English population history from family reconstitution 1580–1837 is the most important single contribution to British historical demography since Wrigley and Schofield’s Population history of England. It represents the culmination of work carried out at the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure over the past quarter-century. Both books use Anglican parish registers to illuminate the population history of England between the sixteenth century and the mid-nineteenth century, for which period they are the prime source available. This second work demonstrates the value of the technique of family reconstitution as a means of obtaining accurate and detailed information about fertility, mortality, and nuptiality in the past. Indeed, more is now known about many aspects of English demography in the parish register period than about the post-1837 period when the Registrar-General collected and published information. Using data from 26 parishes, the authors show clearly that their results are representative not only of the demographic situation of the parishes from which the data were drawn, but also of the country as a whole. While the book largely confirms the earlier findings of the Cambridge Group, many novel and some very surprising features of the behaviour of past populations are brought to light for the first time.

English population history from family reconstitution 1580–1837 marks a further major development in the study of English population history. It will be an essential source of information for all economic and social historians.
English population history from family reconstitution
1580–1837
Cambridge Studies in Population, Economy and Society in Past Time 32

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1580–1837

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