

The Review during the last 50 years

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In 1948 there appeared the first part of volume 1 of the second series of the *Review*. At the end of 1997 the last part of the 50th volume appeared.¹ It seems opportune to mark this half-century of publication with an account of how the journal has changed or refrained from change since the aftermath of the Second World War. Since so much of the development of the subject is reflected in its pages over this period, it would be possible to treat the history of the *Review* since 1948 as a substantive exercise in intellectual history. The aim of this article, however, is limited and largely factual. It is intended to provide a description of those aspects of the *Review's* characteristics which can readily be measured, both because they are of interest *in se* and also because they may provide a jumping off point for later investigation of other aspects of the journal's history. A more complete study, making use of the files of the *Review*, would reveal much of interest about editorial strategy; relationships with typesetters, printers, and publishers; the consequences of implementing 'difficult' editorial decisions about submitted articles; and the changing division of function between editors, assistant editors, review editors, and the very many other participants in the process by which the *Review* has been produced. But, though potentially of great interest, such matters are largely outside the scope of this piece. The narrative thread alternates between descriptions of the several main categories of publishing activity which have filled the pages of the *Review* and a rehearsal of the individuals who have directed affairs within each category.²

Needless to say, the central figures in the activities of the *Review* throughout its history have been its successive editors. They are listed in table 1 which shows the pattern of office holding during the last 50 years.

The top section of table 1 details the editorship of the *Review* while the bottom section treats each editor individually. Apart from the first two volumes of the second series of the *Review*, when Postan was the sole editor, the editorship has always been a shared office. The longest period of joint office was that between Habakkuk and Postan, measured by time, and they also edited more issues of the *Review* than any other pair of editors, but Supple and Thompson, though in office for a substantially shorter period, edited almost as many issues and oversaw the publication of a greater number of pages of *Review* material than any other editorial pair. Except in 1960, when a new team of Hartwell and

¹ Each issue of the first 43 volumes of the series was labelled as a component of the second series, but beginning with the first issue of the 44th volume in 1991 reference to the second series was dropped from titling.

² The circumstances in which the Economic History Society came into being and the earliest years of its history and that of the *Review* are described in Barker, 'The beginnings'.

Table 1. *Editors*

<i>Period</i>	<i>Volumes</i>	<i>Editors</i>	<i>No. of issues</i>	<i>No. of pages</i>
Editorship				
1948-50	1.1-2.3	M. M. Postan	6	528
1950-60	3.1-13.1	H. J. Habakkuk, M. M. Postan	31	4847
1960-6	13.2-19.3	R. M. Hartwell, C. H. Wilson	20	4292
1967-8	20.1-21.3	D. C. Coleman, R. M. Hartwell	6	1303
1969-72	22.1-25.4	D. C. Coleman, F. M. L. Thompson	14	2757
1973-9	26.1-32.4	B. E. Supple, F. M. L. Thompson	28	5067
1980-2	33.1-35.4	A. G. Hopkins, B. E. Supple	12	2005
1983-5	36.1-38.4	R. A. Church, A. G. Hopkins	12	1984
1986-90	39.1-43.3	R. A. Church, E. A. Wrigley	19	3195
1990-2	43.4-45.4	C. Dyer, E. A. Wrigley	9	1872
1993-5	46.1-48.4	F. Capie, C. Dyer	12	2549
1996-7	49.1-50.4	F. Capie, J. Hatcher	8	1716
Individual periods of service as editor				
1948-60	1.1-13.1	M. M. Postan	37	5375
1950-60	3.1-13.1	H. J. Habakkuk	31	4847
1960-8	13.2-21.3	R. M. Hartwell	26	5372
1960-6	13.2-19.3	C. H. Wilson	20	4069
1967-72	20.1-25.4	D. C. Coleman	20	4060
1969-79	22.1-32.4	F. M. L. Thompson	42	7824
1973-82	26.1-35.4	B. E. Supple	40	7072
1980-5	33.1-38.4	A. G. Hopkins	24	3989
1983-90	36.1-43.3	R. A. Church	31	5179
1986-92	39.1-45.4	E. A. Wrigley	28	5067
1990-5	43.4-48.4	C. Dyer	21	4421
1993-7	46.1-50.4	F. Capie	20	4265
1996-7	49.1-50.4	J. Hatcher	8	1716

Notes: All volume numbers in this table and subsequently in the article are quoted as arabic rather than roman numerals, even though the latter have been used conventionally in the *Review*.

In the top section of the table the editors are listed always in alphabetical order, rather than in the order in which their names were printed in the *Review*.

Vol. 18.1, a special issue entitled 'Essays in economic history presented to Professor M. M. Postan', was edited by G. A. Holmes and D. M. Joslin.

Wilson took over from Habakkuk and Postan, a change in the editorial team has always involved a new editor joining one who had already been in office for some time. It has been a firmly established convention for many years that the continuing editor acts as managing editor in the early years after a new appointment, having taken over in that office from his retiring predecessor usually a year before the latter leaves office, so that he has the benefit of his advice for a short period. The cycle is then repeated in the run up to a further appointment.³

³ The editorial standards set by the *Review* have been among the best of any historical journal and errors are much less common than in some other journals. Even Jove nods from time to time, however. Minor errors arising from defective proofreading are inevitable from time to time but have never been numerous. Occasionally a more conspicuous error has crept in. For example, in vol. 7.3, pp. 364-5, tab. 9 is placed immediately after tab. 7 without an intervening tab. 8. The cover of vol. 10.3 lists an article by H. J. Habakkuk as 'The market for monastic property 1539-1360'. In vol. 11.3 one article has its tables numbered by roman numerals, another by arabic numerals. On the inside front cover of vol. 13.3 all the page number references given for the book reviews are

The lower section of table 1 recapitulates the information in the upper section but for individual editors rather than for editorial pairs. Postan was the longest serving editor, but judged either by number of issues or by number of pages Thompson emerges as the editor who bore the heaviest burden, closely followed by Supple. In reference to the last two editors, Capie and Hatcher, it should be remembered that their periods of office will extend beyond 1997 so that the table covers only part of their editorial careers. The same point applies in respect of all the subsequent tables in which individuals are listed similarly. It should also be noted, of course, that in many cases individuals came into office before the start of the second series of the *Review*. Thus, for example, Postan had been the editor since 1934, so that half of his total period in office antedated the period covered in table 1.⁴

Table 2. *Assistant editors*

<i>Period</i>	<i>Volumes</i>	<i>Assistant editors</i>
1948-50	1.1-2.3	H. J. Habakkuk
1950-2	3.1-4.3	K. E. Berrill
1952-5	5.1-7.3	D. M. Joslin
1955-7	8.1-10.1	P. Mathias
1957-60	10.2-13.1	R. M. Hartwell
1960-1	13.2-14.1	G. A. Holmes
1961-2	14.2-15.2	G. A. Holmes, N. McKendrick
1963-7	15.3-20.1	G. A. Holmes
1967-70	20.2-23.3	P. Earle
1971-5	24.1-28.1	E. H. Hunt
1975-9	28.2-32.1	P. J. Corfield
1979-84	32.2-37.1	N. B. Harte
1984-7	37.2-40.4	M. J. Daunton

For the first 40 volumes of the second series of the *Review* the editors enjoyed the support of an assistant editor and these appointments are listed in table 2. The series of appointments came to an end because in 1988 the *Review* for the first time abandoned its longstanding practice of engaging a firm to typeset and print the journal while acting as its own publisher.⁵ The Society was led to make this decision, as the editors remarked at the time in an editorial note in volume 41.1, because ‘the increasingly difficult financial pressures experienced by academic journals in general led the Society to accept the argument for placing the publication of the *Review* in the hands of an organization which could not only maintain the quality of the *Review* but could also offer the benefit

100 pages below the true figure (thus the review listed as on p. 398 is actually on p. 498, and so on). More recently, in vol. 46.1, the title of Greasley’s article given in the table of contents does not match the title in the text.

⁴ There is a list of the editors and assistant editors of the *Review* from the beginning until 1977 in the Golden Jubilee Number of the journal (vol. 30, p. ii).

⁵ The firms engaged to print the *Review* before the changeover were the following: vols. 1-9 (1948-56) Cambridge University Press; vols. 10-19 (1957-66) N.V.A. Oosthoek’s Uitgevers Mij; vols. 20-30.2 (1967-77) The Broadwater Press; vols. 30.3-33 (1977-80) Popper and Co. Ltd; vols. 34-40 (1981-7) Titus Wilson and Son Ltd.

of international experience and reputation in the distribution and marketing of periodicals throughout the world.' Given the new arrangements, under which Basil Blackwell became the publisher of the *Review*, many of the tasks previously discharged by the assistant editor, such, for example, as reading proofs to copy, were now undertaken by others. The longest serving of the assistant editors was Holmes who spanned a total of seven years. The prevailing convention, however, was one of relatively short periods of office lasting from three to five years.

Table 3 presents some basic statistics relating to the *Review* which reflect the policies adopted by the editors from time to time. In this table and in any similar later tables I have used the decade as the basic descriptive unit, though in this table each decade is split into two quinquennial halves. It would have been equally possible to have divided the data by successive 5 and 10 volume blocks (that is volumes 1-5, 6-10, and so on) but the decade is so widely used as a unit that it seemed more convenient to prefer it, even though this meant beginning and ending the series with periods of non-standard length. In considering this and subsequent tables in the article, the following additional points should be borne in mind. First, up to and including volume 17 (1964) the volume year and the calendar year did not coincide, the third part of each volume being published at the beginning of a new calendar year. Thus, parts 1 and 2 of volume 17 were published in August and December 1964 while part 3 was published in April 1965.⁶ In table 3 the data have not been adjusted to take into account this change in convention. The volume was treated as the unit of account throughout. Thus the quinquennium 1950-4, consisting of volumes 3 to 7, *excludes* volume 2, part 3 which was published early in 1950 but *includes* volume 7, part 3 which was published early in 1955. Secondly, each volume consisted of three parts until volume 23 (1970); from volume 24 onwards each volume has consisted of four parts. In 1965-9, therefore, when the average number of pages in each volume was almost identical to the comparable figure for 1980-4 (664 and 663 pages respectively), the average number of pages in each *part* was considerably higher than in the later period.

Column 3 of section B of table 3 shows that the *Review* grew rapidly and continuously in size down to the early 1970s (from 399 pages on average in 1950-4 to 729 pages in 1970-4), but then slimmed down slightly so that in the 1980s it was little different from its size in the later 1960s (in both cases about 660 pages), before rising abruptly to a new plateau in the 1990s when the average size has always exceeded 800 pages. It is striking and slightly paradoxical that the move to a four-part

⁶ Vol. 1 constituted a minor exception to this rule in that the first part was published in 1948 and the second and third parts in 1949, though in this case the second and third parts constituted a single physical entity. Volume 18, the first volume to be published entirely within a single calendar year, consisted of two parts published simultaneously in August 1965 and a third part in December of that year. One of the two parts published in 1965 was a special issue consisting of 'Essays in economic history presented to Professor M. M. Postan'. For this issue editorial responsibility was deputed by the two editors (R. M. Hartwell and C. Wilson) to G. A. Holmes and D. M. Joslin.

Table 3. *Number of pages by different types of articles and other main heads*

1. Volumes						7. Essays in bibliography and criticism					
2. Period						8. Reviews					
3. Total pages						9. Lists of publications on the economic history of Great Britain and Ireland					
4. Articles, including surveys and speculations, and presidential addresses						10. Reviews of periodical literature (Great Britain and Ireland)					
5. Short articles, discussions, comments, notes, replies						11. Reviews of other periodical literature					
6. Revisions						12. Reviews of information technology					
<i>Section A</i>											
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
1-2	1948-9	528	282	73	16	37	104	11			
3-7	1950-4	1994	1004	446	28	115	349	38			
8-12	1955-9	2672	1176	634	18	94	583	110	10	25	
13-17	1960-4	3070	1767	304		55	693	117	39	86	
18-22	1965-9	3322	2143	132		167	662	89	50	71	
23-27	1970-4	3644	1994	253		148	835	216	48	126	
28-32	1975-9	3564	2070	279		81	801	203	63	57	
33-37	1980-4	3314	1959	212		114	720	219	81		
38-42	1985-9	3338	1903	216		158	748	199	103		
43-47	1990-4	4097	2577	279		63	654	192	163		160
48-50	1995-7	2572	1647	150		67	430	131	99		44
<i>Section B</i>											
<i>This section recapitulates the totals in section A but re-expresses the totals as annual averages^a</i>											
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
1-2	1948-9	264	141	37	8	19	52	6			
3-7	1950-4	399	201	89	6	23	70	8			
8-12	1955-9	534	235	127	5	19	117	22	10	13	
13-17	1960-4	614	353	61		11	139	23	8	17	
18-22	1965-9	664	429	26		33	132	18	10	14	
23-27	1970-4	729	399	51		30	167	43	10	25	
28-32	1975-9	713	414	56		16	160	41	13	11	
33-37	1980-4	663	392	42		23	144	44	16		
38-42	1985-9	668	381	43		32	150	40	21		
43-47	1990-4	819	515	56		13	131	38	33		32
48-50	1995-7	857	549	50		22	143	44	33		15
<i>Section C</i>											
<i>This section recapitulates the data from section A but re-expresses the totals of col. 4 to col. 12 as percentages^b</i>											
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
1-2	1948-9	523	53.9	14.0	3.1	7.1	19.9	2.1			
3-7	1950-4	1980	50.7	22.5	1.4	5.8	17.6	1.9			
8-12	1955-9	2650	44.4	23.9	0.7	3.5	22.0	4.2	0.4	0.9	
13-17	1960-4	3061	57.7	9.9		1.8	22.6	3.8	1.3	2.8	
18-22	1965-9	3314	64.7	4.0		5.0	20.0	2.7	1.5	2.1	
23-27	1970-4	3620	55.1	7.0		4.1	23.1	6.0	1.3	3.5	
28-32	1975-9	3554	58.2	7.9		2.3	22.5	5.7	1.8	1.6	
33-37	1980-4	3305	59.3	6.4		3.4	21.8	6.6	2.5		
38-42	1985-9	3327	57.2	6.5		4.7	22.5	6.0	3.1		
43-47	1990-4	4088	63.0	6.8		1.5	16.0	4.7	4.0		3.9
48-50	1995-7	2568	64.1	5.8		2.6	16.7	5.1	3.9		1.7

Notes: ^aIn a few instances the totals shown in this section of the table do not equal the totals shown in section A divided by the number of volumes in the period. Where this is the case the beginning or end of the data did not coincide with the start and finish of the period in question (e.g. in col. 6 *Revisions* came to an end in vol. 11 rather than vol. 12) and therefore the divisor was smaller than would be expected from col. 1.

^bThe percentages were calculated against the totals shown in col. 3. Col. 3 contains the cumulative totals of the individual totals from cols. 4 to 12, and these are slightly smaller than the pagination totals shown in col. 3 of section A because the overall total of pages in each volume includes a few pages which were devoted to other purposes than those covered in cols. 4 to 12.

Review should have been followed almost immediately by a *decline* in the average number of pages in each volume in the later 1970s and 1980s. Only in the 1990s has the average size of each part again reached approximately the same level as was normal in the 1960s immediately before the three-part format was abandoned.

Sections B and C, though derived from section A, are more immediately useful in discussing the development of the *Review* because the former is free from the distortions involved in time periods of differing length which afflict the first and last periods of section A and the latter, being expressed in percentage form, corrects for the changing size of the journal at different periods.

The overall space within the *Review* has been broken down under nine heads (columns 4 to 12). Between them the nine heads comprise almost all the published pages, as may be seen from a comparison of the page totals in column 3 of section C with the same column in section A. The former totals invariably comprise more than 99 per cent of the latter. Indeed, from 1960 onwards the figure is always 99.7 per cent or greater except in 1970-4 when it is 99.3 per cent. The few remaining pages were taken up with topics of minor importance, such as lists of books sent for review, and with ephemera of various kinds. Each of the nine heads may be considered in turn. The first four heads relate to activities which were at all times the direct responsibility of the editors. The five later heads (columns 8 to 12 in table 3) concern activities which were dealt with differently. For example, the reviews of periodical literature have been the immediate responsibility of scholars appointed to undertake this task. Accordingly, when describing developments under the later heads, tables listing the names of those concerned are provided.⁷

The largest single element in the make-up of the *Review* has always been conventional articles. They have usually constituted more than half of the *Review* and have latterly accounted for almost two-thirds of the published pages. If articles and short articles are aggregated together, a remarkably stable pattern is visible. The percentages of columns 4 and 5 combined vary only between 62.1 (1970-4) and 68.9 (1995-7), except for a figure of 73.2 per cent in 1950-4 when the journal was still a slim publication. The distinction between 'articles' and 'short' articles is reasonably clear-cut, even though the second category is somewhat miscellaneous. Articles are taken to include surveys and speculations, a special category which was first introduced in volume 32.1 in 1979, since

⁷ It may be helpful to note that two indexes of material appearing in the second series of the *Review* have been published, covering vols. 1-23 (1948-70) and 24-42 (1971-89). Each is a substantial work comparable in size to an issue of the *Review*. They provide a complete listing of articles, short articles, comments, surveys and speculations, and essays in bibliography and criticism *et sim.*, in each case ordered alphabetically by surname of author. In addition book reviews are listed both by name of reviewer and name of author. Reviews of periodical literature are listed in both indexes though ordered in different ways in the two volumes, and both contain lists, ordered by date, of the annual list of publications. A cumulative index of articles, short articles, comments, surveys and speculations, and essays in bibliography and criticism which have appeared in the *Review* from 1927 onwards is available in a searchable form on the Society's home page at <http://www.ehs.org.uk/>. Reviews and reviewers, however, are not currently covered by this source.

when it has been normal to publish one survey and speculation in each issue,⁸ and presidential addresses. Short articles include both pieces published explicitly under this title and notes, comments, rejoinders and the like. As table 4 shows, articles and short articles have been of very different average length, the former being more than twice as long as the latter in the main. Since 1970 the disparity has become more marked with articles averaging three times the length of short articles. Because the former have also always been more numerous than the latter, and this difference has increased in recent decades, the number of pages devoted to articles has latterly been about ten times as great as the number devoted to short articles, though in the 1950s the contrast was far less pronounced. Indeed in 1955-9 short articles took up well over half as many pages as articles.

Table 4. *Average length of articles*

Period	Articles			Short articles			Bibliography and criticism		
	No.	Pages	Mean	No.	Pages	Mean	No.	Pages	Mean
1948-9	16	282	17.6	12	73	6.1	4	37	9.3
1950-9	128	2180	17.0	106	1080	10.2	29	209	7.2
1960-9	236	3882	16.4	49	436	8.9	24	202	8.4
1970-9	241	4017	16.7	98	532	5.4	17	229	13.5
1980-9	207	3862	18.7	81	428	5.3	20	272	13.6
1990-7	197	4224	21.4	60	429	7.2	9	130	14.4

Notes: Articles include surveys and speculations and presidential addresses. Short articles include discussions, comments, notes, replies.

The absolute total of pages occupied by articles fluctuated modestly round an average of about 400 from 1960-4 to 1985-9, but during the 1990s it has risen to a much higher level and in 1995-7 averaged almost 550 pages a year. The comparable total for short articles shows a somewhat different pattern. They reached a peak in the late 1950s and since then have fluctuated only within rather narrow margins apart from the late 1960s when short articles almost disappeared. The average length of articles has changed very little from the earliest volumes of the second series until the 1980s (table 4), but has since risen from 16 or 17 pages in the earlier period to more than 21 pages in the 1990s.

Until volume 13 (1960) short articles figured in every issue of the *Review*. The table of contents always included a section headed 'short articles'. In this period they were numerous and averaged more than half

⁸ This convention has not been adhered to with precision. Two surveys and speculations were published in vol. 45.1, though none in 45.3 (1992); two were again published in 46.2 (1993); and none appeared in 50.1 (1997). In each case where two surveys and speculations were published in the same issue, both were devoted to a common topic. The absence of a survey and speculation in 45.3 was due to the fact that this was a special issue devoted exclusively to European economic history. This was one of the few issues of the *Review* where all the articles were commissioned by the editors.

the length of articles.⁹ At this point editorial policy clearly changed markedly. From volume 13 onwards short articles, however described, were published much less regularly. In many volumes there were individual parts in which none appeared and there were also occasionally entire volumes in which there were no short articles at all.¹⁰ Nomenclature also changed. The list of contents on the cover of the *Review* referred to 'short articles and discussions', or from volume 28.4 (1975) onwards to 'comments' or 'comments and notes', or 'comments and replies'. Their average length fell to little more than half what it had been in the 1950s. However, although the change in nomenclature in 1975 appears to have reflected some change in the nature of the material published, many of the pieces published before this date might easily have appeared under the title which was later adopted. The pattern of publication after 1960 suggests that the editors were always willing to publish the kind of material here described for simplicity's sake as 'short articles', but they felt no urgency to seek out such pieces if none were readily forthcoming.

Column 6 of table 3, revisions, was a short-lived experiment. Revisions were brief, averaging only half-a-dozen pages in length. As the name suggests, they were intended to offer a different view of a familiar topic or issue. The editors of the early volumes probably intended that there should be one such piece in each volume. Each of the first eight volumes contained one revision apart from volumes 3 and 7, but after volume 8 only one further revision was published, in volume 11.

Essays in bibliography and criticism, on the other hand (table 3, column 7), have been a perennial feature of the *Review*. One was published in volume 1.1 and most subsequent volumes have contained at least one such essay, though there have been four volumes with none, grouped in two runs of two consecutive years each: volumes 15 and 16 (1962-3), and 27 and 28 (1974-5). Indeed, in the latter case there were 13 consecutive parts of the journal, volumes 26.2 to 29.2, without an essay in bibliography and criticism. The essays increased substantially in average length after 1970 (table 4), but this was offset by a decline in their number so that the total number of pages devoted to them has been broadly similar in each decade from the 1950s to the 1980s but their percentage share of the overall text of the *Review*, though it has fluctuated somewhat, has shown a general tendency to fall as the size of the journal has increased. In the eight volumes published in the 1990s less than 2 per cent of the total pagination has been taken up by essays in bibliography and criticism, compared to a figure of 4.8 per cent in the first 12 volumes from 1948 to 1959.

Book reviews have always been a major feature of the *Review* (table 3, column 8). In percentage terms they have been the second most important

⁹ From 1948 to 1959 118 short articles were published compared with 144 articles: the former averaged 9.8 pages in length, the latter 17.1 pages. At times, the distinction between articles and short articles was somewhat finely drawn. In vol. 12.1, for example, the four main articles totalled 62 pages in length while the four short articles were 57 pages long, while in vol. 16.1 the five main articles comprised 75 pages while the five 'short articles and discussions' ran to 79 pages!

¹⁰ This happened in vol. 14 (1961) and also in vol. 20 (1967).

element in the journal overall and this was also true in each quinquennium of table 3 apart from those in the 1950s when the short article occupied second place. From 1955 onwards the percentage of the *Review* given over to book reviews held constant at about 22 per cent with only minor variations until the 1990s when the percentage fell sharply to about 16 per cent. This, however, was a period of marked expansion in the size of the journal and section B of table 3 puts matters in a different light by showing that from 1960 onwards the average number of pages devoted to book reviews has not changed greatly, though it was somewhat higher in the 1960s than at any other time.

Table 5. *Book review editors*

<i>Period</i>	<i>Volumes</i>	<i>Book review editor</i>
1969-72	22.1-25.4	R. M. Hartwell
1973-81	26.1-34.4	M. E. Falkus
1982-6	35.1-39.1	E. H. Hunt
1986-90	39.2-43.1	F. Capie
1990-4	43.2-47.2	P. Fearon
1994-7	47.3-50.4	N. Zahedieh

Although book reviews have been a constant feature of the *Review*, the position of book review editor was established as recently as 1969 (table 5). The appointment of Hartwell as the first book review editor coincided with the disappearance of the editorial board from the affairs of the *Review*. Until 1968 the names of the members of the editorial board were published in each issue of the *Review*, and since the board went out of existence when the first book review editor was appointed, it is to be supposed that the two events were connected, though the nature of the relationship is not made clear in the brief editorial announcement published in volume 22.1 (1969) which, after referring to the arrival of Thompson as one of the two editors, went on to note that Hartwell, having been successively assistant editor in 1957-60 and then joint editor from 1960, was 'to remain part of the editorial team, in the capacity of Book Review editor'. No reference was made to the disbandment of the editorial board. Presumably, however, the board had exercised some of the functions which were now taken over by the book review editor. The post of book review editor has been held for periods of either three or four years by five of the six editors so far appointed; Falkus served for nine years.

The book review section of the *Review* has seen many changes over the years. Recently it has been divided under two main headings, 'Great Britain and Ireland' and 'General', the latter consisting of all works dealing with any other part of the world as well as works of general import. But the use of these two main headings has held good only since volume 32 (1979). The book reviews in earlier volumes can, however, be rearranged into these two categories and this has been done in

Table 6. *Book reviews*

Section A							
(1) Period	(2) Number of reviews	(3)	(4)	(5) Total of review pages	(6) Pages per review	(7) Percentage of total of reviews	(8)
	Great Britain and Ireland	Other	Total			Great Britain and Ireland	Other
1948-9	32	40	72	91	1.26	44.4	55.6
1950-4	153	146	299	310	1.04	51.2	48.8
1955-9	224	592	816	571	0.70	27.5	72.5
1960-4	247	481	728	685	0.94	33.9	66.1
1965-9	304	444	748	646	0.86	40.6	59.4
1970-4	373	603	976	830	0.85	38.2	61.8
1975-9	346	461	807	801	0.99	42.9	57.1
1980-4	351	397	748	720	0.96	46.9	53.1
1985-9	346	381	727	748	1.03	47.6	52.4
1990-4	302	384	686	654	0.95	44.0	56.0
1995-7	214	216	430	430	1.00	49.8	50.2

Section B				
This section recapitulates the totals in section A but re-expresses the totals as annual averages				
(1) Period	(2) Great Britain and Ireland	(3) Other	(4) Total	(5) Total of review pages
1948-9	16	20	36	46
1950-4	31	29	60	62
1955-9	45	118	163	114
1960-4	49	96	146	137
1965-9	61	89	150	129
1970-4	75	121	195	166
1975-9	69	92	161	160
1980-4	70	79	150	144
1985-9	69	76	145	150
1990-4	60	77	137	131
1995-7	71	72	143	143

Note: The total of pages in col. 5 of section A does not always equal the total in col. 8 of tab. 3 because the review section of the journal sometimes included material which did not consist of book reviews.

table 6 to allow an overview of trends during the half-century as a whole, and so to provide a background to the discussion of other characteristics of the book review section.

Table 6 shows that the total number of works reviewed reached a peak in the early 1970s and has fallen gently since then. Section B shows that the annual average rose very sharply from 60 in the early 1950s to 163 in the second half of the decade, marked time during the 1960s, and reached a peak of almost 200 reviews per annum in 1970-4 before falling back to an annual average of about 140 in the last dozen years. The total number of pages devoted to book reviews has risen and fallen roughly in parallel with the number of reviews since 1960 and therefore

the average number of pages per review has not changed greatly over this period though in earlier years it varied more markedly.

In the early postwar years and again since the late 1970s the percentage share of 'British' and 'Other' reviews in the overall total was stable with a split roughly in the ratio 45/55, but in between these two periods there was a far higher percentage of 'Other' reviews. The annual average of 'British' reviews rose uninterruptedly down to 1970-4 and has since stabilized at a level slightly short of its peak value but the number of 'Other' reviews has been far more volatile with a much more marked peak between 1955-9 and 1970-4 (table 6, section B). The explanation of the very different patterns in the two categories is simple. In volume 10.1 (1957) there appeared, for the first time, the names of review correspondents for the major European countries and the United States. The panel of review correspondents continued to be listed until volume 31.3 (1978) when their names appeared for the last time. The major increase in the proportion of non-British books reviewed during this period and the subsequent decline in this proportion may confidently be attributed to the efforts of the review correspondents. They also ensured that during the period 1957-78 there were regular reviews of periodical literature published in other countries (see table 3, column 11). The policy of appointing a panel of review correspondents meant that the reviews were chiefly written either by the review correspondents themselves or by their colleagues in the same countries. Before 1957, in contrast, most of the reviewers of works published abroad were British, and this has also been true of the period since 1979.

A further consideration to be borne in mind in reviewing the evidence of table 6 is that, although for many years book reviews have all been of a single type occupying on average about a page of text, there were periods in the history of the *Review* when other conventions prevailed. In the first eight volumes of the second series a distinction was drawn between reviews and short reviews. Fortunately, the average length of all reviews in this period was 1.07 pages, closely similar to the later averages, but whereas reviews, of which there were 179, averaged 1.61 pages in length, short reviews, of which there were 272, averaged only 0.72 pages in length. Short reviews, designated as such, occur occasionally after volumes 1 to 8, notably in volumes 16.3, 22.1, 23.1, 23.3, and 24.1, but they were always few in number. The short reviews in the five issues listed were only 0.54 pages in length on average and were thus much shorter than the norm, but their presence or absence would make only a minor difference to the average length of reviews given in table 6.¹¹ The shorter average length of reviews in the period during which the *Review* maintained a panel of review correspondents, however, reflects the prevalence of short reviews in the material contributed through their good offices, even though they were not designated as such. The average

¹¹ If the averages for 1960-4, 1965-9, and 1970-4 are adjusted to remove the short reviews the averages change only as follows (the average in table 12 is shown in brackets in each case): 0.95 (0.94), 0.86 (0.86), and 0.86 (0.85).

length of 'British' reviews has changed very little over the whole period from volume 9 onwards, when the practice of distinguishing formally between reviews and short reviews was abandoned.

Another perennial element throughout the past half-century has been the annual appearance of a list of publications on the economic history of Great Britain and Ireland (table 3, column 9).¹² A list has appeared in almost all of the volumes of the second series.¹³ Section B of table 3 shows that since 1970 the list has taken up about 40 pages of text each year, having grown from fewer than 10 pages in the 1940s and early 1950s to about 20 pages in the period 1955-69. It is natural to suppose that this pattern reflected a major increase in the volume of publications in economic history in the immediate postwar decades followed by a plateau in publishing activity since then.¹⁴ In large measure no doubt this supposition is justified, but it is also important to note that the coverage of the list was confined to economic history down to volume 25 (1972) but from volume 26 onwards expanded to include both economic and social history. Indeed, between these two volumes the number of pages comprising the list increased sharply from 33 to 42, though the subheadings within the list did not immediately change in a way which suggests that the compilers had greatly altered the scope of their survey.¹⁵ Since the number of pages taken up by the annual list has not changed significantly since the early 1970s, its percentage share of the *Review* in recent years has risen or fallen as the total pagination has decreased or increased.

The compilation of the annual list represents a very substantial burden. Although initially it was discharged by a single person, it soon became a task either for two or for three people. Since 1974, except for two brief periods (1975-7 and 1979-82), it has always involved three collaborators. The names of the compilers are set out in table 7. The composition of the team of compilers has changed frequently except, remarkably, for the

¹² The title of this section of the *Review* changed in 1953 from 'A list of books and articles on the economic history of Great Britain and Ireland' to 'A list of publications on the economic history of Great Britain and Ireland' in recognition of the inclusion of pamphlets *et sim.* as well as books and articles in the list. Harte, 'Trends in publications', p. 21.

¹³ There are two exceptions to the rule of a list in each volume. The first occurred in vol. 11 (1958). In the previous year D. C. Coleman had questioned the value of the annual list because of its miscellaneous and uncritically inclusive nature. As a result no list appeared in vol. 11 but Council soon countermanded this policy change, and a list covering both 1957 and 1958 was published in vol. 12 (the previous list, covering 1956 had appeared in vol. 10). The second gap relates to vol. 18. The list covering publications in the year 1963 appeared in vol. 17; that for 1964 in vol. 19, but because vol. 18 was the first to coincide with a calendar year, the 1963 list, appearing in vol. 17.3, was published in April 1965, while the 1964 list, appearing in vol. 18.2, was published in August 1966, so that the absence of a list in vol. 18 is less surprising than might appear at first sight.

¹⁴ Harte has compiled statistics from the annual list of publications about the number of books and articles published for each quinquennium to 1970-4, which give a more precise picture of the rising tide of publication in the postwar period. Harte, 'Trends in publications', tabs. 2, 3, and 4, p. 26.

¹⁵ It is, however, Harte's view that the change of title made little difference to the scope of the list. 'Social history, insofar as it had an existence separate from economic history, was always covered by the lists.' Harte, 'Trends in publications', p. 21.

Table 7. *Compilers of lists of books and articles on the economic and social history of Great Britain and Ireland*

<i>Publication period covered</i>	<i>Volumes</i>	<i>Compilers</i>	<i>No. of lists</i>
1947-50	1-5	A. A. Ruddock	4
1951-4	6-8	W. M. Stern	4
1955-6	9-10	A. J. Taylor	2
1957-9	12-13	G. E. Mingay, J. Thirsk	2
1960-3	14-17	J. Thirsk, F. M. L. Thompson	4
1964	19	H. A. Beecham, F. M. L. Thompson	1
1965-6	20-21	H. A. Beecham, R. S. Craig, R. C. Floud	2
1967	22	R. S. Craig, R. C. Floud	1
1968-9	23-24	R. S. Craig, N. B. Harte	2
1970-3	25-27	N. B. Harte, D. J. Tierney	4
1974	28	N. B. Harte, D. J. Tierney, R. C. Richardson	1
1975-7	29-31	G. Channon, R. C. Richardson	3
1978	32	J. Armstrong, G. Channon, R. C. Richardson	1
1979-81	33-35	J. Armstrong, J. Hannam	3
1982	36	J. Hannam, S. Ville	1
1983	37	T. Claydon, J. Lieberman, S. Ville	1
1984-5	38-39	T. Claydon, M. Partridge, S. Ville	2
1986	40	R. Hawkins, M. Partridge, S. Ville	1
1987	41	T. Geiger, R. Hawkins, M. Partridge	1
1988	42	A. Gandy, R. Hawkins, M. Partridge	1
1989-96	43-50	M. Hale, R. Hawkins, M. Partridge	8

last eight annual lists, all of which were compiled by the same team.¹⁶ Though teams changed often, some individual compilers served for substantial periods. Partridge has had a hand in 13 lists, Hawkins in 11, Hale in 8, Harte in 7, and Thirsk in 6, with much larger numbers who have taken part in 5 compilations. The number and definition of the subjects into which the list as a whole is subdivided have changed somewhat over time, though not greatly in recent decades. It covers not only what might be regarded as obvious topics within social and economic history, such as agriculture and agrarian society, or industry and internal trade, but original documents, sources and archives, and methodology and historiography.¹⁷

The annual review of periodical literature (table 3, column 10) first appeared in volume 12 (1959).¹⁸ It was initially much less comprehensive than it was later to become. From the beginning the review was divided into four periods: medieval, early modern (1500-1700), eighteenth century (1700-1800), and modern (post-1800). In the first exercise some of the

¹⁶ The development of the working methods of the compilers is described in Harte, 'Trends in publications', pp. 28-9.

¹⁷ Harte, 'Trends in publications', tab. 5-10, pp. 34-6 provides details of the numbers of books and articles broken down into 14 categories appearing in the lists of publications down to 1970-4.

¹⁸ It was introduced as a preferable alternative to the annual list of publications following the attack upon the supposed inadequacies of the latter by Coleman (see n. 13 above). The new venture was to consist of 'a series of reviews of the most important articles appearing in learned journals other than the *Review*.' Harte, 'Trends in publications', p. 29. It may be noted that *Review* articles have been included in literature surveys since the review of 1987 (vol. 41).

Table 8. *Authors of reviews of periodical literature*

<i>Medieval</i>		<i>1500-1700</i>		<i>1700-1850</i>		<i>1850-</i>	
<i>Volumes</i>	<i>Review author</i>	<i>Volumes</i>	<i>Review author</i>	<i>Volumes</i>	<i>Review author</i>	<i>Volumes</i>	<i>Review author</i>
12-13	E. Miller	12-15	D. C. Coleman	12-19	P. Mathias	12-14	A. J. Taylor
14	E. Miller, C. D. Ross	16-17	B. E. Supple	20-23	B. R. Mitchell	15-24	F. M. L. Thompson
15-19	C. D. Ross	18-24	H. E. S. Fisher	24-30	R. Quinault	25-32	R. C. Floud
20	G. H. Martin	25-28	P. Clark	31-37	J. A. Chartres	33-39	F. Capie
21-25	O. Coleman	29-32	R. B. Outhwaite	38-42	P. Hudson	40-43	G. N. von Tunzelmann
26-29	G. A. J. Hodgett	33-37	D. Ormrod	43-49	K. Honeyman	44-48	M. Collins
30	A. R. Bridbury	38-41	B. A. Holderness	50	R. Pearson	49-50	J. Tomlinson
31	G. A. J. Hodgett	42-44	R. A. Houston				
32-41	I. Blanchard	45	J. Walter				
42-44	C. Dyer	46	R. A. Houston				
45-50	R. H. Britnell	47-50	J. Boulton				

Note: Before vol. 29 (1976) the division between the third and fourth periods was made at 1800 rather than 1850.

reviews were closer to a listing than to a critical review but it quickly came to assume the character it was always later to retain. The only major change to take place after the inception of the review occurred in volume 29 (1976) when the third and fourth periods became 1700-1850 and post-1850, no doubt in deference to the changing balance of publication as time went on. It is a testimony to the interest that this aspect of the *Review's* activities has aroused that both the number of pages and its share of total pagination should have increased almost without interruption since its first appearance. The reviews now occupy three or four times as many pages each year as when they were first instituted. In the 1990s the space devoted to the annual review of periodical literature has been almost as great as that devoted to the annual list of publications.

Table 8 sets out the authors of the reviews of periodical literature. They have sometimes proved willing to undertake the task for a substantial period of time. Both Blanchard and Thompson served for 10 years, Mathias and Floud for 8 years, and Fisher, Quinault, Chartres, Honeyman, and Capie for 7 years.

For a time the *Review* made an effort to parallel surveys of the periodical literature relating to Great Britain and Ireland with comparable surveys of the periodical literature of other countries (table 1, column 11). Indeed, the first foreign survey antedates the first British survey. As already noted, the surveys were provided by the review correspondents themselves or their colleagues. They started when the panel was first constituted and ended when the panel ceased to exist. The panel normally included scholars from the major European countries or groups of countries (a typical list would comprise France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Poland, Scandinavia, and the Low Countries) and the United States. The space

devoted to surveys of foreign periodical literature substantially exceeded the comparable space used for the annual British survey during the years when they ran in parallel.

The final aspect of *Review* activity summarized in table 3 records a much more recent initiative. The increasing importance of information technology both for research and teaching purposes made it opportune to begin systematic coverage of the topic in the *Review*. This started with an introductory survey in 1990 by Middleton and Wardley. In the following year the first routine review was published in volume 44, entitled 'Review of information technology, 1990' and this has been repeated annually in subsequent volumes, latterly under the title 'Annual review of information technology developments'.

There are aspects of the history of the *Review* which could not readily be incorporated even into a rather complex table such as table 3. It may prove of interest to examine four such topics: the chronological distribution of the articles published; their geographical distribution; the changing proportions of male and female authorship; and the relative frequency of tables, figures, and maps from time to time.

Table 9. *The chronological distribution of articles (percentages)*

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
<i>Period of publication</i>	<i>No. of articles</i>	<i>Period</i>					<i>Not allocable</i>
		<i>before 500</i>	<i>500-1500</i>	<i>1500-1750</i>	<i>1750-1913</i>	<i>1914 onwards</i>	
1948-9	30	0.0	21.4	32.1	42.9	3.6	6.6
1950-9	234	1.8	18.0	31.2	46.8	2.2	3.0
1960-9	285	1.5	17.8	28.0	48.3	4.4	7.4
1970-9	339	0.6	11.6	20.9	50.3	16.6	4.7
1980-9	288	0.0	14.3	14.7	44.0	27.1	5.2
1990-7	257	0.0	9.2	15.7	49.5	25.6	3.1

Note: The data refer to all articles and short articles (see tab. 3 above for a definition of what constitutes an article and a short article), plus revisions. The percentages in cols. 3 to 7 relate to all the articles, etc. which could be classified chronologically. The figure in col. 8 indicates the percentage of the total of articles given in col. 2 which could *not* be classified. Thus in the row relating to 1960-9 the percentage in col. 8 indicates that 21 of the 285 articles could not be classified chronologically, while the percentages in that row from cols. 3 to 7 all refer to a total of 264 articles (285 - 21 = 264).

Table 9 deals with the first of these four topics, the frequency with which the *Review* has carried articles relating to particular time periods. The notes to the table describe the basis on which the percentages shown in the table were calculated. Articles devoted to the classical period or earlier have always been few and far between and the small trickle has dried up completely in the last two decades, leaving only four time periods to consider. It is customary to divide the post-Roman period into three large blocks of time, the medieval, the early modern, and the modern. This convention is followed in table 9 except that the modern period, that is the period after 1750, is divided into two by the outbreak of the First World War. There were, of course, many articles published which did not fit neatly into one of the four post-Roman divisions shown

in the table. Where the bulk of the time period covered in the article fell within one of the time divisions, it was allotted in full to that period, but when the article straddled two periods, as, for example, an article dealing with the eighteenth century, the periods in question each scored a half. Proceeding in this fashion involved some arbitrary judgements but these were not such as to affect the overall pattern other than marginally. A proportion of articles dealt with topics which could not be allocated to a particular period. For example, Offer's recent article 'Between the gift and the market: the economy of regard' is not classifiable chronologically.¹⁹ These articles figure in column 8 of the table.

It was to be expected that there would be a rapid and sustained rise in the proportion of articles devoted to the post-1914 period during the last 50 years. When volume 1 was published 1914 was only 34 years distant in time, whereas when volume 50 appeared it was 83 years distant. Since the present and the very recent past are unlikely to attract the attention of the historian the growth in the percentage of post-1914 articles is arguably not very much greater than might have been expected on general grounds. If, for example, the last 20 years at any one point in time are regarded as 'not history' then the scope for twentieth-century articles has expanded from 14 to 63 years, or more than four-fold, an increase not wildly out of line with the growth in the percentages in column 7 of the table. It is slightly surprising that the very large increase in the share of twentieth-century history during the 1980s has not been matched by some further advance in the current decade when, indeed, there has been a slight regression. The first half of the modern period, 1750-1913, has always enjoyed the lion's share of attention with percentages varying between 43 and 50 per cent and little sign of any clear trend. In the 1980s and 1990s the whole modern period, from 1750 onwards, has accounted for 70 to 75 per cent of all articles published.

Both the medieval and early modern periods have suffered substantial decline in parallel with the advance of the modern period. Until 1970 the early modern period accounted for about 30 per cent of all the articles published, and was handsomely the second largest group, but this percentage had halved by the 1980s and has since remained at about the same level. The percentage of medieval articles declined regularly but gently in the period before 1970, fell abruptly in the 1970s, rose again in the 1980s, but slumped sharply in the 1990s. For a very long time it was a matter of editorial policy to try to secure at least one medieval article in each issue of the *Review* but in recent years the editors have no longer been able to fulfil this ambition which may partially explain the sharp decline of recent years.

Table 10 parallels table 9 but deals with geographical rather than chronological coverage. It relates to the same articles as those covered in the previous table, and the same convention was used in calculating the percentages shown in the table. As in table 9, there was a problem of allocation in that many articles relate to more than one area and their

¹⁹ Offer's article appeared in vol. 50 (1997), pp. 450-76.

Table 10. *The geographical distribution of articles (percentages)*

(1) <i>Period of publication</i>	(2) <i>No. of articles</i>	(3) <i>England</i>	(4) <i>Scotland</i>	(5) <i>Wales</i>	(6) <i>Britain</i>	(7) <i>Ireland</i>	(8) <i>Europe</i>	(9) <i>North America</i>	(10) <i>South America</i>	(11) <i>Asia</i>	(12) <i>Africa</i>	(13) <i>Australia</i>	(14) <i>Not allocable</i>
1948-9	30	72.2	3.7	3.7	79.6	3.7	13.0	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0
1950-9	234	72.2	3.6	1.1	76.9	1.8	13.6	1.3	0.9	4.0	1.3	0.2	3.8
1960-9	285	65.4	3.0	0.6	69.0	3.8	17.7	4.0	0.4	3.2	1.5	0.4	7.7
1970-9	339	67.9	2.5	0.8	71.2	2.2	14.5	4.8	1.6	2.7	1.9	1.1	6.5
1980-9	288	77.0	2.8	0.6	80.4	2.6	10.3	2.2	0.0	1.1	2.8	0.6	6.9
1990-7	257	71.2	1.6	1.4	74.2	1.0	16.9	2.9	0.4	1.9	0.8	1.9	5.4

Note: The data refer to all articles and short articles (see tab. 3 above for a definition of what constitutes an article and a short article) plus revisions. The percentages in cols. 3 to 13 relate to all the articles, etc. which *could* be classified geographically. The figure in col. 14 indicates the percentage of the total of articles given in col. 2 which could *not* be classified. Thus in the row relating to 1960-9 the percentage in col. 14 indicates that 22 of the 285 articles could not be classified geographically, while the percentages in that row from cols. 3 to 13 all refer to a total of 263 articles (285 - 22 = 263).

allocation also involved an arbitrary element. But in addition there was a further difficulty over what constituted 'England'. This surfaced in several ways in relation to the British Isles. A particular problem occurred in relation to Wales. Quite often an article which contained 'England' or 'English' in its title also dealt with Wales or presented data which referred to both countries. To a lesser extent the same might happen with Scotland, though rarely with Ireland. More generally, however, articles might refer to 'Britain' or 'British' when dealing solely or almost solely with England. There is no easy resolution to problems of this nature. In consequence the 'England' column includes both strictly English articles and 'British' articles also. The percentages for England, Scotland, and Wales should therefore be treated with considerable reserve since they involved much crude and arbitrary classification. For this reason there is also a column in the table labelled 'Britain' which is taken as the sum of the percentages for England, Wales, and Scotland and is a much firmer figure than that for any of the three constituent countries.

Table 10 shows very clearly two prominent features of the geographical distribution of articles: that they are very heavily skewed towards British topics, and that there has been very little change in the relative importance of any area over the 50 year period. Over the period as a whole three-quarters of all articles have been on British topics, rising to a peak of more than 80 per cent in the 1980s. If Ireland is regarded as 'British' in this context the percentages are even higher. For a journal of the status and scope of the *Review* this seems an excessively parochial pattern. It might be thought doubly odd in view of the current distribution of institutional sales. The United Kingdom accounts for only 21 per cent of the total compared with 34 per cent in North America, 13 per cent in Japan, 24 per cent in Europe, and 8 per cent in the rest of the world.²⁰ More than half of all the articles which are not about Britain are on European topics, with North America a clear but distant third. All other continents attract some coverage but infrequently and spasmodically. In no category has there been any clear evidence of rise or fall rather than random variation.

Table 11. *Male and female authorship*

Period	Totals			Percentages	
	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
1948-9	34	0	34	100	0
1950-9	254.3	14.7	269	94.5	5.5
1960-9	289	20	309	93.5	6.5
1970-9	335.5	21.5	357	94.0	6.0
1980-9	281	27	308	91.2	8.8
1990-7	229.8	36.2	266	86.4	13.6

Note: The data refer to articles, short articles and revisions, as in tab. 9 and tab. 10, plus essays in bibliography and criticism.

²⁰ The quoted percentages were supplied by Blackwell Publishers.

The balance of authorship between the sexes changed very little before the 1980s. Table 11 shows that only about 6 per cent of authors were female in the period down to 1980 but in that decade this figure rose to about 9 per cent and in the current decade is running at about 14 per cent. In a significant number of cases there was joint authorship of an article and if the authors were of different sex the scores were split appropriately. This explains why the male and female totals are not always whole numbers. The totals may not be perfectly accurate since for the more distant past it has not always been possible to determine the sex of an unknown author but it is highly unlikely that the percentages would change other than marginally if any inaccuracies were made good. How the data which comprise table 11 should be interpreted is a matter for debate. It may be appropriate to remark, however, that all articles submitted are sent out by the editors to be refereed and all identifiers are deleted before the material is despatched. This practice has been standard for many years.

Table 12. *Tables, figures, and maps: frequency per 1,000 pages*

<i>Period</i>	<i>Tables</i>	<i>Figures</i>	<i>Maps</i>
1948-9	104	14	0
1950-9	122	15	6
1960-9	122	28	8
1970-9	192	41	7
1980-9	184	34	6
1990-7	166	63	4

Note: The data relate to all articles, short articles, surveys and speculations, and reviews of information technology. It should be noted that, particularly in the earlier volumes of the *Review*, many tables and some figures were not labelled as table or figure *x* but were simply introduced into the text without labelling. Where this was the case they have nonetheless been counted in the totals from which the frequencies shown in this table were calculated.

The *Review* has always contained much information and analysis in the form of tables, figures, and maps, but the balance of text and other matter has changed substantially over time. Table 12 shows that there has been a marked tendency for the number of tables and figures to increase. The combined total of tables and figures per 1,000 pages of article text has risen almost continuously throughout the half-century but the growth was modest before 1970. The number of tables jumped to a very much higher level in the 1970s, though it has retreated somewhat since then. The number of figures increased steadily until the 1970s from a very low initial level, dipped in the 1980s, but has grown again very vigorously in the 1990s, no doubt in part a result of the ease with which modern software enables numerical information to be displayed in the form of a graph or in other pictorial forms. The number of maps, always a tiny figure, has not changed significantly over the whole period since 1948. On the assumption that, on average, a table or a figure will take up about three-quarters of a page, the increase in the frequency with which tables and figures appear would have added about a page to the length of an article between the 1960s and the 1990s. This change, therefore, does not account for the bulk of the increase in article length

which has occurred (table 4). Most of the increase reflects a rise in the number of words per article.²¹

The material analysed in the tables above has not comprised all aspects of *Review* publishing during the past half-century, though all other types of material have constituted only a minute fraction of the enterprise as a whole. From time to time, for example, obituary notices or memoirs have been published.²² Lists of research grants awarded by the Social Science Research Council and of research completed were published annually in the 1970s.²³ Lists of books received appeared in volumes 27 to 32 (1974-9). And a recent innovation, begun in volume 49, has been the annual publication of lists of all those who have acted as referees for the journal during the preceding year.

Editorial announcements between the covers of the *Review* have been few in number but occasionally throw an interesting light on matters of concern at the time. For example in 1952 the editors expressed themselves strongly on the subject of over-long articles, remarking that they 'regret to have to inform the readers and the prospective contributors that Mr Imlah's article in this number may well be the last to exceed the average length by a large margin'. Both a lengthening queue of articles waiting to be published and financial constraints, they claimed, left them no alternative but to be severe. A limit of 8,000 words was to be enforced. They went on to express the hope that any unfortunate effect of the new policy would be mitigated by the publication of supplements to the *Review* 'specially designed as a vehicle for studies too long to be published as articles and yet too short to appear as books'.²⁴ The first two supplements were announced in the same issue. A few years later the editors had clearly sought a ruling from Council to quieten arguments about the proper way to deal with historical controversies which had arisen out of articles published in the journal. The editorial announcement stated rather pompously that 'The Council regard such controversies as valuable, provided that they make a contribution to the advancement of knowledge.' It went on to prescribe best practice in ensuring that the matters at issue were carefully identified by the protagonists through exchange of views. There should then be a piece by the critic, matched by the response from the original author, if the author so wished, both pieces to be printed in the same issue of the *Review*: 'After this, no further contributions on the matter are accepted from the two historians concerned. If, in exceptional circumstances, one of them feels that a further contribution from

²¹ There seems no reason to suppose that the number of lines of text on the page or of words to the line has changed during the period when the average length of the article was rising.

²² The following have appeared: J. L. Hammond, vol. 1.2&3 (1949), p. 143; Elie Heckscher, vol. 5.3 (1953), pp. 398-9; Harold Adams Innis, vol. 6.2 (1953), pp. 183-4; N. S. B. Gras, vol. 9.3 (1957), p. 485; Thomas Southcliffe Ashton, vol. 21.3 (1968), pp. iii-v; William Henry Bassano Court, vol. 25.1 (1972), pp. v-vii; Eleanora Mary Carus Wilson, vol. 30.2 (1977), pp. iii-v; Sir Michael Moisse Postan, vol. 35.1 (1982), pp. iv-vi; Michael W. Flinn, vol. 37.1 (1984), pp. v-vii; Sydney George Checkland, vol. 39.4 (1986), pp. v-viii; Frederick Jack Fisher, vol. 41.3 (1990), pp. 343-5.

²³ Such lists appeared in vols. 27 (1974) to 32 (1979).

²⁴ Vol. 5.2 (1952), p. 177.

himself is urgently needed, he may appeal to the Editorial Board of the *Review*, whose decision is final.²⁵

The *Review* might be said to have changed in size more than it has changed in shape over the past half-century. There have been innovations from time to time, some of which have become permanent features of the journal while others were dropped after an experimental period, but, apart from its size, there would be little in an issue of the late 1990s which would greatly surprise a reader from the 1950s. Nor does there appear to be urgent need for radical change at present, though it seems certain that, in common with other academic journals, the *Review* must face the possibility of change as a result of the electronic revolution in methods of publishing and disseminating articles and other text which is now under way. And further change may flow from the wish to make it seem that the *Review* is as natural a home for social as for economic history. In 1991 (volume 44) the *Review* adopted a new cover design and also added for the first time a sub-title on the front cover, *A journal of economic and social history*. In a British setting a seamless link between economic and social history appears natural, in contrast with the position in North America where economic history has, in general, a more distinctively economic and econometric character, reflecting the origins and training of most of its practitioners.

Predicting future trends is an act of hubris in most contexts and few contexts are more shot through with uncertainties than that in which publication of an academic journal takes place, but at the conclusion of a survey of this type it might appear odd to make no reference to the future. Given the richness and variety of the intellectual strands which have been represented in the *Review* since its inception, it is reasonable to hope that, though there is likely to be more change in the next half-century than in the last, the journal may be able to greet the appearance of the hundredth volume in the second series in at least as healthy a state as it displays on the appearance of the fiftieth.

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²⁵ Vol. 10.1 (1957), p. 179.

Footnote references

- Barker, T. C., 'The beginnings of the Economic History Society', *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 30 (1977), pp. 1-19.
 Harte, N. B., 'Trends in publications on the economic and social history of Great Britain and Ireland, 1925-74', *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 30 (1977), pp. 20-41.