

CENSUS OFFICIALS' PAYMENT 1841-1901

This article was written by Gwyneth Wilkie. See also her articles at <http://amershamhistory.info/research/reference/census-districts/> and <http://amershamhistory.info/research/reference/amersham-and-the-censuses/>

References to the amount paid to the people who organised and carried out the censuses locally in England and Wales in Victorian times are scattered through studies on the subject and have mostly taken from contemporary newspaper accounts. Such reports are mostly concerned with the amounts paid to enumerators, who were temporary recruits. In modern times this may have occurred because the enumerators make up the category of census official which has been most closely studied by demographers and statisticians. The burden of organisation fell most heavily, however, on the Registrars of Births and Deaths, who have received comparatively little attention. In the belief that it might be useful for the various Tables of Allowances issued by the Registrar Generals to be transcribed and made available in their entirety the following is offered.

1841

Source www.histpop.org, browse 'TNA Other', go to 1841, '*History of the 1841 Census*', pp 85-87 and 38-39.

Allowances to Superintendent Registrars and Registrars (pp 85-87)

The Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, by Letter dated May 13, 1841, expressed their approval of the following Scale of Allowances to Superintendent Registrars and Registrars respectively, which had been submitted by the Commissioners for their consideration on the 23rd of April (namely): —

Table of Allowances for Superintendent Registrars

To each Superintendent Registrar

For various duties with respect to the Census of the Population £5-0-0

For every Enumerator's Schedule delivered to him by the Registrar or Registrars of his District, and transmitted by him to the Commissioners for the Census, duly certified, together with an Abstract of the Totals in every such Schedule & a Summary of the Abstracts on or before July 10 1841 £0-1-0

For every Public Institution within his District, for which he has obtained from the Registrar a Schedule and transmitted it to the Commissioners for the Census, duly certified, together with an Abstract of the Totals in every such Schedule £0-5-0

Table of Allowances for Registrars

To each Registrar

For various duties with respect to the Census of the Population £3-0-0

For every Enumeration District within his Registration District of which the Schedule signed by the Enumerator and certified by the Registrar under his

hand to be made as accurate as is possible is delivered to the Superintendent Registrar of his District before July 1 1841 £0-2-6

For every 100 Persons duly enumerated in the Schedules, duly signed, certified & delivered to the Superintendent Registrar before July 1 1841 £0-0-6

For every Public Institution (if there be any such within his District) for which he has obtained from the Master or Head a Schedule, duly signed and certified to have been made as accurate as is possible, and delivered it to the Superintendent Registrar before July 1 1841 £0-2-6

For every Enumeration District within his Registration District, in which he has left, or caused to be left, Householders' Schedules at every House, pursuant to the Instructions of the Commissioners for the Census £0-2-6

The following additional allowance to Enumerators was also at the same time approved by the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury: —

Additional Allowance to Enumerators:—

To each Enumerator

For the delivery of his Schedule to the Registrar of his District on or before June 14 1841, duly signed by the Enumerator, and certified by the Registrar to have been made as accurate as is possible £0-5-0

Enumerators (pp 38-9)

Table of Allowances for Enumerators to be employed under the Act of 3 and 4 Victoria cap 99 for taking Account of the Population of Great Britain, as sanctioned by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury

Each Enumerator shall be entitled to remuneration according to the following Scale:—

[NB the wording in the list below has been slightly simplified: '50 and less than 60' has been changed to '50-59' for inhabited houses and '300 and less than 360' has been changed to '300-359' for persons enumerated]

Less than 50 inhabited houses	or	less than 300 persons enumerated	£0-10-0
50—59 inhabited houses	or	300—359 persons enumerated	£0-11-0
60—69 ditto	or	360—419 ditto	£0-12-0
70—79 ditto	or	420—479 ditto	£0-13-0
80—89 ditto	or	480—539 ditto	£0-14-0
90—99 ditto	or	540—599 ditto	£0-15-0
100—109 ditto	or	600—659 ditto	£0-16-0
110—119 ditto	or	660—719 ditto	£0-17-0
120—129 ditto	or	720—779 ditto	£0-18-0
130—139 ditto	or	780—839 ditto	£0-19-0
140—149 ditto	or	840—899 ditto	£1-0-0
150—159 ditto	or	900—959 ditto	£1-1-0

and so on increasing at the rate of one shilling for every ten inhabited houses visited, and of which all the Inmates are enumerated, or for every sixty Persons duly enumerated.

The Enumerator will have the right of claiming to be paid according to the number either of houses visited or of Persons enumerated.

In every District containing not less than 25 inhabited houses, the Enumerator will be entitled to an additional allowance of one shilling for every mile above five miles necessarily traversed by the Enumerator in visiting every house within his District, but not including any distance traversed by him between his own place of abode and the first and last houses visited.

NB – Printed Notices and Forms will be delivered at each house, previous to the day of Enumeration, by Persons employed by the Registrar, by which it is expected that the labours of the Enumerator on that day will be materially lightened.

And, in addition to the remuneration mentioned in the foregoing “Table of Allowances”, the further sum of five shillings will be paid to each Enumerator as a compensation for the duties he will have to discharge in reference to the completion and delivery of his Returns to the Registrar subsequent to the day of Enumeration, but only after due fulfilment of the duties assigned to him.

Signed by Order of the Commissioners,

Thos Mann

Secretary

General Register Office
March 1841

1851

Source: www.histpop.org, browse ‘TNA Census Other’, go to 1851 *Population returns, England and Wales, Instructions to Registrars of Births and Deaths*, p 4.

TABLE OF ALLOWANCES

To be made to the several SUPERINTENDENT-REGISTRARS, REGISTRARS, ENUMERATORS, and other Persons in England employed in the Execution of the Act for taking Account of the Population of Great Britain

SUPERINTENDENT REGISTRARS

For various duties duly performed with respect to the Census of the Population, including the Revision of Enumerators’ Schedules and the preparation of an Abstract of Totals

£5-0-0

REGISTRARS

For various duties performed with respect to the Census of the Population, including the preparation of various Returns, and the examination and verification of the Enumerators’ Schedules

£3-0-0

An additional fee of 10d for every 100 persons properly enumerated, if all the Schedules of his District, made correct, shall be received by the Superintendent-Registrar before the 22nd day of April, 1851

ENUMERATORS

For various duties performed with respect to the Census of the Population, including

the delivery and collection of all necessary Forms, the enumeration of the houses in his District, and of the persons resident therein on the night of March 30 1851, and the subsequent completion of his Enumeration Schedule £0-18-0

Note — The above pay is subject to a deduction of 5s [shillings] if the Enumerator's Schedule is not delivered into the hands of the Registrar before the 8th day of April, 1851.

If the Enumerator's District contains more than 300 inhabitants, an additional fee of 1s [shilling] for every 60 persons duly enumerated above 300

In every District containing more than 25 inhabited houses, an additional allowance of 1s [shilling] for every mile above 5 miles necessarily traversed by the Enumerator, in visiting every house within his District; but not including any distance traversed by him between his own place of abode and the first and last houses visited.

MASTERS OR KEEPERS OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

For enumerating the inmates of each Institution, and forwarding the Schedule to the Registrar before the 8th of April, 1851 £0-10-0

If the number of Inmates exceed 300, an additional fee of 1s [shilling] for every 60 persons enumerated

Approved
G.GREY

GEORGE GRAHAM
Registrar General

1861

Source www.histpop.org, browse 'TNA Other', go to *Instructions to the superintendent registrar as to his duties in taking the census* (18 January 1861), page 3

TABLE OF ALLOWANCES

To be made to the several SUPERINTENDENT REGISTRARS, REGISTRARS, and ENUMERATORS, employed in the execution of the Act for taking the Census of England and Wales

(Sanctioned by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury).

SUPERINTENDENT REGISTRAR

For duly performing all his duties in taking the Census:—

A fixed Fee of £5-5-0
And an additional Fee at the rate of *Two Shillings* for every 1,000 Persons enumerated over and above the first 10,000 in his District

REGISTRAR

For duly performing all his duties in taking the Census:—

A fixed Fee of £3-10-0
And an additional Fee at the rate of *One Shilling* for every 100 Persons properly enumerated over and above the first 1,200 in his Sub-District

ENUMERATOR

For duly performing all his duties in taking the Census:—

A fixed Fee of £1-0-0

And an additional Fee at the rate of *Two Shillings* for every 100 Persons duly enumerated over and above the first 400 in his Division or District

And in each Enumerator's District ['containing more than 25 inhabited houses' has been crossed out] an additional allowance of *Sixpence* for every mile above 5 miles necessarily traversed by the Enumerator in visiting every house within his District, for the purpose of *delivering* the Householders' Schedules; and a further sum of *Sixpence* for every mile above 5 miles necessarily traversed by him in *collecting* the said Schedules

In reckoning the Mileage, only the number of miles necessarily traversed between the first and the last house visited must be taken into account; the distance traversed by the Enumerator in going to the first house, and from the last house to his own home, must, therefore, be excluded from the calculation.

ENUMERATOR OF A PUBLIC INSTITUTION

For duly performing all his duties in taking the Census:—

A fixed Fee of £0-10-0

And an additional Fee at the rate of *Two Shillings* for every 100 persons duly enumerated over and above the first 300 inmates of the Institution

1871

The same pay scales were used in 1881 and 1891.

Source: www.histpop.org, browse 'TNA Other', go to 1871, *Instructions to Superintendent Registrars*, pp 9-10.

TABLE OF ALLOWANCES

To be made to the several Superintendent Registrars, Registrars, and Enumerators, employed in the execution of the Act for taking the Census of England and Wales, 1871.

(*Sanctioned by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury*).

SUPERINTENDENT REGISTRAR

For duly performing all his duties in taking the Census:—

A fixed Fee of £6-0-0

And an additional Fee at the rate of *Two Shillings* for every 1,000 Persons properly enumerated over and above the first 10,000 in his District

[A proportional fraction of 2s [shillings] to be paid for each part of 1,000 over and above 10,000]

REGISTRAR

For duly performing all his duties in taking the Census:—

A fixed Fee of £4-0-0
And an additional Fee at the rate of *One Shilling* for every 100
Persons properly enumerated over and above the first
1,200 in his Sub-District
[A proportional fraction of 1 s [shilling] to be paid for
each part of 100 over and above 1,200]

ENUMERATOR

For delivering and collecting the Householders' Schedules, copying the Schedules correctly into the Enumeration Book, and duly performing his other duties in taking the Census:—

A fixed Fee of £1-1-0
And an additional Fee at the rate of *Two Shillings and Sixpence* for every
100 Persons duly enumerated over and above the first 400 in
his Division or District
[A proportional fraction of 2s 6d [two shillings and sixpence]
to be paid for each part of 100 over and above 400]
And an additional allowance of *Sixpence* for every mile above 5 miles
necessarily traversed by the Enumerator in visiting every house within
his District, for the purpose of *delivering* the Householders' Schedules;
and a further sum of *Sixpence* for every mile above 5 miles necessarily
traversed by him in *collecting* the said Schedules
In reckoning the Mileage, only the number of miles above five necessarily
traversed between *the first and the last house visited* must be taken
into account; the distance traversed by the Enumerator in going to the
first house, and from the last house to his own home must, therefore,
not be included in either calculation. No charge will be allowed for any
fractional part of a mile.

ENUMERATOR OF A PUBLIC INSTITUTION

For duly performing all his duties in taking the Census:—
A fixed Fee of £0-10-6
And an additional Fee at the rate of *Two Shillings and Sixpence* for
every 100 persons duly enumerated over and above the first 300
inmates of the Institution
[A proportional fraction of 2s 6d [two shillings and sixpence] to
be paid for each part of 100 over and above 300.]

Census Office, Craig's Court
London, S.W.
16 Jan 1871

GEORGE GRAHAM
Registrar General

1901

Source: www.histpop.org, browse 'TNA Census Other', go to *Instructions to the superintendent registrar relating to his duties in connection with the Census*, pp 5-7.

TABLE OF ALLOWANCES

The following Table of Fees and Allowances has been sanctioned by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's treasury, to be paid to the several Superintendent Registrars, Registrars of Births and Deaths, and Enumerators for services imposed upon them by the Census (Great Britain) Act, 1900.

SUPERINTENDENT REGISTRAR

For the due and satisfactory performance of all his Census duties:—

- (a) A fixed Fee of £6.
- (b) A Fee of Two Shillings for every 1,000 persons enumerated over and above the first 10,000 in his District, proportional parts of 1,000 being paid for at the same rate.

REGISTRAR OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS

For the due and satisfactory performance of all his Census duties:—

- (a) A fixed Fee of £4.
- (b) A Fee of One Shilling for every 100 persons enumerated over and above the first 1,200 in his Sub-District.
- (c) An additional Bonus not exceeding Sixpence per 100, counting from zero, may be conferred, at the sole discretion of the Registrar-General, in those cases where the Registrar has, by attention in the arrangement of Enumeration Districts, by care in the selection and supervision of Enumerators and by accuracy in revision of their work facilitated the compilation of the Census returns at the Central Office.

Proportional parts of 100 will be paid for at the same rate in each case.

The payment of the Bonus will be deferred until the tabulation at the Census Office has sufficiently advanced to afford a test of the general character of each Registrar's work.

ENUMERATOR

For delivering and collecting the schedules, correctly copying the particulars from the schedules into the Enumeration Book, and for due and satisfactory performance of all the Enumerator's other Census duties:—

- (a) A fixed Fee of £1 1s [shilling]
- (b) A Fee of Three Shillings and Sixpence for every 100 Persons enumerated over and above the first 400 in his District; proportional parts of 100 being paid for at the same rate.
- (c) An additional allowance, in rural Districts of large area, in remuneration for distance traversed.

No allowance for distance traversed will be made to an Enumerator, the estimated area of whose district is less than 1,500 acres; the minimum allowance will be 2s 6d [two shillings and sixpence], and the allowances will increase in proportion to area and inaccessibility of population to a general maximum of £1. Any allowance above £1 will only be made in cases of exceptionally large area and of extremely scattered population, and under no circumstances will a higher sum than £1 10s [shillings] be awarded.

The allowance in each case will be fixed by the Registrar-General on the suggestion of the Registrar, and the amount of such allowance will be specified in the Agreement to be signed by the Enumerator when he accepts his appointment.

ENUMERATOR OF A PUBLIC INSTITUTION

For due and satisfactory performance of all his Census duties a fixed Fee of 10s 6d [ten shillings and sixpence]; and an additional Fee of *Two Shillings and Sixpence* for every 100 persons enumerated over and above the first 300 inmates of the Institution, proportional parts of 100 being paid for at the same rate.

REGINALD MACLEOD

Census Office,
Millbank,
London, S.W.

HOW THE CENSUS WAS PAID FOR

The expenses of the census locally were paid in 1841 from the poor rate and the Amersham Poor Law Union Board of Guardians' Minute Book stated:

'19 Oct 1841 "The Expences attending the Census having been directed by a Recent Act of Parliament to be paid from the Funds of the Union, the Superintendent Registrar presented the Account of the Sums payable to himself, the Registrars and the Enumerators for this Union Amounting to £90-17-0. A Cheque was Ordered to be given".' (Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, 1841, G/1/1)

This had been authorised by An Act to provide for Payment of the Persons employed in taking Account of the Population in England, 7 October 1841 (5 Vict., c. 9), but the 1851 Act for taking account of the Population of Great Britain, 5 August 1850, 13 & 14 Vict. c. 53, shifted the responsibility to central government:

'XXI. And be it enacted, That all Allowances defrayed as aforesaid by any Parish or Place, or by the Guardians or Overseers on behalf thereof, or by the Treasurer of any County, Riding, Division, or Borough shall be reimbursed to such Parish, Place, or Treasurer by the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, out of such Monies as shall be provided by Parliament for that Purpose.'

From then on the Superintendent Registrars were informed that:

'An Order on Her Majesty's Paymaster General, Whitehall, will be sent to you for the payment of the whole amount of the allowances due to yourself, and to the Registrars, Enumerators, and other Persons within the Sub-Districts under your superintendence, and you will pay over to each Registrar the allowances to which the said Registrar is entitled, and will also pay over, or cause to be paid over, to the Enumerators and other Persons, the allowances to which they are severally entitled. You will then, with the least possible delay, return all the accounts to this Office, properly arranged and receipted, in order that they may be transmitted to the Commissioners for Auditing the Public Accounts.' (Instructions to the superintendent registrar as to his duties in taking the census dated 18 January 1861, page 2)

In 1881 the wording is almost unchanged except that the accounts were to be passed to the Comptroller and Auditor General.

COSTS OF THE CENSUS 1841-1871

Source *Parliamentary Papers* 1875 (Vol 377) p 2

The cost incurred by Central Office amounted to £28,400-6-3 in 1841, £33,062-0-4 in 1851, £28,805-9-9 in 1861 and went up to £41,674-9-9 in 1871.

Payments to local officials were broken down by category. The numbers of Superintendent Registrars varied little, from 622 in 1841 to 627 in 1871 and the same held good for

Registrars, who numbered 2,184 in 1841 and 2,196 in 1871. The number of Enumerators showed a similar, very modest, increase, although the population generally had risen. 2,353 were deployed in 1841 and 32,605 in 1871.

However in terms of pay to the Superintendent Registrars and Registrars of Births & Deaths the 1841 census was relatively expensive and efforts must have been made to cut back the costs in 1851. £5,059-15-0 went to the senior grade in 1841, but only £3,999-8-0 in 1851. Registrars' pay also went steeply down, from £18,371-8-0 to £13,972-13-1. The total for registrars did not exceed the 1841 figures until 1871.

It is surprising to find that, although the enumerators were most vocal in their protests over pay scales, in fact the totals for them rose steadily: £34,896-9-5 for 32,353 enumerators in 1841, averaging out at just over £1 per head; £42,097-19-9 in 1851; £45,755-12-4 in 1861 and £63,928-15-0 (averaging just under £2 each) in 1871. They would not get another rise until 1901.

Adding together costs incurred centrally and locally, the total costs for these four censuses were given as: £86,727-18-8, £93,132-1-2, £95,719-16-1 and £119,977-18-10, showing a steady rise.

PENALTIES

The Act for taking an Account of the population of Great Britain, 3 & 4 Vict. c.99, passed on 10 August 1840, specified in clause XX the penalty for those who refused to answer the enumerators' questions:

'every Person refusing to answer, or wilfully giving a false Answer to such Questions, or any of them, shall for every such Refusal or wilfully false Answer forfeit a Sum not exceeding Five Pounds nor less than Forty Shillings, at the Discretion of any justice of the Peace or Magistrate before whom Complaint thereof shall be made.'

The amount was maintained in 1851, but clause XIII was extended to cover the filling up of the form by the householder:

'and every such Occupier who shall wilfully refuse or without lawful Excuse neglect to fill up the said Schedule to the best of his or her Knowledge and Belief, or to sign and deliver the same as herein required, or who shall wilfully make, sign, or deliver, or cause to be made signed, or delivered, any false Return of all or any of the Matters specified in the said Schedule, shall forfeit a Sum not more than Five Pounds nor less than Two Pounds.'

A circular issued by the Census Office on 25 March 1861 and reprinted in many newspapers, such as *The Times*, 1 April, p 7, stated that 'in 1851...the Census was taken without the infliction of a single fine under the penal clauses of the Act of Parliament.'

For 1861 the fine was lowered to 'a Sum not more than Five Pounds nor less than Twenty Shillings (clause IV), but it was imposed in the case of a Mr Evans of Southampton who, though aged about 70, insisted he was 105 years old. He alleged that the enumerator had no right to ask anyone's age 'or to come King Bomba over the public' and was duly fined twenty shillings (*Coventry Times*, 17 April 1861). Every census brought forth in the press sly remarks about the reluctance of ladies to admit their age, but in 1871 a Scottish

schoolmistress, Flora Mitchell of Ballachulish, was brought before the bench by the local enumerator, also a teacher. He had gone to the lengths of obtaining a copy of her baptism and could demonstrate that it had taken place 44 years previously, thereby disproving her claim to be aged 29 (*Manchester Evening News*, 4 Aug 1871). This was widely publicised. She was fined the minimum £1.

Sporadic refusals occurred. James Seaton, a baker of Granborough, Bucks, appeared in before the petty sessions, but gave no reason for his intransigence. He was fined £1 plus 18 shillings and sixpence in costs, denied that he had any money and was removed to the cells (*Bucks Herald*, 16 April 1881). In 1891 Edward Harrison Taylor, Superintendent Registrar, Putney, acting on instructions from the Registrar General, brought proceedings against Mr J Morgan of Battersea. He contended that he had complied with the Act by writing down the number of people in his house. 'The Government authorities had no right to inquire into a man's private life or secrets unless he had committed a criminal act. He was not a sham but a free-born Briton, a husband and father, defending his home, his wife and his children.' Having had his say, he agreed to fill in his form in the gaoler's room. On his return to court to the courtroom he was told that he must pay a fine of £1 plus costs of 17 shillings or go to prison for 7 days. He chose prison. (*Lancaster Gazette*, 25 April 1891)

The case of Miss E Kirby of Victoria, London, was treated in her absence in a fairly jocular fashion by the court. Her form had been delivered on April 1st and she took it to be a hoax, tore it up and refused to give any information to the enumerator, though alleging she was quite aware of the Act. Once again, there was a fine of £1, but with 44 shillings costs as well (*Westminster Chronicle*, 4 May 1901).

A far more unusual case was that of a Liverpool enumerator who was charged with neglecting his duties:

'John Purcell, who had been engaged as a census enumerator in the parish of St Martin's, Liverpool, was charged with wilfully neglecting to visit a number of houses in his district, for neglecting to make up a summary, and to sign the declaration. It was found that at a number of houses the defendant had not delivered the schedules at all, and at others he had not collected them. Altogether it was found that he had omitted about 89 names. He had not made up the summary nor signed the declaration. On Mr Stewart ascertaining that the defendant would lose his £1 14 shillings and fourpence for the work, he fined him 1s [shilling] and 1s [shilling] costs in five cases proved and 10s [shillings] and costs in regard to the nonsigning of the declaration' (*Manchester Courier*, 9 May 1891).

For two enumerators in 1901 who had trouble completing their tasks the outcome was much grimmer. Charles Tanner of Winchester, a stationer, distributed all his schedules but then, having taken off and folded his coat and overcoat, left them neatly piled with his hat and bag of census papers and, jumping into the river Itchen, was drowned (*Hull Daily Mail*, 3 April 1901). The case of John William Hind of Oldham was less widely reported. He told the local registrar that, because of difficulties in collecting the schedules, he was unable to complete his returns. The next morning his body was found in the mill reservoir at Millrow, four miles away from Oldham (*St James's Gazette*, 8 April 1901).

PROTESTS ABOUT PAY

The enumerators' books sometimes contain protests to the authorities about inadequate pay. Sue Lumas, *Making Use of the Census*, 2002, p 7 quotes an aggrieved and anonymous census-taker from All Hallows, Barking:

'The enumeration of this district was undertaken by me in the belief that I should be fairly paid for my services. I was not aware that all the particulars were to be entered by the enumerator in a book, the work without that, being ample for the sum paid, nor had I any idea of the unreasonable amount of labour imposed. The distribution, collection etc of the schedules together with the copying of the same, occupied from two or three hours for every sixty persons enumerated, and for this — the equivalent is — ONE SHILLING!!! What man possessing the intelligence and business habits necessary for the undertaking would be found to accept it, if aware of the labour involved? How then can a correct return of the population be expected?

He who proposed the scale of remuneration, should, in justice be compelled to enumerate a large district, such as this, upon the terms he has himself fixed.' (HO 107/1531/193/18)

Thomas Panchard grappled with enumerating district 13 of St Marylebone and appears to have recruited Richard Spencer, a 40 year-old law writer of 65 East Street, to help him. He was perfectly entitled to do this, but asserts that Spencer should be paid as for a separate area. Spencer used a different book for District '13A' and the following note was written in the front of it:

'NB The Registrar or parties who combined the above places in Union with Grays Buildings & other streets, could not have been aware of the localities, labor and difficulties of the said places, and the impossibility of its accomplishment by one person. In Orchard Place and Grays Buildings are about 450 rooms occupied each by separate families, one half of whom were unable to make out their returns or Schedules, which the Enumerators had to perform without a Table to write on or a Chair to sit upon. It is therefore only common Justice to Messrs Panchard and Spencer that No 13 & 13a should be considered & paid for as two distinct Divisions, the first comprising 1358 persons and the Second Series containing 1134 names. Five Pounds would not be a sufficient compensation for the fortnight's labor, anxiety & expense of making the returns of their two books.

Thos Panchard, No 4, Homer Place, New Road.' (HO 107/1488/642. Discovered by Margaret Whittington and printed in *Your Family Tree*, April 2015, p 6)

A London compositor derided the structure of the enumerators' pay-scale: 'Any employer would be scouted, were he to say to his workpeople, "I shall give you on this *fat* job *less than half price* for the number of type you pick up *after* the first thousand.' He found that the job was more burdensome because it entailed 'deciphering the hieroglyphics *and correcting and transcribing* the mal-orthography of the *heads*'. He described the fee of thirty pence [two shillings and sixpence] per hundred [the rate he received after enumerating the first 400 people] as a 'paltry pittance'. He implies that he authorities were having difficulties recruiting enumerators:

'No wonder that my respectable neighbours and the local and governmental tax-gatherers politely declined to accept the decennially inflicted boon(?). Sir, the members of the Great Circumlocution Office — whose love of brainwork and whose *penchant* for prolonged business-hours are not exactly proverbial — would never consent to do so much original manuscript for so little remuneration as has now been done by

An East End Enumerator 1st May, 1871.'
(*East London Observer*, 6 May 1871)

Following the census of 1871, dissatisfied enumerators held meetings, particularly in the north and east of London. They complained that they were having to do almost double the amount of writing which had been required in 1861, but for the same pay, that this worked out at not much over fourpence per hour and that the work involved risks, one of them having caught smallpox on his rounds (*Clerkenwell News*, 9 May 1871; *Maidstone Telegraph*, 27 May 1871). *The Dundee Advertiser* of 18 May reported that the Home Secretary had turned down the request for higher pay and in fact the same rates were maintained for 1881 and 1891.

Before the 1901 census took place recommendations were drawn up by the Census Committee of the National Federation of Registrars of England and Wales and the Association of Registrars of Scotland (www.histpop.org, browse 'TNA Census Other', go to 'Recommendations regarding the 1901 Census', then 'Census Committee of British Registrars. Memorandum addressed to LGB. 9 January 1900'.) Their letter, amongst other issues, makes a strong case for increasing the fees paid to registrars and enumerators. They point out that there has been no increase for thirty years 'during which time the rate of payment of all classes has gone up from at least twenty to thirty percent'. Applications for an increase had been turned down in 1880 and 1890, despite the Treasury Census Committee having unanimously recommended a rise in 1890. The planning, especially in large urban areas can take months. The fourth point concerned enumerators and is worth quoting at length:

'The work of the Enumerators is most important as there can be no exact check on their returns, and yet their figures form the very basis of our national tables on population and other most important subjects. We as Registrars are officially told that the men we choose "must be intelligent, trustworthy, active, write well, have some knowledge of arithmetic, not to be infirm or of weak health, not under eighteen, nor over sixty-five, must be temperate, orderly and respectable, and be such persons as are likely to conduct themselves with strict propriety and civility in the discharge of their duties", — and yet the pay of the Enumerator is also officially acknowledged to be "not much more than that of a labourer"!! Last census many Registrars had great difficulty in obtaining respectable men, and the newspapers all over the kingdom had large numbers of letters in them from dissatisfied Enumerators. It is felt that correct and reliable work will not be obtained at the present scale of fees.'

Although official communications continued to assume that enumerators would be male, over 30 women had been appointed in 1891. Perhaps this came about through the dearth of applicants mentioned above?

The Registrars also pointed out that higher fees had been paid 'at the London Census of 1896' and 'the recent Census in connection with Old Age Pensions' and that most other nations were spending more than the penny per head expended by Great Britain once every ten years. They argue that the value of the information produced by the Census is recognised 'by all leading Statisticians, Medical, Sanitary and other authorities'.

The *Sheffield Telegraph* reported on 14 March 1891 that the cost of the last census (1881) had amounted to £172,000 for a population of 26 million, while the United States in 1890 had spent £1,230,000 enumerating a 61,000,000 people.

Not all the enumerators in 1871 felt underpaid. One Scot rejoiced in having received twenty-five shillings [£1-5-0] for having recorded sixteen names (*Greenock Telegraph and Clyde Shipping Gazette*, 23 May 1871).

ENUMERATORS' EXPERIENCES

Enumerators who kept a diary are rare. Edward Higgs, *Making Sense of the Census Revisited*, 2005, p 16, mentions in a footnote the diary, owned by a descendant, of John Sutherland of Crosby Ravensworth in Westmorland. He was a schoolmaster who enumerated his district in 1841, 1851 and 1861. He performed many other services for his community, collecting tithes and rates, filling in forms and witnessing signatures. He also created his own copy of the census findings which he then kept up to date, noting births, marriages and migration in the area.

George Bird of Corby in Lincolnshire also kept a diary. From it we learn that he received all his paperwork and was briefed by the registrar on 15 March 1871, a fortnight before the census. The copying of schedules occupied him for the whole of 4 April. On 21 June he received his money, 26 shillings, or £1-6-0, for work which had taken four days. In 1881 he was allocated the bigger district of Corby and was out from 6am to 8pm collecting schedules on 4 April, but had to return and finish the round the following morning. Copying took up the rest of that day and the whole of the next (David I A Steel, 'The Enumerator of Corby, Lincs' in *Local Population Studies*, Vol 19, 1977, p 35). The summary pages of the enumerators' books show that he received his 26 shillings for recording 333 people in 1871 and had over twice the number, 783, in 1881.

One Eccles enumerator in 1891 wrote up his experiences for the *Eccles Journal* of 10 April and the article was transcribed by Mary Turner and appeared in *Local Population Studies*, Vol 27, 1981, pp 79-82. Ten years later the same periodical included an article by Christopher Charlton, "Bag in hand, and with a provision of papers for an emergency" – an impression of the 1891 census from the pages of some contemporary newspapers', *Local Population Studies*, Vol 47, 1991, pp 81-88.

Local papers continued to be interested in enumerators' experiences and some, like the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, sent a reporter to accompany one on his rounds (27 March 1901, p 6).

Such reporters often commented that the rates of pay given to enumerators were far from generous.

