

200 years of the Census in...

NORTHUMBERLAND

(includes Tyne & Wear from 1981 onwards)

March 10th 2001 marks the bicentenary of the modern Census in Britain.

For 200 years the Census has been the cornerstone of planning in Britain. The first Census in 1801 was taken amidst fears that Britain's growing population might outstrip the country's supply of food. It asked 5 questions and counted 10 million people living in two million households. The 2001 Census, which takes place on the 29th April, will count almost 60 million people who live in approximately twenty four million households. It will ask 40 questions and generate 2 billion pieces of information to allocate more than £50 billion of public spending each year.

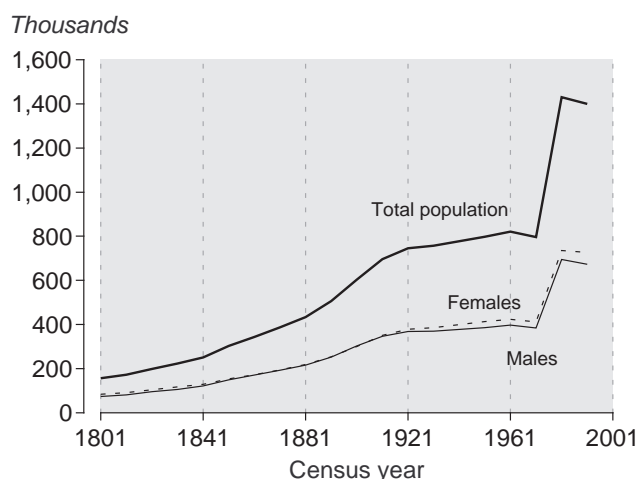
The Census is not only useful for planning. Two centuries of census taking have produced a record of remarkable changes in British society. For example, 90% of the population lived in urban areas in 1991 compared with just 16% in 1831. The average size of households has fallen by half in the past 100 years from 4.6 persons in 1901 to approximately 2.4 persons in 1991. We are also living longer. In 1821 almost half of the population was under 20 years of age compared with just over a quarter under 20 years of age today.

The value of the Census is that it provides detailed information at a local as well as a national level. This pamphlet - one of a series for various areas in England and for Wales - describes the changes in society measured by the Census between 1801 and 1991.

The information from censuses has continued to evolve and grow since the first reports in 1801. The questions and results are on issues relevant to a particular time and change cannot always be tracked exactly over the two centuries. Boundaries of counties also shift over time. The figures and graphs in this pamphlet are the best approximation in the circumstances and are to help paint the picture of change. A full list of the topics covered in the census since 1801 is available in an accompanying document 'Census Topics 1801-2001', and details on how to obtain further information on historical census statistics are given on the back page of this monitor.

THE POPULATION AND AREA SIZE OF NORTHUMBERLAND

This table and chart show the various increases and decreases in area size and population, and numbers of males and females. The big increase in both population and boundary size between 1971 and 1981 is due to the inclusion of Tyne and Wear.



| Year | Area Size (Acres) | Total Population | Males | Females |
|------|-------------------|------------------|---------|---------|
| 1801 | na | 157,101 | 73,357 | 83,744 |
| 1811 | na | 172,161 | 80,385 | 91,776 |
| 1821 | na | 198,965 | 95,354 | 103,611 |
| 1831 | 1,165,430 | 222,912 | 106,147 | 116,765 |
| 1841 | 1,165,430 | 250,278 | 121,268 | 129,010 |
| 1851 | 1,249,299 | 303,568 | 149,515 | 154,053 |
| 1861 | 1,249,299 | 343,025 | 170,665 | 172,360 |
| 1871 | 1,290,312 | 386,646 | 192,663 | 193,983 |
| 1881 | 1,290,312 | 434,086 | 215,882 | 218,204 |
| 1891 | 1,289,756 | 506,030 | 252,283 | 253,747 |
| 1901 | 1,291,515 | 603,119 | 302,433 | 300,686 |
| 1911 | 1,291,515 | 696,893 | 346,713 | 350,180 |
| 1921 | 1,291,515 | 746,096 | 367,810 | 378,286 |
| 1931 | 1,291,978 | 756,782 | 370,446 | 386,336 |
| 1951 | 1,292,040 | 798,424 | 385,780 | 412,644 |
| 1961 | 1,292,040 | 821,243 | 397,936 | 423,307 |
| 1971 | 1,291,970 | 795,752 | 384,124 | 411,628 |
| 1981 | 1,376,770 | 1,430,943 | 695,248 | 735,695 |
| 1991 | 1,375,425 | 1,399,846 | 673,252 | 726,594 |

na = not available

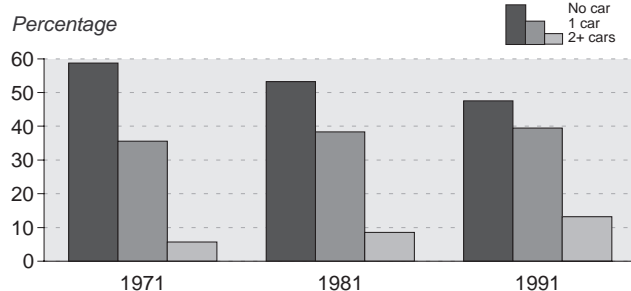
Households and Amenities

At the end of the Second World War (1939-45) it was vital to assess the overall housing situation in Great Britain. Consequently the 1951 Census had a number of questions on housing needs. These were met in the post-war housing programmes, and significant improvements were evident in subsequent Censuses. In 1971 only 2,655 households in Northumberland were without a WC, compared to 13,972 households in 1951. By 1981, only 1,164 households were without a fixed bath.

The 2001 Census will ask questions relevant now, such as availability of central heating and the lowest floor level of accommodation.

| Amenities | 1951 | H/Holds % |
|------------------------------------|---------|-----------|
| H/Holds without piped water | 20,487 | 8.7 |
| H/Holds without WC | 13,972 | 5.9 |
| H/Holds without fixed bath | 84,340 | 35.8 |
| H/Holds without kitchen sink | 24,720 | 10.5 |
| H/Holds without cooking stove | 2,546 | 1.1 |
| H/Holds with all five of the above | 136,193 | 57.9 |

(Total Households in 1951 = 235,400)



Car Availability 1971 – 1991

A question on car availability was asked for the first time in 1971, by which time just over 40 per cent of households in Northumberland already had a car. At the time of the 1991 Census this had increased by a further 13 percentage points to over a half of households (53%). There has also been a big increase in households with two or more cars since 1971.

OCCUPATIONS

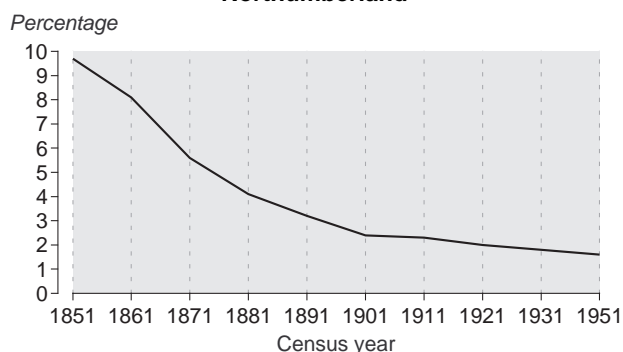
Agriculture

A general decline in the number of people employed in agriculture is common to many counties. In Northumberland the number of agricultural labourers fell from 14,869 in 1861 to 8,305 in 1931, a decrease of 44%.

By 1991, the number of farmers and agricultural labourers accounted for less than 2% of Northumberland's population.

N.B. This analysis is based upon the number of people employed in agriculture as a percentage of the total population, not just the working population.

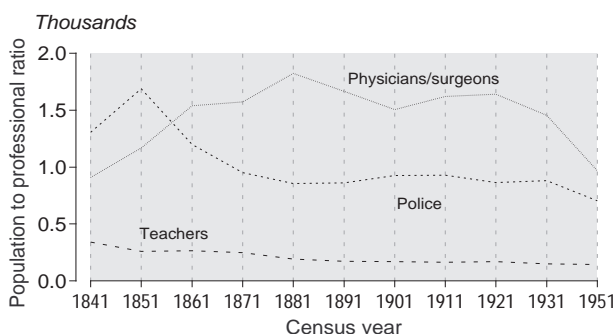
Percentage of people employed in agriculture in Northumberland



Professionals

This chart is based on a comparison between three professional occupations (physicians/surgeons, teachers and the police), and the total population of Northumberland, 1841-1951.

There have been changes in definition in what is included in each of these professions over the years.



For example, in 1841 'Police' included watchmen who were paid for 'guarding the gates' and patrolling the streets at night. Early figures for physicians and surgeons may also be overstated as they included people employed in 'apothecary' (chemists) and medical students.

The number of people per physician/surgeon appears to have risen and fallen, whilst the numbers of people per policeman/woman and teacher has fallen. For example, there was one police officer per 1,687 people in 1851, dropping to 704 people in 1951.

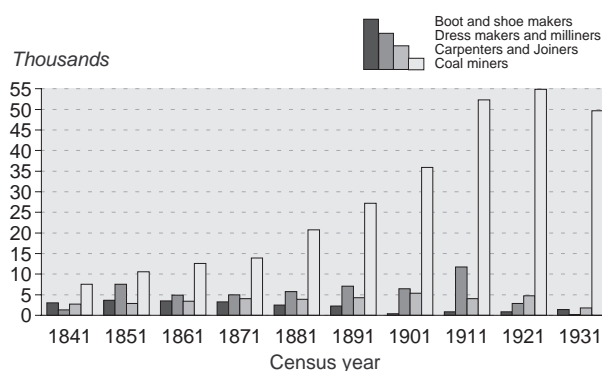
By 1991, there was one teacher per 72 people, one physician/surgeon per 505 people and one police officer per 405 people.

N.B. Figures between 1951 and 1991 have not been included due to problems with the availability and comparability of data between these years.

Key Occupations

The chart highlights four of the main occupations in Northumberland, past and present, and trends over the years.

Between 1841 and 1931 the only rise occurred in the number of coal miners, with an increase of almost seven fold, from 7,547 people in 1841 to 49,663 people in 1931. Numbers for the other occupations shown, which were clearly dominated by the number of coal miners, varied across the period. The numbers of boot and shoemakers fell across the period, the numbers of dressmakers and milliners rose and then fell, whilst the number of carpenters and joiners remained relatively steady.



N.B. Analyses are only shown to 1931 because of difficulties in making comparisons with more recent statistics.

Did you know?

- The population of Northumberland increased nine-fold between 1801 to 1991.
- In 1991, one in ten households in both Northumberland and Tyne and Wear did not have central heating, which compared to a GB average of one in five.
- Between 1851 and 1901, the number of people employed on the railways in Nottinghamshire (excluding construction) increased over nine-fold – from 497 people to 4,706 people.
- In 1871 there were over 14 times as many females employed as domestic servants compared to males (21,129 women – 11% of the total female population).
- In 1851, there were 7 chimney sweeps aged between 5 and 9 in Northumberland.
- In 1901 there were 54,885 people employed a coal miners in Northumberland.
- There was a modest rise in the population density of Northumberland from 0.2 people per acre in 1831, to 0.25 people per acre in 1991. The population density of Tyne and Wear in 1991 was 8.2 people per acre. The GB average in 1991 was almost 1 person per acre.
- In 1801 the average household in Northumberland contained 6 people, compared to 2.5 in 1991. Households in Tyne and Wear in 1991 had a similar average size of 2.4 people. This compared with the 1991 GB average of 2.5 people per household.

The Census reports also contain interesting explanatory notes:

1821 – *“The increase of population at Berwick is partly ascribed to the employment of workmen on the new pier.”*

1831 – *“Brinkburn Parish experienced a fall in population (80 persons) occasioned by fever.”*

1921 – *“A large increase in the population of Ulgham Parish is attributed mainly to colliery development.”*

Further information

These monitors have been produced to show county level information. Often, there is more interest in information for lower geographical areas e.g. parishes. Many good reference libraries hold census volumes to enable individuals to carry out their own research. The ONS London library (details below) which is open to the public also contains a full set of census volumes back to 1801. From 10th March 2001 there will be additional information made available on our website www.statistics.gov.uk. Further advice and limited research can be also carried out by Census Customer Services.

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