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Demographic fieldwork in Great Britain since the war

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Summary

This paper contains an annotated bibliography of major pieces of demographic research undertaken in Great Britain since the war.

* General distribution of this document is limited to the introductory summary. Participants who have been invited to take part in the meeting referred to above will receive also the full text of the paper. Other participants in the Conference will receive the full text upon request.

Pour la traduction française voir au verso.

Principales études démographiques en Grande-Bretagne depuis la guerre

E. Grebenik (Royaume-Uni)

Résumé. Ce document contient une bibliographie annotée des ouvrages de recherche démographique plus importants, entrepris en Grande-Bretagne depuis la guerre.

Seule la présente analyse d'introduction fait l'objet d'une distribution générale. Les participants qui ont été invités à assister à la séance mentionnée ci-dessus recevront en outre le texte intégral du document. Les autres participants au Congrès recevront le texte intégral sur leur demande.

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Demographic Fieldwork in Great Britain since the War

by E. Grebenik

This communication is in the nature of an annotated bibliography. It describes the aims and methods of eight different enquiries undertaken in Great Britain since the war, and gives a list of publications.

In a list of this kind it is difficult to know what to include and what to exclude. In all the enquiries, except the last, the necessary data were specially collected; the eighth enquiry dealing with infant mortality is included in view of its importance, although it makes use only of birth and death certificates. Some of the field enquiries undertaken by the General Register Office, e.g. their morbidity enquiry and their enquiry into mental illness have been excluded, as their primary interest seemed to lie in the field of medical statistics.

I am indebted to Mr. B. Benjamin of the General Register Office, Professor D. Baird of the University of Aberdeen and Mr. J.A. Heady of the Medical Research Council's Social Medicine Research Unit for supplying information about the enquiries with which they were associated.

1. Family Census, 1946.

A sample of 10% of the married women of Great Britain was taken. About 1,225,000 schedules were sent out and collected by special enumerators.

The Census schedule contained the following questions:

1. Marital Status.
2. Date of Birth.
3. Date of first marriage.
4. Date of end of first marriage (where applicable).
5. Total number of children born alive.
6. Date of Birth of each live born child.
7. Occupation of first husband.
8. Whether husband employed, self-employed, wage earner or salary earner.

The main purpose was to study the fertility of cohorts of married women, distinguishing between women marrying at different ages or in different social classes. The progress of family building could be traced from the answers to Q.6.

Publications: Royal Commission on Population, Report, Cmd. 7695, H.M.S.O., London, 1949, *passim*.

Glass, D.V. and Grebenik, E.: The Family Census: A Preliminary Report. Papers of the Royal Commission on Population, Vol.2. Reports and Selected Papers of the Statistics Committee, London, H.M.S.O., 1950.

Trends and Patterns of Fertility in Great Britain: Report on the Family Census, 1946. H.M.S.O., London (in the Press, to be published in 1954).

2. Enquiry into Family Limitation.

This enquiry was conducted for the Royal Commission on Population by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists under the general direction of Dr. E. Lewis-Fanning.

The enquiry took place between August 1946 and June 1947. 11,078 questionnaires were completed, relating mainly to married female patients in the general wards of hospitals in a number of areas.

The main analysis relates to the so-called K-group of women, numbering altogether 3,281 who were in hospital for other than obstetric or gynaecological reasons. The resulting sample was slightly biased towards high fertility.

The questionnaire was lengthy and detailed and all interviews were conducted by medical practitioners. The survey was designed to throw light on the following questions:

- (i) How extensively is birth control practised?
- (ii) In what proportions are the different methods of birth control practised?
- (iii) Are there important differences between different social groups in the extent of the practice of birth control or in the choice of method?
- (iv) To what extent is birth control as practised effective?
- (v) What is the extent of involuntary infertility?
- (vi) Does the practice of birth control affect the power to reproduce?
- (vii) How important is abortion as a method of birth prevention?
- (viii) What is the proportion of 'unplanned' pregnancies?
- (ix) What is the proportion of 'unwanted' children?
- (x) What are the chief reasons given for using birth control?

Publications: E. Lewis-Faning: Report on an Enquiry into Family Limitation and its Influence on Human Fertility during the past 50 years. Papers of the Royal Commission on Population, Vol. 1, H.M.S.O., London, 1949.

The data collected by Lewis-Faning were also used by J. Berent to study the Relationship between Family Sizes of two successive generations. See:

J. Berent: Relationship between Family Sizes of two successive generations. Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly, Vol. xxxi, No. 1, January, 1953, pp. 39-50.

4. Maternity Survey and Survey of the Health and Development of Children.

This survey was directed by a Joint Committee of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and the Population Investigation Committee, The Institute of Child Health of the University of London was represented on the Joint Committee in its later stages. When the material dealing with certain aspects of childbirth had been analysed the Royal College ceased to

be officially represented on the Joint Committee, and the National Foundation for Educational Research became associated with the work. Professor James Young served as Chairman of the Joint Committee throughout and Dr. J.W.B. Douglas was the Director of the Enquiry, assisted by Miss G. Rowntree.

The sample consisted of 14,000 women who bore children during a specified week in 1946. Thanks to the co-operation of the 424 local maternity and child welfare authorities, the interviews were carried out by local health visitors. Women were interviewed eight weeks after the birth of their children. As the full questionnaires were extremely lengthy, it was decided to use two separate questionnaires. They each contained certain basic questions, but one of the questionnaires dealt specifically with the use made of the maternity services, the second with the costs of pregnancy and confinement. Half of the local authorities selected at random were sent the first type of questionnaire and half were sent the second.

It proved possible to contact the women selected in the sample again in 1948 and 1950. However, it proved unnecessary to re-survey them all, and it was considered sufficient to survey a sample consisting of all the wives of professional and salaried workers, black coated wage earners and agricultural workers, and of 25% of the wives of manual wage earners. The children who were originally enrolled in the survey are now of school age and arrangements have been made to obtain reports on their growth and development until they are eleven years old.

The original aim of the enquiry was to obtain information regarding the use made of the maternity services, and to try and estimate the expenses incurred in connection with a confinement. The opportunity given by the enrolment of a representative sample of schoolchildren made it possible to use the follow-up surveys to trace differences in the health and survival of children of different social classes.

- Publications: Maternity in Great Britain, Oxford University Press, London, 1948.
- Douglas, J.W.B. and Rowntree, Griselda, A Survey of Childbearing in Britain. Pop. Studies, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1947.
- Douglas, J.W.B. and Rowntree, Griselda, Supplementary Maternal and Child Health Services, Pt. I, Post-natal care, Pt. II: Nurseries. Pop. Studies, Vol. III, No. 2, 1949; Pt. III, Infant Welfare Centres, Pop. Studies, Vol. III, No. 4, 1950.
- Douglas, J.W.B., Some Factors Associated with Prematurity, Jour. Obstetrics & Gynaecology Brit. Empire, Vol. lvii, No. 2, April 1950.
- Douglas, J.W.B., The Extent of Breast Feeding in Great Britain in 1946 with special reference to the Health and Survival of Children. Jour. Obst. & Gyn. Brit. Emp., Vol. lvii, No. 3, June, 1950.
- Rowntree, Griselda, Diphtheria Immunisation in a national sample of children aged two years in March, 1948. Monthly Bull. Min. Health, Vol. ix, June, 1950.
- Douglas, J.W.B., Deux enquêtes nationales sur la maternité et la santé de l'enfant en Grande Bretagne. Population, Vol. v, No. 4, 1950.
- Douglas, J.W.B., Weights and Heights of a national sample of two-year old children. Proc. Roy. Soc. Medicine, Vol. xliv, 1950.
- Douglas, J.W.B., Social Class Differences in Health and Survival during the first two years of life. The Results of a National Survey. Pop. Studies, Vol. v, No. 1, July, 1951.
- Douglas, J.W.B., The Health and Survival of Children in different social classes. The Results of a National Survey, The Lancet, No. 6680, Sept. 1951.
- Rowntree, Griselda, Accidents among children under two years of age in Great Britain. Jour. Hygiene, Vol. xlviii, No. 3, Sept. 1950.
- Rowntree, Griselda, Accidents among young children. Monthly Bull. Min. Health, July, 1951.
- MacCarthy, D., Mogford C., and Douglas, J.W.B., Circumcision in a National Sample of 4 year old children. Brit. Med. Jour., 1952, ii, p. 755.
- Douglas, J.W.B. and Mogford, Cynthia, Health of Premature Children from Birth to Four Years. Brit. Med. Jour., April 4, 1953, p. 748.

Douglas, J.I.B. and Logford, Cynthia, The Results of a National Inquiry into the Growth of Premature Children from Birth to four years. Archives of Disease in Childhood, Vol. xxviii, No. 142, December, 1953.

The Scottish Mental Survey.

The enquiry was conducted in 1947, a main objective being to repeat the 1932 Scottish Mental Survey in which intelligence tests were administered to all children aged 11+ at the time. This procedure was repeated in 1947, but as it was recognised that a mere repetition would contribute little of immediate value to educational research, it was decided to seize the opportunity to enlarge the scope of the work. The enquiry was supervised by an ad hoc joint committee of the Scottish Council for Research in Education and the Population Investigation Committee, with the co-operation and assistance of the local Directors of Education. The survey involved the administration of a group intelligence test to all pupils born in 1936; the completion of a short sociological schedule for these pupils and of a more extensive sociological schedule for all pupils born on the first three days of each month in 1936, and for all twins born in 1936, and the administration of individual (Terman-Merrill) tests to a random sample of about 1200 pupils in order to calibrate the group tests.

The sociological schedule which was completed by all pupils contained questions on the place of residence, the number in the family and the position of the tested child in the family, the child's school attendance record, and the number of schools previously attended. The random sample sociological schedule asked in addition whether the child had been evacuated during the war, whether the child was living with his or her own mother, the occupation of the child's father, the age of the mother, the housing conditions, the child's height and weight and requested information regarding certain physical disabilities.

The group test was taken by some 75,000 boys and girls born in 1936, and in addition 7,380 random sample sociological schedules were completed.

The enquiry was designed to trace any changes that may have occurred in the intelligence of the population, and to study the association between family size and intelligence and the relation between intelligence and certain other social factors. The results are set out in 3 volumes of which two have already appeared and the third is in course of publication. Arrangements have been made to follow up a sample of the children tested in order to compare their subsequent careers with their performance in the intelligence test.

Publications: Scottish Council for Research in Education, The Trend of Scottish Intelligence. A Comparison of the 1947 and 1932 Surveys of Eleven-year old pupils. University of London Press, Ltd., London, 1949.

Scottish Council for Research in Education, Social Implications of the 1947 Scottish Mental Survey, University of London Press, London, 1953.

S.N. Mehrotra and J. Maxwell, The Intelligence of Twins. A Comparative Study of Eleven-year-old Twins. Pop. Studies, Vol. iii, No. 3, December, 1949.

G. Barclay and J. Maxwell, The Intelligence of Twins. A Comparative Study of Eleven-year-old Twins. Pop. Studies, Vol. iv, No. 3, December, 1950.

Demographic Aspects of Social Mobility.

This enquiry was sponsored by the Population Investigation Committee as part of a wider study of social mobility undertaken by the Nuffield Research Unit of the London School of Economics and the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

The sample consisted of 10,000 randomly selected individuals and the interviewing was done by the Social Survey Division of the Central Office of Information, during the period June to August, 1949. The analysis was, however, confined to 1893 'current' marriages, defined as marriages contracted

before 1930 and which were still in existence in 1949.

The following questions were asked in the schedule:

1. Year of Birth, Birthplace, Sex and Marital Status of the subject sampled.
2. Year of last marriage and number of children born alive in the case of married subjects.
3. Detailed information regarding the occupation of the subject, subject's spouse, father and father-in-law.
4. Information regarding the education of the subject and his or her spouse.

The enquiry was designed to provide information on the interrelation between social status of the head of the family, his social origin, and the size of his family. The relationship between personal mobility as measured by the difference between occupation at marriage and occupation at interview, and size of family was also investigated.

Data relating to all the 5,100 married subjects in the original sample were also analysed to study the degree of intermarriage between different social classes.

Publications: J. Berent, Fertility and Social Mobility, Pop. Studies, Vol. v, No. 3, March, 1952, pp. 244-60.

J. Berent, Social Mobility and Marriage. A Study of Trends in England and Wales in Social Mobility in Britain, edited by D.V. Glass; London, 1954.

The Cancer Registration Scheme.

Although this scheme is of primary interest to medical statisticians, a brief account is included here in view of its interest in the study of mortality. The scheme is operated by the General Register Office through "registering centres" which may be an individual hospital, a radiotherapy centre or a group of hospitals. Each centre reports to the General Register Office every new case of malignant disease encountered, and a central register is built up from these cards. A follow-up report on each patient is made every year.

Information asked for includes the occupation of the patient (or the patient's husband in the case of a married woman), his age, the type of cancer he is suffering from, and the type of treatment received. The main object is to obtain information regarding the incidence of cancer in relation to age, site and sex, the method of treatment employed and certain differential survival rates.

Statistics relating to the scheme are published in the Registrar General's Statistical Review. The following special reports have also been issued by Her Majesty's Stationery Office:

P. Stocks; Regional and Local Differences in Cancer Death Rates, London, 1947.

" " Cancer Registration in England and Wales, London, 1950.

" " Cancer Registration in England and Wales, Third Year Recovery and Survival Rates, London, 1952.

7. Studies of Childbearing in Aberdeen.

A number of papers on different aspects of childbearing have been published by members of the Department of Midwifery at the University of Aberdeen, working under the general direction of Professor D. Baird. It was possible to obtain information about a very high percentage of all deliveries in that city and to relate such factors as birthweight, neo-natal mortality, difficult labour, etc., to various social and economic factors. A number of papers are still in the press; amongst those published so far are the following:

D. Baird: Variations in Reproductive Pattern according to Social Class, The Lancet, July 13th, 1946.

" " Social Class and Foetal Mortality, The Lancet, October 11th, 1947.

" " Social Factors in Obstetrics, The Lancet, June 25th, 1949.

E.H.L. Duncan; D. Baird and A.M. Thomson, The Causes and Prevention of Stillbirths and first week Deaths. Pt. I, The Evidence of Vital Statistics. Jour. Obst. & Gyn. Brit. Empire; Vol. lix, No. 2, April 1952: Pt. II, Evidence from Aberdeen Clinical

Records, ibid, Vol. lx, No. 1, February, 1953.

D. Baird: The Cause and Prevention of Difficult Labour. Amer.Jour.Obst. & Gyn. Vol. lxxiii, No. 6, June, 1952.

D.B. Stewart and Eileen M. Scott: The Assessment of Efficiency in Labour, Psychological Factors related to Labour. Trans.Edin.Obst.Soc. Session cv, 1952-3.

D. Baird and R. Illsley, Environment and Childbearing, Proc.Roy.Soc.Med., Vol. xlvi, No. 2.

D. Baird and Eileen M. Scott: Intelligence and Childbearing, Eugenics Review, 1953.

8. Enquiry into Infant Mortality.

This enquiry is conducted by the Social Medicine Research Unit of the Medical Research Council with the co-operation of the General Register Office. It is based entirely on birth and death certificates. All the deaths of infants under one year of age which occurred in 1949 or 1950 were related to the birth certificates in order to study the relationship of infant and neo-natal mortality to maternal age and parity, birth spacing, occupation of father, housing conditions, etc. The influence of birth spacing, sex and loss of previous children will also be considered. Finally the influence of these factors on different causes of death will be studied.

No results of this enquiry have been published at the time of writing.