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David Machin
9 Prospect Bank
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Dear Mr Machin

Thank you for your recent letter advising us of the village archive you are compiling for the millennium. We would like to be associated with this and will help in any way that we can. While the most obvious contribution we can make is with regard to our home, Cragg Cottage and what we know of it, there may be other less obvious ways in which we can add to the archive.

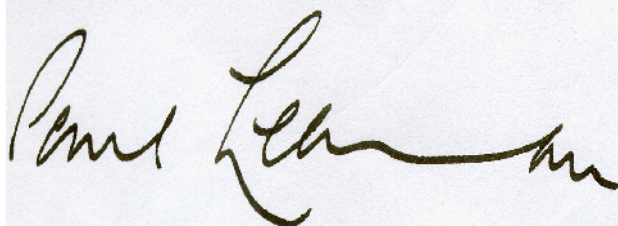
The most useful of these will be the thesis on Bramham that our son Paul put together in 1986 when he was reading history at Nottingham University. This was based on the annual census for 1851 and we would be prepared to loan you our copy so that you can make a copy from it for the archive should you feel it appropriate.

Another theme with which I may be able to help is with respect to the 1914-18 aerodrome originally known as 'Bramham Moor' but later as 'Tadcaster'. You have access to the words I wrote for the illustrated booklet on Bramham you published earlier, but I do have additional information not available to me at the time which I would be happy to make available should it be considered of interest. I have to admit that I haven't been able to take my research on this as far as I would like, mainly through my inability to trace any relevant files in the PRO at Kew. But, if what I have is of interest, please let me know.

Having been living here since 1984, we have many photographs of Cragg Cottage in its various guises - but these are all buried within our photograph albums and not easy to extract. However, should there be any that you feel are particularly relevant, we would be happy to lend them to you.

I enclose a few notes on Cragg Cottage.

Yours sincerely



BRAMHAM, WEST YORKSHIRE, 1851

An Agricultural Community

Paul Chinnery

January 1986

FOREWORD: The Census and the Computer

The principle aim of this study was to analyse the 1851 census for Bramham with the aid of a computer. P M Tillot in 1968 points out that the "sheer bulk of the data is generally speaking too great for one person to handle alone,"(1) hopefully it will be shown that this situation has changed. Today the trend is obviously towards the computerisation of historical material but it should be stressed from the outset that this is not the total answer to the problems of labourious counting which has dominated past statistical work especially on the census.

The information contained on the census for Bramham was committed to the Nottingham University 2900 Computer and the Famulus 77 package was used to sort and index the data. Clearly Famulus's greatest asset is the speed with which it can sort the census and as long as the data has been typed in perfectly it will always be totally accurate. The form in which the results are given, computer print out, means that a permanent copy can be kept for easy reference. When sorting the census Famulus prints not just a total figure of those who fell into a certain category but also the other variables related to those people. By using a computer it is possible to add further

information to the census eg data from a Tithe Award or estate survey, building up a more detailed picture. Once the data has been input into the computer it can be stored indefinitely allowing for further work to be done at a later date or for extra data to be added.

None the less there is still labourious work to be done when using Famulus. The creation of a perfect data base means a considerable amount of checking and editing. One particular draw back of the package is that it deals only with individual 'citations', this is a single person and the variables ('fields') related to him. This made it impossible to group people into households making analysis on such a basis difficult. In this study work on household composition was undertaken by hand. This situation is easily overcome by including an address field, though impractical here because no such information was available.

A reconstruction of the village is almost impossible because there is no survey around 1851. A Tithe Award for 1843 exists and this could have been tied in with the 1841 Census but because the basis of this project was the census as a source this was discounted. The 1851 material is more comprehensive with particular information on place of birth allowing for some study of migration. Also the relationship of

each person to the household head is included. As enumerated the information needed some adjustments. Firstly those listed as visitors were removed as they can be regarded as not part of the village. Secondly the information concerning a private school with 127 pupils was omitted and dealt with separately to avoid irregular results.

The rationale adopted in this study was based on the work in E A Wrigley's 'Nineteenth Century Society' (2) with particular regard to occupation. Here two classifications were recommended by W A Armstrong (3). The Registrar General's Social Classification (1951) has been proven to be a valid means of producing a social stratification following modifications made by Armstrong. An Industrial Classification was also added to the census the basis for which came from the work of Charles Booth in the 1880's [Appendix 2]. By adopting these readily accessible classifications it is possible to produce data following a common system which could be comparable with other work.

There is no doubt that the census alone shows a very static picture of conditions on a particular day but its detail and comprehensiveness make it an invaluable source as a means of looking at a complete village and its structure. P M Tillot says of the

censuses "they are reliable and for almost all purposes the extent of error is slight"(4). Thus with a certain degree of confidence this study concentrates on the historical picture produced by the census of 1851.

Useful information:

Introducing The Cripps Computing Centre. University of Nottingham October 1984.

Famulus 77 Users Manual 1985, L D Burnard.

Running Famulus 77 on the Nottingham 2900. Cripps Computing Centre. University of Nottingham April 1985.

Footnotes:

- (1) Tillot P M. 'The Analysis of Census Returns'.
The Local Historian Vol 8 1968 No.1 P-3.
- (2) Wrigley E A. Nineteenth Century Society. Essays in the use of Quantative Methods for the Study of Social Data. Cambridge 1972.
- (3) Armstrong W A. 'The Analysis of Information about Occupation' in E A Wrigley Nineteenth Century Society. P.191-210
- (4) Tillot P M. 'Sources of Inaccuracy in the 1851 and 1861 Censuses' in E A Wrigley Nineteenth Century Society. P.123

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THE ESSAY

Unless otherwise stated all figures are derived
from the census returns for Bramham 1851.

SYNOPSIS

This essay is based primarily on one major source, the Decennial Census of 1851. Its detailed nature means that in the time allowed it was only reasonable to look at one year. As it was decided to consider a complete community a village sized settlement was selected at random - Bramham, West Yorkshire.

Two major themes are followed, firstly the nature of village society and economy and secondly the idea that Bramham was essentially a traditional community on the edge of the explosive urban and industrial expansion of Leeds.

The village as placed in its historical, economic and geographical context can be analysed adopting loosely the format of the census data. Thus the information is considered under the headings of population structure, migration and employment. It is possible to see that Bramham was still a rural village with a traditional social order. Despite the diversity of employment, agriculture was still the key to the village economy. Though evidence suggests that farming was relatively prosperous this only reinforced the existing system.

A dominant landowner of the Gentry class George Lane-Fox clearly played a key role in maintaining the traditional community. His part in village society enforced the old social and economic order directly and through agriculture.

The overall picture produced may not be anything new or historically important but it is hoped to show that it is possible for the census to be used with the aid of a computer to recreate an image of society relatively quickly. Though static, there is little to suggest that the census is not a valid source for the interpretation of a mid 19th Century village.