' (London, 1995), pp. 204-5
[226] K., Grannum, & N., Taylor, 'Wills and Probate Records' (Kew, 2004)

Table 5.1 Breakdown of known occupations for Woodplumpton

Occupation	Baptism Register 1719-37	Hart's Baptism Registers, 1725[227]	Wills 1728-9	1767 Return of Papists[228]
	%			
Agriculture[229]	19.5	27.55	60.7	35.4
Labourers	3.8	5.5	0	6.3
Weavers[230]	8.8	14.78	4.3	13.9
Not Listed	40	17.32	30.4	10.1
Other Occupation	28.9	NA	4.3	34.2
N= total numbers	159	NA	23	281

Source: The Registers of Woodplumpton, Part II, 1659-1784, LPRS 103; Hart's thesis '*The Textile Industry*'; WRW Probate documents, Richmond Deanery, Worrall, *Returns of the Papists*

Table 5.1 details known occupations for Woodplumpton and is somewhat contradictory, potentially due to differing requirements of the data and interpretation of occupations by the range of incumbents compiling the information.[231] The data from the baptism registers deviates from one another and can only be due to the different timing of data under scrutiny as well as potential interpretation. As with Hart's methodology, all illegitimate children have been removed as have all records that are resident outside of the settlement. Any suspect duplications within the register, including the same father registering a number of children have been removed from the data for 1719-39. Conclusions are virtually impossible to make due to the number of unknown occupations as well as the number of other occupations recorded such as cooper, miller, maltman which do not wholly belong in any of the classifications. Hart considers Woodplumpton to have a dual economy of both agriculture and textiles.[232] Although this is not in dispute the accompanying data

[227] Hart, 'The Textile Industry', pp. 31-2
[228] Worrall, 'Returns of the Papists, 1767', pp. 134-5
[229] Occupations included farmer, yeoman, husbandman
[230] Occupations included weaver and linen weaver
[231] J. V. Beckett, 'The Peasant in England: A Case of Terminological Confusion?', The Agricultural History Review, 32 (1984), pp. 113-38; Hart, 'The Textile Industry', p. 26; Gritt,' Aspects of agrarian change' pp. 278-83
[232] Hart, 'The Textile Industry', p. 32

provided by the wills and Returns suggest that agriculture was still the dominant occupation for Woodplumpton.

The crisis

The burial registers of St Anne's, Woodplumpton show a volatile mortality regime from the beginning of the eighteenth century. An average annual burial total has been established and detail a number of peaks of heightened mortality every few years, although none reached the crisis levels recorded for the late 1720s. Peaks included 1710-12 for which contemporaries record 'food shortages associated with an epidemic fever of great malignity' evident in London.[233] National data confirms a trebling of wheat prices although Chambers concludes that there was little correlation between food prices and burials for this period.[234] A further peak in burials occurs between 1715 and 1720, which is potentially the onset of the unsettled demographic regime which culminated in the 'disastrous' decade of the 1720s.[235]

In line with other parish studies a simple count of the baptisms, marriages and burials has been conducted.[236] Table 5.2 lists both the actual burial totals and an index to indicate the extent of crisis, using the average number of burials calculated from the years 1720-1738, excluding the suspected crisis years of 1727-30.[237] The index data details the massive increase of burials in the years 1727 to 1730 with a peak of four times the average in 1728.

[233] Creighton, 'A History of Epidemics in England, II', p. 55
[234] Chambers, 'The Vale of Trent 1670-1800', p. 25
[235] Chambers, 'The Vale of Trent 1670-1800', pp. 28-9
[236] Rogers, 'The Lancashire Population Crisis of 1623', p. 13
[237] Gritt, 'Mortality Crisis and Household Structure', p. 47

Table 5.2: Annual Burials (including index) for Woodplumpton, 1720-38

Year	Annual Total of Burials	Index*	Number of Burials for Woodplumpton Residents only	Index
1720	30	109	20	73
1721	32	116	24	87
1722	36	131	30	109
1723	35	127	25	91
1724	20	73	14	51
1725	20	76	10	36
1726	35	127	16	58
1727	50	182	22	80
1728	111	400	69	251
1729	106	385	65	236
1730	62	225	31	113
1731	29	105	15	55
1732	31	102	14	51
1733	23	84	13	47
1734	25	91	13	47
1735	24	87	17	62
1736	27	98	15	55
1737	25	91	16	58
1738	23	84	16	58

Index* Index of burials: mean average of 1720-1726 and 1731-1738 = 100 (ave. is 27.53 per year)

Source: The Registers of Woodplumpton, Part II, 1659-1784, LPRS 103

Within the burial register for 1728 and 1729 a total of 217 burials were recorded, however not all records were residents of Woodplumpton. Known Woodplumpton burials are somewhat lower at 134, yet are still at crisis level.[238] With regard to repatriation, a brief review of neighbouring parishes was undertaken to establish whether a high number of Woodplumpton residents were buried outside the chapelry. The only parish to record any Woodplumpton burials was Broughton in which two

[238] Wrigley and Schofield's definition of crisis mortality is twice the average number of deaths. Schofield, "'Crisis Mortality"', pp. 10-22

burials were recorded during the crisis.[239] Thus the Woodplumpton registers give a clear indication of the burial regimes within both the township of Woodplumpton and surrounding settlements, and repatriation should not be necessary to consider the impact of the crisis on the chapelry. In considering the impact of crisis the loss for Woodplumpton was sizeable with approximately 13 per cent of the population dying within the two year period.

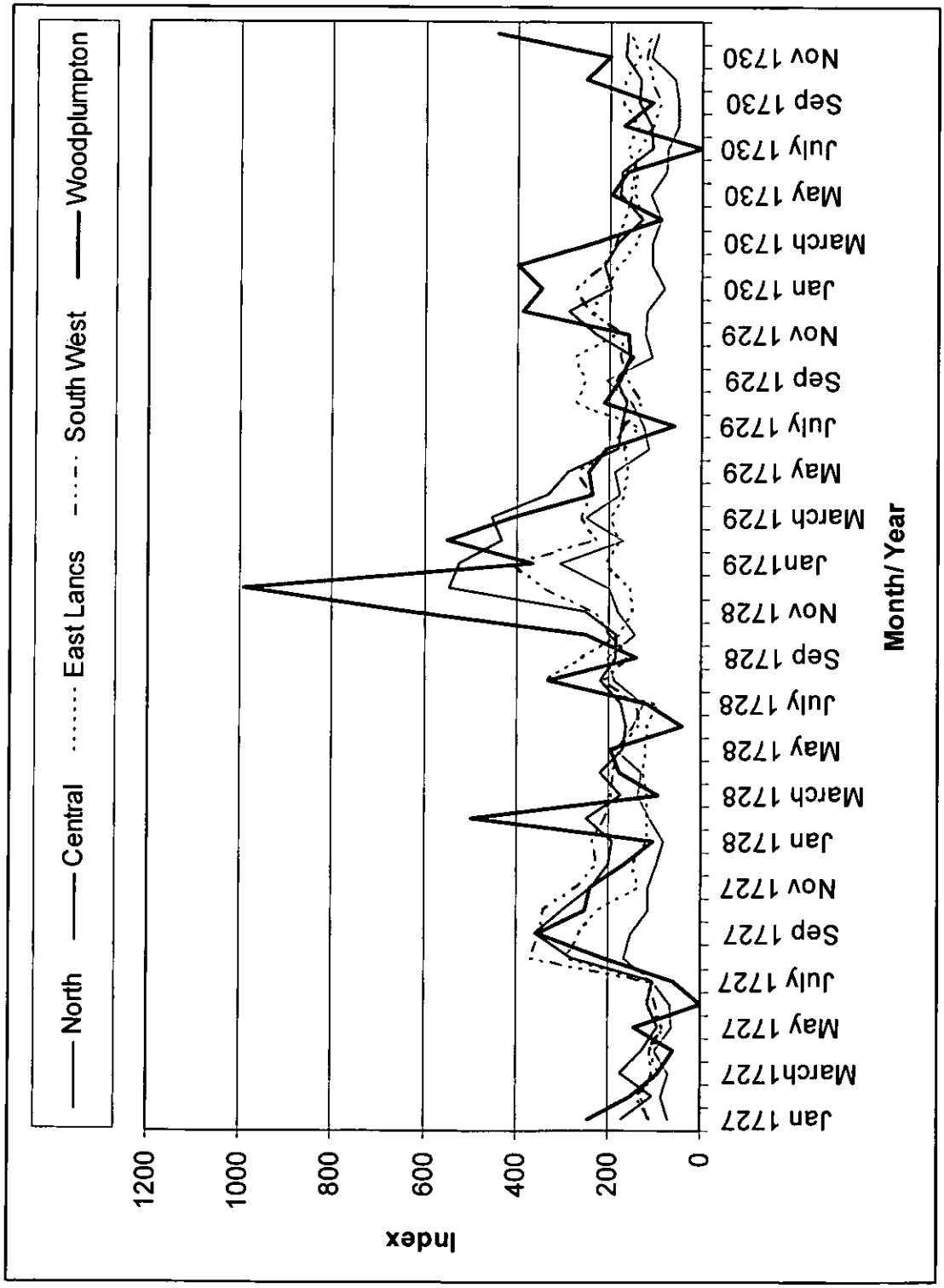
The crisis in Woodplumpton began in the autumn of 1727 with increased burials recorded for September and October with a further peak in February and August 1728 before the onset of the main period of crisis from November 1728 which lasted until March 1729. The burials remained above the average monthly burial figure for a further three months until late spring when burials returned to average levels.[240] The next twenty-four months indicate higher than average burials for the chapelry with the higher increases experienced during the colder winter months. In line with other accounts, the peak of 1728-9 could be described as the crest on a single mountain of mortality, albeit only one main peak was experienced.[241]

[239] Cuthbert son of Robert Cardwell of Woodplumpton buried 9th August 1727 and Isabel Cardwell of Eaves in Woodplumpton buried 30th December 1728. Both were buried within the parish of Broughton, LPRS48; Other registers checked included Penwortham, Walton-le-Dale and Leyland

[240] The average monthly burial figure has been determined through the individual monthly average throughout the period 1719-38 excluding the identified crisis years of 1727-30. Each month has been calculated individually to identify the background mortality of the parish. For Woodplumpton the average monthly burial rate is between 1.7 and 3.4 burials per month. Normally, the most mortal months for Woodplumpton were April and October with the least mortal months identified as July and December.

[241] Chamber's description of the mortality regime for the 1720s was that 'the peaks of 1724, 1726 and 1728 appear as single crests on a single mountain of mortality.' Chambers, 'The Vale of Trent 1670-1800', p. 330-31.

Figure 5.2: Monthly burials, north, central, south-west, east Lancashire and Woodplumpton



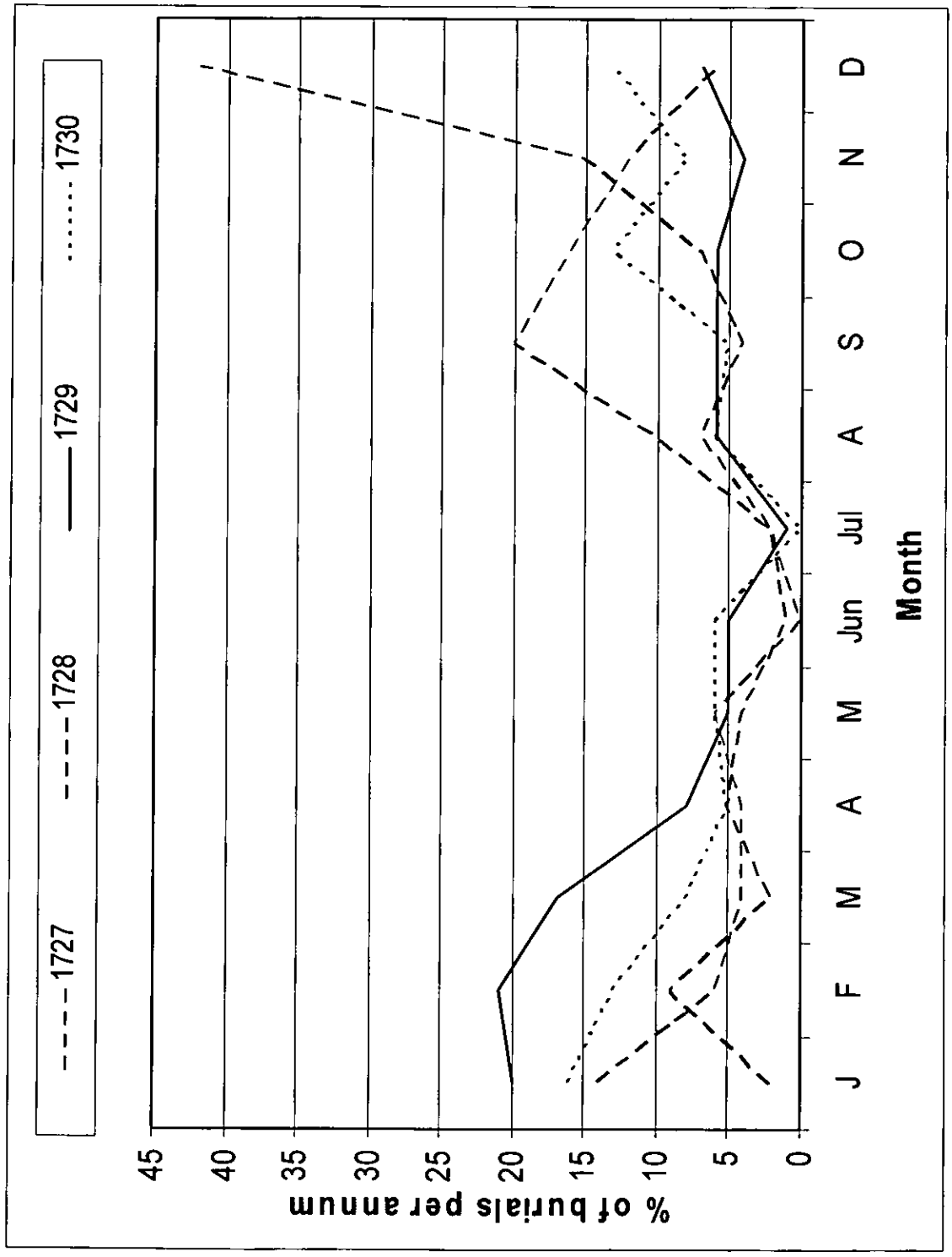
Source: The Registers of Woodplumpton, Part II, 1659-1784, LPRS 103

From the county wide data detailed in Figure 5.2, Woodplumpton fits completely within the experiences of other parishes in Lancashire, displaying the increase in burials from autumn 1727, reaching its peak from late 1728 into 1729. There is an additional peak evident for early 1728, which might be due to a local outbreak of disease, although the seasonality is similar to the peak experienced 12 months later. Again, Woodplumpton does not experience the heightened mortality described by Gooder for 1724/5.[242] This is perhaps indicative that this small peak of mortality was unrelated to the crisis period of the late 1720s.

Returning to the Woodplumpton data, seasonality of the crisis as shown in Figure 5.3 indicates that for the crisis years of 1728 and 1729 the massive peak in burials occurs over a relatively short number of months, with the last two months of 1728 accounting for over 40 percent of the annual total. Onset of crisis is swift from a relatively low percentage to 15 percent in November rising to 42 percent in December 1728. Burials remain high for the first quarter of 1729 with almost two thirds of burials for the year being recorded. The proportion of burials returns to the summer low as evident in the other years, rising modestly in the autumn months with a further peak in the first quarter, albeit only a smaller proportion of burials at 37 percent.

[242] Gooder considered that the earlier peak in 1724 was probably not a result of food shortages and was thus separate to the crisis of 1727-30. Gooder, 'The Population Crisis of 1727-30 in Warwickshire'

Figure 5.3: Seasonality of burials in Woodplumpton



Source: The Registers of Woodplumpton, Part II, 1659-1784, LPRS 103

Having dismissed the notion of a subsistence crisis within Chapter Four, consideration of disease as a cause of crisis might be considered in light of the Woodplumpton data. Both contemporary writers and historians have suggested a variety of fevers as being responsible for the increased mortality, thus this supposition will be considered against available data.[243] Healey suggests that two types of fevers were responsible for the peaks of crisis with a typhus type fever as described by Wintingham for the increased burials in late summer/autumn 1727, followed by a more widespread outbreak of influenza in winter 1728/9 with a lesser outbreak twelve months later.[244] The Woodplumpton data has both the peaks of crisis, and combined with the contemporary observations of Blundell and Stout with notes within the parish registers, a range of fevers is the most probable primary cause of crisis within the parish.

Scott and Duncan's study of the plague throughout the early modern period profiles epidemics, detailing how disease is transmitted to and within communities and identifying the different characteristics according to their incubation, latent and infectious timings. A computer modelling exercise of a known plague and a typical influenza outbreak provide a useful insight into a potential cause of crisis for Woodplumpton.[245] Scott and Duncan detail the approximate incubation and infectious periods for a variety of diseases and the modelling demonstrates that an influenza outbreak can reach its peak within a matter of days and perhaps only lasts a short number of weeks as the infection quickly infects and spreads but is unable to maintain such a high infection rate. Rogers' chart of disease characteristics notes that influenza is highly infectious, especially within unprotected communities and a

[243] Creighton, 'A History of Epidemics in Britain', p. 66; Chambers, 'The Vale of Trent 1670-1800', p. 29
Healey, 'Evidence from Lancashire', pp. 60-1
[244] Wintringham, 'Commentarius nosolgicus', 33. cited in Healey ' Evidence from Lancashire'
[245] Scott & Duncan, 'Return of the Black Death', pp. 149-151

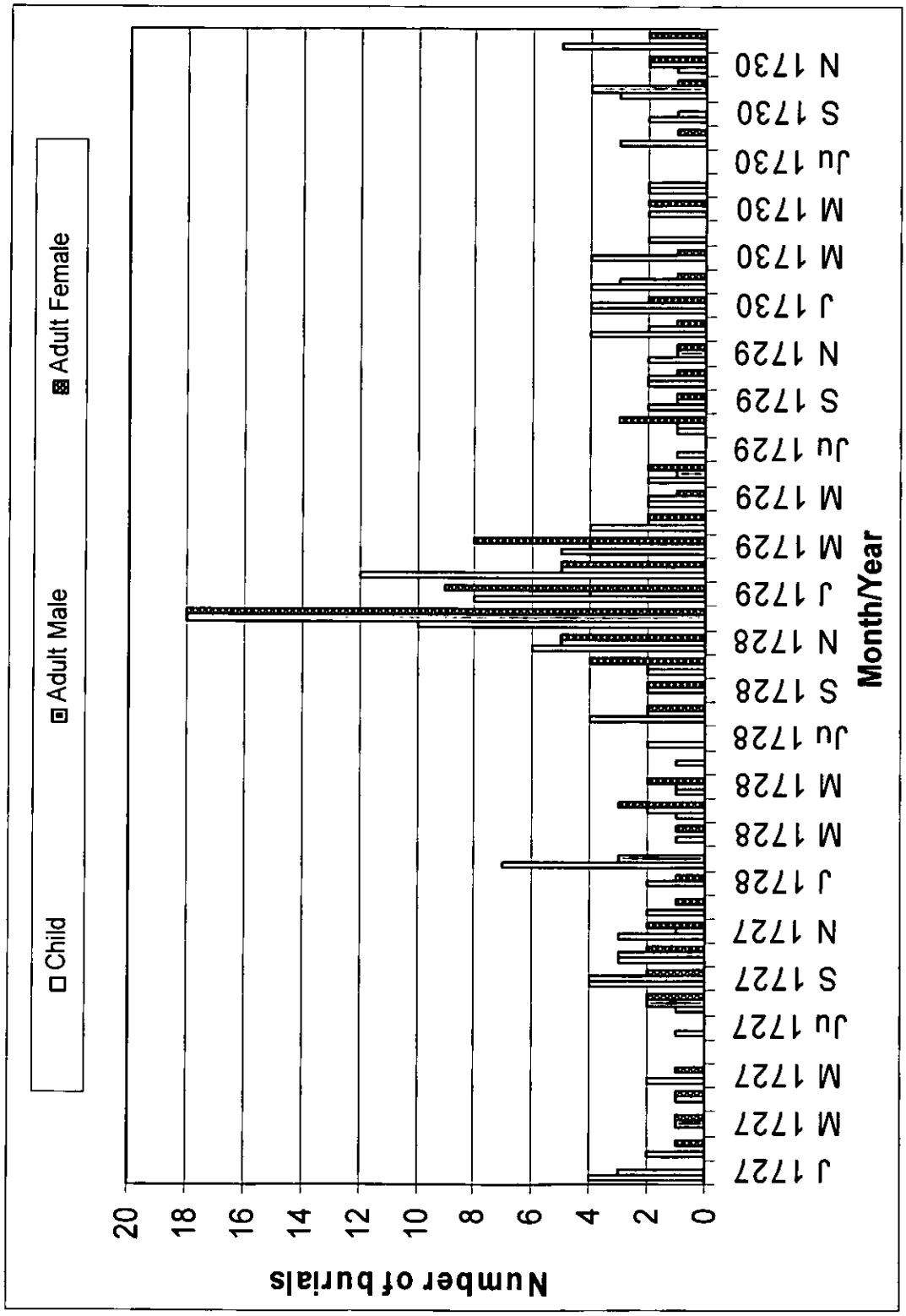
typical epidemic might last around two months.[246] In reviewing the height of the Woodplumpton crisis between November 1728 and March 1729 there are some remarkable similarities to Scott and Duncan's simulated influenza model, especially when the timescale is considered within the separate quarters and neighbouring hamlets. Crisis affects the parish dramatically from November 1728 with increased burials taking place from late November and culminating in the 46 burials recorded for December 1728. In addition the potential of a typhus fever must be included especially given the known food shortages and high food prices. Harty, in writing about the Irish famine fevers considered how much stronger the influence of fever would be when aggravated by famine.[247] Thus despite evidence away from a subsistence crisis, there is perhaps an indirect link between high food prices and exposure to disease.[248]

Socially selective crisis: age

In returning to Healey's supposition that the older members of the community formed the majority of the deaths, Figure 5.4 provides a breakdown of child, adult male and female burials during the crisis period. The data is based on the assumption that any burial noted as 'child' or 'son or daughter' of are children whilst a 'wife or widow of' is an adult female with all other males being listed as adult males.[249]

[246] Rogers, 'The Lancashire Population Crisis of 1623', p 32-3
[247] W. Harty, 'An Historic Sketch of the Causes, Progress, Extent and Mortality of the Contagious Fever Epidemic in Ireland during the Years 1817,1818 and 1819', (Dublin, 1820), p. 166
[248] Dobson, 'Contours of death and disease', pp. 464-5
[249] Gritt, 'Mortality Crisis and Household Structure' p. 47; Rogers, 'The Lancashire Population Crisis of 1623', pp. 14-5

Figure 5.4: Actual burials, child, adult male & female, Woodplumpton 1727-30



Source: The Registers of Woodplumpton, Part II, 1659-1784, LPRS 103

The adult/child split is varied throughout the period 1724 to 1735 with several individual years in which adult burials form the vast majority of the burials. The data clearly shows that throughout the extended crisis period the split between adult and child deaths were fairly equal, albeit with a higher percentage for adults as shown in 1728. A closer analysis of burials from November and December that year shows that twelve adults were buried, of whom three were widows. Of the six children that were buried of which one was still born and two were illegitimate.

Wills and probate information have enabled families to be linked with the parish registers to provide limited family reconstructions. William and Anne Bryning of Bartell were buried in late 1728 and early 1729 respectively and were in their mid to late 70s at time of death. John and Agnes Cunliffe, also residents of Bartell were both buried in August 1728 and are likely to have been in their early eighties. Without a full reconstruction of all the adult burials for the crisis period it is simply impossible to discover the proportion of older adults buried during the period, and it would be even more difficult to confirm if these individuals died as a direct result of crisis or from other, perhaps natural causes. Thus despite Blundell's information and the evidence that adults were greatly affected during the crisis no further conclusion can be made regarding the experience of the older members of the community.

Socially selective crisis: the vulnerable poor

Through linkage to occupations Healey concluded that the poor, spinsters and widows were most severely affected.[250] Table 5.3 reproduces the data presented by Healey showing that widows and spinsters were included within Healey's vulnerable group. Indeed spinsters and widows show the greatest increase in mortality from non-crisis to crisis years. However there are a number of issues with the data, firstly that within the registers there are only three real sections that an adult female may be

[250] Healey, 'Evidence from Lancashire', pp. 69-71

recorded; spinster, wife or widow. It is appropriate not to use the category wife as it does not indicate an occupation, but surely this is also the case for widows and spinsters, especially given the range of economic situations of the individuals. It is accepted that receipt of poor relief is often granted to widows and single mothers, evidenced in the Woodplumpton Overseers of the Poor Accounts book.[251] However the will and probate information for Woodplumpton details a number economically independent women who leave estates worth between £28 and £36.[252] Thus in considering the experience of the vulnerable only the stated poor will be used, of which the increase of 51 per cent is actually lower than many of the other occupations.

The greatest increase for an occupational category is that of unskilled labourers which does suggest some relationship between wealth and mortality. The increase in mortality for labourers may be a direct result of the poor harvests, given that the work opportunities for these men would be reduced, with a reduction in wages.[253] Given the increased food prices, these families would suffer the greatest of hardship within the community. In addition, the relatively high increase for textile industries might also reflect the known decrease in textile manufacture noted during the crisis period.[254]

[251] For example, Alice Charnley 'an old woman' and the Rawlinson children, Overseers of the poor account book; G. W. Oxley, 'Old Poor Laws in West Derby Hundred 1601-1837' (Oxley, 1966), p. 187

[252] WRW/ Kellet 1726, WRW/ Bain 1728, WRW/ Cance 1729, WRW/ Clarkson 1729

[253] Appleby, 'Famine in Tudor and Stuart England', pp. 116-8, 132; Tyrer, 'Nicholas Blundell', p. 230

[254] Harland, 'William Stout', p. 201.

Table 5.3: Burials by occupation in Bolton-le-Moors, Hindley, Melling and Prescot, 1721-1735[255]

	Burials per year (non-crisis)	Burials per year (crisis)	% increase during crisis	Total burials
Gentry, mercantile, and professional	9.7	9.0	-8	130
Yeoman, farmer, and husbandman	38.2	64.7	+69	594
Metal-working	8.2	14.0	+70	134
Textiles	63.8	116.3	+82	953
Mining and fuel-related	12.1	20.7	+75	201
Other skills and semi-skilled	71.7	111.3	+55	1,079
Total skilled and semi-skilled	**155.9**	**262.3**	**+68**	**2,367**
Unskilled labourer	27.0	60.7	+125	494
Widows	30.0	79.0	+164	547
Spinsters	9.5	25.7	+170	185
Poor	0.5	1.0	+51	27
Other vulnerable	6.8	10.7	+58	77
Total vulnerable	**46.8**	**116.3**	**+149**	**844**
Unknown	29.4	53.3	+81	441

Source: Healey, 'Evidence from Lancashire'

Importantly though, all occupations other than professional experienced a similar increase in mortality during crisis. It is difficult to establish the wealth of the occupations, especially given the wide definition and use of the terms such as yeoman and husbandmen in the period.[256] The decrease in mortality for the gentry and professional class is interesting as it is suggestive that this social grouping might have been able to escape the crisis through leaving the settlement, or equally it strengthens the notion that they were not affected by the price increases.[257] In summary Healey's data show an overall increase in mortality across the occupations and social status with the only exception of the gentry and professional classes who appeared to have escaped crisis.

The Woodplumpton Overseers of the Poor Accounts provide details of those residents in receipt of relief and the annual or casual monetary amounts paid, although a number of records include no monetary amount. It is difficult to assess

[255] Healey, 'Evidence from Lancashire', p. 70
[256] Beckett, 'The Peasant in England: A Case of Terminological Confusion?', pp. 114-5
[257] Arkell, Evans & Goose, 'When death do us part', p. 210

whether the relief granted was sufficient especially as King has argued that relief given in the north and west of the country was often supplementary and too low for a family to live off.[258] The accounts are divided into the four quarters giving an indication of where relief was distributed. On average there were a total of 21 people, or approximately 5 to 6 per cent of the parish in receipt of poor relief in any one year, which is within established parameters.[259] Finally, it should be remembered that the account book only shows the poor relief given to the individual not those who applied or required support and this can be evidenced from the number of additional poor noted within the registers but not in receipt of poor relief.[260] One explanation for this is that 'poor' is noted where the deceased was unable to pay the mortcloth or clerks fees.[261]

Table 5.4 indicates the number of poor burials entered in the burial register and indicates that between nine and 16 per cent of the total burials were designated 'poor'. The information provided by the definition of poor within the burial registers appears to show a stable number of poor dying within the community rather than supporting the notion that the poor were greatly affected.

Table 5.4: Percentage of poor listed within the burial registers

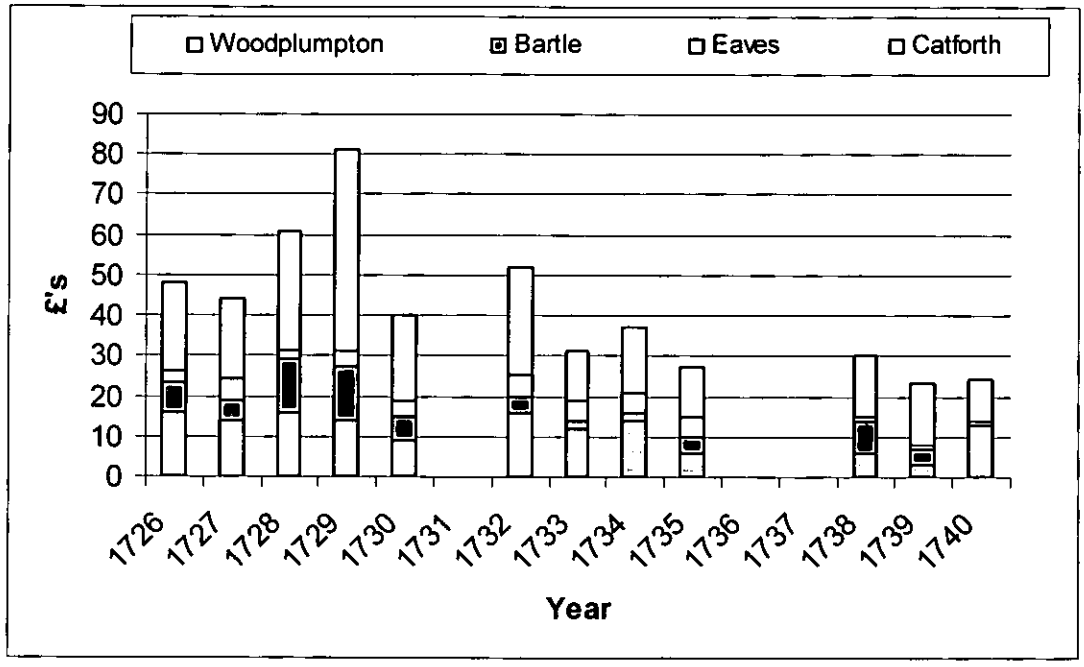
Year	% of poor within the burial register
1727	12
1728	14
1729	12
1730	11
1731	14
1732	10
1733	9
1734	16
N=	436

[258] S. King, 'Reconstructing Lives: The Poor, the Poor Law and Welfare in Calverley, 1650-1820', Social History, 22 (1997), p. 319
[259] Slack – 1-10% of the parish in receipt of relief
[260] S. King,' Poverty and Welfare in England 1700-1850: A Regional Perspective' (Manchester, 2000), p. 103
[261] R., A., Houston, 'The Population History of Britain and Ireland 1500-1750' (London, 1992), p. 17

Source: The Registers of Woodplumpton, Part II, 1659-1784, LPRS 103

However, the Overseers of the Poor Accounts book provide evidence of the effects of crisis with an increase in expenditure noted as detailed in Figures 5.5. It should also be noted that , unusually, a second meeting was convened in 1729 to allocate further relief to the poor, which is perhaps indicative of hardship.

Figure 5.5: Total £s spent per year, per Quarter from the Overseers of the Poor Accounts



Source: PR2693/2 Woodplumpton Overseers of the Poor Accounts

The increase in expenditure during the crisis would suggest a greater proportion of individuals requiring relief, perhaps due to a reduction of wages and the increase in food costs, or due to the death of head of the family or significant wage earner within the household. The effect of the death of the primary wage earner to the family would have had a significant impact on the family and the wider community who could be required to provide financial assistance through poor rates, with a high proportion of relief being granted to widows and mothers. Through nominal linkage some

connections are possible for example; John Brown of Catforth, a linen weaver buried December 1728. The account book notes relief granted to a John Brown of Catforth in 1726 followed by payments to a widow Brown of Catforth for 1729.

Poor relief expenditure decreases from 1733, although the missing data for 1731 makes it difficult to consider whether it took three years for the community to recover or whether there was a separate reason for increased expenditure in 1732. There is also a slight reduction in the number of paupers in the years immediately following crisis as shown in Figure 5.7. In considering the work of Malthus, this reduction in the number of poor in the community may suggest that the majority of the poor died during the crisis, thus reducing pressure on food supplies, relief and employment opportunities.[262]

In returning to Healey's supposition, the poor did suffer greatly during the crisis with a rise in relief expenditure in correlation with the poor harvests and increased mortality. Healey's review of affected occupations does show that lower occupations such as labourers experienced an increase in mortality, however this increase is also evident across the wider range of occupations suggesting that the majority of the community was affected.

Impact and Recovery

The impact and recovery from crisis can be illuminated through a number of sources and partial family reconstructions. Surnames can be used as a proxy measure for the impact of crisis, especially on the family unit. Utilising Gritt's methodology tables 5.5 and 5.6 show the impact of two crises. [263]

[262] Malthus, 'An Essay on the Principle of Population', p. 71, 82; Hinde,' England's Population', pp. 82-7

[263] Gritt, 'Mortality Crisis and Household Structure: Broughton', p51

Table 5.5: Number of burials for each of the 102 surnames in the Woodplumpton parish register, 1725-30

No. of burials	No. of surnames 1725-1727	%	No. of surnames 1728-30	%
1	39	61	39	38
2	15	23	23	23
3	6	9	14	14
4	3	5	7	7
5	-	-	8	8
6	1	2	2	2
7	-	-	5	5
8	-	-	2	2
9	-	-	-	-
10	-	-	1	1
More than 10	-	-	1	1
Total	64	100	102	100

Source: The Registers of Woodplumpton, Part II, 1659-1784, LPRS 103

Table 5.6: Number of burials for each of the 120 surnames in the Broughton parish register, 1667- 1672

No. of burials	No. of surnames 1661-1666	%	No. of surnames 1667-1672	%
1	47	61.8	47	39.2
2	12	15.8	24	20.0
3	8	10.5	19	15.8
4	4	5.3	9	7.5
5	2	2.6	5	4.2
6	1	1.3	5	4.2
7	2	2.6	1	0.8
8	-	-	2	1.7
9	-	-	-	-
10	-	-	-	-
More than 10	-	-	8	6.7
Total	76	100	120	100

Source: Gritt, 'Mortality Crisis and Household Structure: Broughton'

For the extended crisis period of 1728-30 a total of 102 surnames are recorded within the Woodplumpton registers, of which 39 per cent are mentioned just once and 23 per cent twice, and are comparable to Gritt's results. Woodplumpton's experience during crisis is less severe than the 1667-72 Broughton crisis with only one example of a surname being recorded more than ten times. The surname that experienced the highest number of burials ratio is Brown, for which a simple review of the registers shows that there is no definite relationships between the entries. To contrast the years of normal mortality, 84 per cent of the surnames were recorded once or twice, and certainly no surname recorded more than six burials in the time period. This is

suggestive that the crisis affected many individual families, but very few were decimated.

Table 5.7: Known wills or inventories for Woodplumpton residents, 1727-31

Year	Surname	First Name	Location	Occupation	Total Monies	Beneficiaries
1727	Lund	Anthony	Myerscough	Yeoman	73/19/5	Wife, children, grandchildren
1728	Charnock	William	Catforth	Husbandman	44/4/8	Wife and child
1728	Moon	John	Elston, Preston	Husbandman	44/10/-	Wife and children
1728	Cunliff	John	Lower Bartle	Husbandman	20/4/-	Wife and children
1728	Joly	Seth	Woodplumpton	Yeoman	294/3/-	Sons
1728	Bryning	William	Higher Bartle	Husbandman		Daughters and grandchild
1728	Bain	Jane	Salwick in Kirkham		32/7/9	Son
1728	Hall	John	Bartle	Husbandman	38/19/9	Wife and children
1729	Kellet	Elizabeth	Catforth	Singlewoman	33/9/6	Unknown relative
1729	Clarkson	Perpetua	Swillbrook	Widow	36/5/2.75	No will
1729	Cance	Jane	Woodplumpton		28/8/4	No will
1729	Brown	John	Newsham Hall Lane	Yeoman	85/10/-	No will
1729	Clarkson	Leonard	Catforth	Husbandman	105/2/2	Wife and children
1730	Bramwell	Joseph	Higher Bartle		145/8/-	Children
1730	Cunliffe	Titus	Lower Bartle		46/1/-	Children
1730	Eccles	Leonard	Lower Bartle	Yeoman	222/19/-	Children & grandchildren
1730	Holladay	William	Catforth	Husbandman	36/16/6	Children
1730	Lund	John	Higher Bartle	Yeoman	28/14/-	Sisters, nephews and nieces
1730	Charnley	Roger	Catforth	Husbandman	18/7/-	No will
1730	Nickson	Ralph	Salwick		106/5/9	Wife, sister & cousin
1731	Brown	Henry	Westby in Kirkham	Miller		Brother and unrelated person
1731	Adamson	Thomas	Catforth	Yeoman	112/16/10	Wife and children
1731	Hodkinson	John	Catforth	Linen Weaver	23/15/-	No will

Source: WRW Probate documents, Richmond Deanery

A total of 23 wills or inventories are in existence for Woodplumpton at the height of crisis and can demonstrate how individuals sought to provide for their spouses and children following crisis. As previously discussed, the wills are socially biased towards older men who may have established occupations and exclude a number of

sections of the community.[264] Table 5.7 shows all wills and inventories recorded for Woodplumpton during the crisis. All wills show that monies are being bequeathed to relatives, mainly spouses and children, with a small number of wider relations such as a cousin or nieces and nephews. Only one will details a beneficiary which is potentially unrelated to the deceased, although further investigation might reveal the beneficiary to be related via marriage.

There seems little haste in the wills and there is clear movement of goods and monies from one generation to the next which supports the notion that the crisis was slow moving and did not strike whole families. This is in contrast with wills from other crises where whole families were devastated and the bequests were more confused with a wider range of beneficiaries and instances where goods of other living relatives are bequeathed.[265] The normality of the wills and those who inherited supports the consideration that the community was not adversely affected by the crisis and was accepting of events and reacted to them with minimal upheaval.

Known population figures for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries allow consideration of how the community recovered following the crisis. A population estimate given for 1676 records a total of 646 inhabitants for Woodplumpton, with an increased figure of 969 inhabitants for 1755. Therefore a 50 percent increase in population was experienced over an eighty year period. This is suggestive of recovery given that regional studies considered only modest population increase from the late seventeenth century. This can be explored further through the Return of Papists data available for 1767 which details the length of time the individual was

[264] Arkell, Evans & Goose, 'When death do us part', p. 44, 45-6; Erickson,' Women and Property', pp. 204-5; Glennie, 'Distinguishing Men's Trades', p. 34; Zell, 'The social parameters of probate records in the sixteenth century', pp. 107-13

[265] Jefferaye Stephenson of Penrith, Carlisle, will bequeathed a number of his wife's clothing despite the fact that she survived him by a few days in October 1598. Scott & Duncan, 'Return of the Black Death', pp111-2.

resident. This will give some indication whether the increase in population was due to increased births or immigration into the parish. Out of the 79 male recusants detailed in Table 5.8 the majority of residents moved to the chapelry in the years following crisis, thus suggesting that a proportion of the population increase was due to migration into the chapelry.

Table 5.8: Length of residency of male recusants, 1767

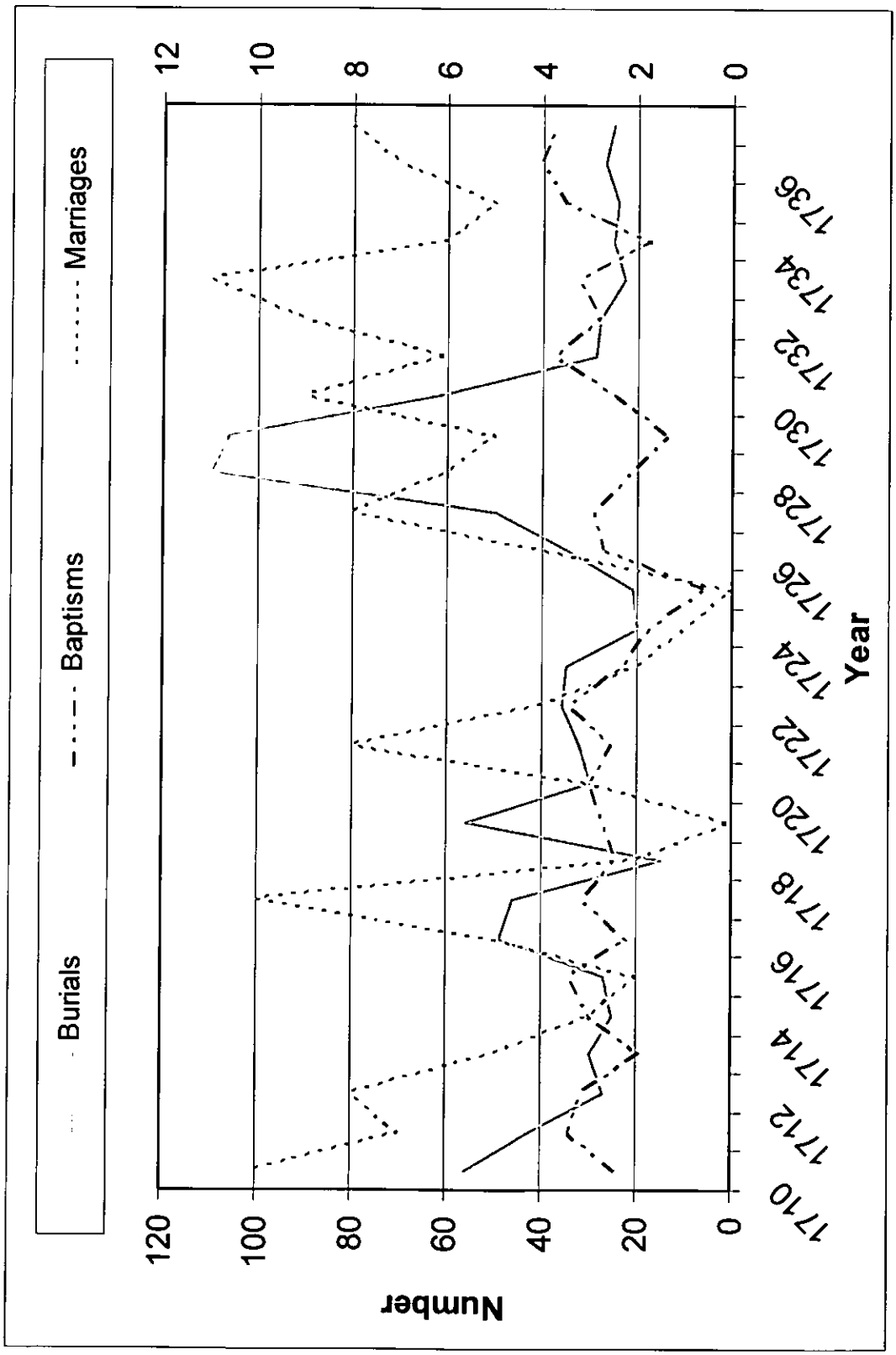
	Resident pre-crisis	Woodplumpton born post crisis	Moved to Woodplumpton post crisis
Number	16	18	45

Source: 1767 Return of Papists

The supposition that increased population was due to immigration rather than increased births is strengthened by the baptismal registers shown in Figure 5.6. Baptisms generally maintain an annual average of around thirty with the only significant reductions being in 1725 and 1729. Baptisms fall significantly in 1725, along with a low record of marriages which had been in decline for a number of years, which perhaps is an explanation for such a low return for baptisms. The baptisms do recover for a couple of years but reduce again by 1728 and only reach average or above average range post crisis. What is clear is that baptisms do fall with the increase of burials during crisis but reassuringly return to average levels within months of the end of the extended crisis years and begin to be in excess of the burial totals in line with national trends. [266]

[266] Wrigley & Schofield, 'The Population History of England 1541-1871', p.324

Figure 5.6: Annual Baptism, Marriages and Burials for Woodplumpton, 1710-37



Source: The Registers of Woodplumpton, Part II, 1659-1784, LPRS 103

The marriage register is more volatile with a number of years recording no marriages. However given the size of the chapelry and the high proportion of known Roman Catholics who may not marry within the Church, it is feasible to suggest that the registers are accurate. A reduction in marriages is recorded during the crisis years of 1728 and 1729 which is expected as the crisis affected more adults than children, including young adults who would potentially have married during this period. There is a slight increase in marriages from 1730, but again the numbers are too small to make firm conclusions. However, it is suggestive that the rise in marriages after 1729 is an indication of recovery within the community with more promising economic opportunities enabling couples to marry.

Summary

In summary this chapter has provided a detailed review of one community which suffered severely during the 1720s crisis. Crisis from 1727 through to 1730 has been established with the peak of crisis evident over a number of weeks in winter 1728/9. Seasonality confirmed that the community suffered during the colder months of the year and was primarily a crisis affecting adults, which would be expected with the winter seasonality. Unfortunately, without a full reconstruction further consideration of the age range of those affected by crisis cannot be concluded, thus Blundell's comments remain speculative. Review of both the parish registers and the Overseers of the Poor Accounts book provided insight into the experience of the poor during the crisis. Poorer members of the community were indeed susceptible to the crisis with those listed as labourers showing a marked increase, as well as spinsters and widows. The only category that did not experience an increase was the gentry, which has been known in other crises where they simply leave a parish in times of disease. Overall, the majority of the economic categories were affected by crisis, suggesting that although the most vulnerable members of the community were affected, that it was not exclusively a socially selective crisis.

The effect of crisis on a community is more difficult to discover and qualify as full family reconstructions are not possible within the scope of this study and available data only provides snapshots. The effect of crisis on the community can be measured through the surname distribution exercise which confirms that as a whole each surname or family were not greatly affected by the crisis with only a minority of families experiencing multiple deaths. The wills and inventory information for the community provides further evidence that the community retained normality during the crisis with inheritance continuing to display the standard distribution from one generation to the next. Finally, the increase in the population by 1755 is suggestive that the crisis did not have a lasting effect on the community, with evidence of an average baptism regime returning within months of the crisis. The number of incomers to the community may suggest that the increase was a result of immigration, although the majority of immigration occurred in the decades following crisis.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

In the late summer of 1727 the Lancashire parishes experienced the onset of a demographic crisis that would last a total of four years, affecting the majority of parishes in three individual peaks of crisis, with a massive peak in the winter of 1728/9. A number of regional studies across England have detailed this crisis, noting its longevity and its universal occurrence in East Anglia, throughout the Midlands and now confirmed by this study, in Lancashire. This creates an arc of crisis across England that was in contrast with previous demographic crises in which a north-west/ south-east pattern would be evident.

Lancashire has provided an ideal field of study given its diversity in terms of the geographic and economic characteristics. The split into four regions demonstrated that although the majority of parishes experienced increased mortality, the only ones that consistently experienced crisis mortality were those parishes sited on the Lancashire plain. Topographically, the low-lying land sited on marshes and mosslands has long been acknowledged as a particularly unhealthy environment. This conclusion is in stark contrast with that of Healey, who suggested a country/town divide.

Whilst this study was never intended to comment on the cause of crisis, the unique evidence provided by the Lancashire study does add to the debate on the variety of suggested causes. Subsistence crisis, or one of harvest failures with resultant diseases has been much explored within Chapter Four. Clearly it was demonstrated that Appleby's criteria for subsistence being at the heart of crisis was not met. In considering the location of the affected parishes there is a discrepancy with regard to the most susceptible parishes. Famine and famine related diseases would have been felt most keenly in the remote northern parishes that had a limited agricultural base

and were less able to withstand continued harvest failures. Yet, a number of these parishes recorded no or very little increase in mortality, further supporting the argument against famine as a cause.

Disease was often dominant in areas of higher population, with close proximity to towns, ports or trading routes, which facilitated the transmission of disease. The parishes of central and south-west Lancashire are not perhaps directly matched to this description as they were often isolated during times of bad weather. Liverpool, although emerging as an important port, was still essentially in its infancy, thus it is debatable as to whether disease would have been spread quite so easily. However, it is known that imports of corn were brought into Lancashire via the port of Liverpool, and certainly south-west and central Lancashire parishes would have been able to access this supply fairly readily. This would then perhaps allow disease to be introduced to the communities, and transmitted from parish to parish. The three peaks of crisis would support this supposition given that diseases such as typhus and influenza would often last only a matter of weeks, producing sharp peaks of crisis in the affected parishes. Thus the contemporary accounts of a multitude of fevers sweeping the country certainly are a consideration to the cause of crisis.

One aspect that the study aimed to explore is the notion that the crisis could have been socially selective, a theory discussed at great length by Healey. The Lancashire crisis was certainly an adult crisis, and this is particularly true for the most severe peak in the winter on 1728/9. Analysis of actual ages of the adults who succumbed to crisis is impossible given the lack of detail provided by the parish registers, and it remains difficult to separate those dying of the cause of crisis and those of other causes.

In terms of the vulnerable and the poor, two clear conclusions are apparent from this study; the experience of the poor during the crisis; and the morbidity of the poor. It would be expected that those with the fewest resources would be most affected in times of depressed wages and increased food prices, and this is clearly detailed in the account books for Woodplumpton in which the frequency and value of relief increased significantly. Additionally, recovery was slow with relief expenditure remaining high for the first few years of the 1730s. However, this increase appears to be due to a need for support in terms of food and accommodation for those who were already in need and not as a direct result of the crisis. There is little evidence to link individuals who died within the crisis to families who subsequently required relief. In terms of those who actually died within the crisis, the data clearly indicates the impact of crisis on the unskilled occupations and widows and spinsters. Yet, almost all the occupational groupings examined, with the exception of the gentry, suffered an increase in mortality during the crisis. This would suggest that although those with little financial reserve suffered severely during crisis, that their social status was not the only determinant for crisis. This is supported further by the fact that the actual number of poor burials did not increase during the crisis. This specific area would certainly be an aspect that would benefit from further investigation.

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Appendix 1 – Parishes used within study, 1719-38

North Lancashire

Name	Parish or Chapelry	% increase experienced	Completeness of data (out of 20 years)
Hawkshead	Parish	-11	20
Torver	Chapelry	-5	20
Broughton in Furness	Chapelry	26	17
Pennington	Parish	36	20
Urswick	Parish	35	20
Warton	Chapelry	95	20
Whittington	Parish	65	20
Tunstall	Parish	0	20
Thornton in Lonsdale	Parish	45	20
Over Kellet	Chapelry	31	19
Bentham	Chapelry	72	20
Bolton le Sands	Parish	64	19
Gressingham	Chapelry	57	20
Tathom	Parish	64	20
Halton	Parish	45	19
Claughton	Parish	30	18
Heysham	Parish	110	20
Lancaster	Parish	58	20

Central Lancashire

Name	Parish or Chapelry	% increase experienced	Completeness of data (out of 20 years)
Pilling	Chapelry	150	20
Garstang	Parish	71	16
Bispham	Parish	103	20
Poulton-le-Fylde	Parish	111	20
St Michaels	Parish	150	20
Goosnargh	Chapelry	75	20
Woodplumpton	Chapelry	179	20
Broughton	Chapelry	98	20
Lytham St Annes	Parish	173	20
Penwortham	Parish	87	20
Walton le Dale	Chapelry	98	20
Leyland	Parish	56	20

South-West Lancashire

Name	Parish or Chapelry	% increase experienced	Completeness of data (out of 20 years)
North Meols	Parish	93	20
Rufford	Chapelry	106	19
Croston	Parish	78	20
Chorley	Parish	53	20
Halsall	Parish	114	20
Formby	Chapelry	133	20
Aughton	Parish	128	20
Upholland	Parish	101	17
Hindley	Chapelry	155	20
Altcar	Parish	196	20
Sefton	Parish	145	17
Melling	Chapelry	89	20
Rainford	Chapelry	70	20
Billinge	Chapelry	218	18
Walton on the Hill	Parish	104	17
St Helens	Chapelry	59	18
Newchurch in Culcheth	Chapelry	92	20
Prescot	Parish	60	20
Childwall	Parish	46	20
Hale	Chapelry	11	20

East Lancashire

Name	Parish or Chapelry	% increase experienced	Completeness of data (out of 20 years)
Downham	Chapelry	16	20
Mitton	Chapelry	61	20
Great Harwood	Chapelry	46	17
Altham	Parish	53	20
Church Kirk	Chapelry	16	20
Todmorden	Chapelry	23	20
Rivington	Chapelry	44	20
Rochdale	Parish	33	20
Radcliffe	Parish	69	20
Leigh	Parish	88	20
Deane	Parish	141	19
Middleton	Parish	69	20
Blackley	Chapelry	95	20
Newton Heath	Chapelry	136	20
Ashton under Lyne	Parish	41	20
Gorton	Chapelry	128	20
Denton	Chapelry	56	20
Didsbury	Chapelry	136	20