

1851 England and Wales census parishes, townships and places: documentation

Filename: 1851EngWalesParishandPlace.shp

This ArcGIS shapefile provides boundary and attribute data for the parishes and places enumerated in the 1851 census for England and Wales. These data derive from the 173 digital maps of the boundaries of English and Welsh parishes and their subdivisions produced by Roger Kain and Richard Oliver based on the listing in the 1851 census.¹ This dataset was the product of an enormous amount of work, a very high level of expertise and specialised cartographic knowledge that cannot be praised enough in terms of how it overcame the very significant difficulties in locating, extracting and integrating historic boundary data from a variety of key map sources. The maps were subsequently converted into a single GIS by Burton *et al.* Creating the 1851EngWalesParishandPlace (abbreviated to EWCP) dataset would have been much more difficult if they had not expertly surmounted the challenging task of joining the 173 sets of digital boundaries into a single shapefile. However, what they produced was not yet ready for the mapping of census data. As the creators of both datasets acknowledged, there remained a number of administrative units which either lacked boundaries or were unlocated.² Though small in number as a proportion of the total size of the dataset, these still remained to be addressed.

[*The Occupational Structure of Britain c.1379-1911*](#) research programme undertook the task of enhancing the Burton *et al.* dataset to provide a comprehensive shapefile of parish and places as listed in the 1851 and 1831 censuses for mapping demographic and occupational data with tolerable accuracy for the whole of England and Wales. It was also decided to add additional attributes concerning counties, hundreds and boroughs in 1831, counties in 1851 and registration sub-districts, districts and counties in 1851 from which shapefiles of these different larger scale administrative units could be assembled. Due to missing boundaries (acknowledged and unacknowledged) and errors with three figure 1851 census numbers in the Kain and Oliver dataset, plus further geographical and labelling errors introduced by the conversion of the data into GIS by Burton *et al.*, this task proved to be considerably larger than anticipated.³

The most novel element added to the GIS, the name of the ancient hundred, wapentake, borough or equivalent unit, requires some further comment. The immediate rationale for this exercise was to map population estimates for English

¹ R.J.P. Kain and R.R. Oliver, *Historic parishes of England and Wales: An electronic map of boundaries before 1850 with a gazetteer and metadata*. Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive, May, 2001. SN 4348

² N. Burton, J. Westwood and P. Carter, *GIS of the ancient parishes of England and Wales, 1500-1850*. Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive, May, 2004. SN 4828. In the UK data archive catalogue the dataset is now credited to H.R., Southall and N. Burton but the original citation is retained here due to uncertainty that the current version available may not be identical to the one we used.

³ For more details see A.E.M. Satchell, 'The creation of the 1851 England and Wales Census Parishes GIS': <http://www.campop.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/occupations/abstracts/paper31.pdf>

hundreds and their northern equivalents (wapentakes and wards) for 1761-1841. In situations where a polygon from the Burton *et al.* GIS encompassed two or more hundreds it was subdivided, if cartographic sources of boundary data were available. Of these, the most important were digital scans of the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 and 1:10560 maps published before 1879.⁴ For those boroughs which were also parliamentary constituencies in 1831, some boundaries were obtained from mapping published in the boundary surveys connected with the Reform Act of 1832.⁵ Where a source for missing boundaries could not be found, the attribute data included the names of both units. In some instances the 1831 census notes that a parish encompassed two hundreds, but assigns its entire population to one hundred. The GIS follows the 1831 census in assigning the whole unit to the single hundred.

The GIS attribute data were checked, edited and enhanced with extra data from the census by Max Satchell, Tony Wrigley and a number of research assistants, with technical support from Peter Kitson and Gill Newton. Max Satchell checked and in some cases edited the GIS polygon data using a variety of cartographic and documentary sources. Of these the most important were digital scans of the Ordnance Survey first edition 1:2500 and 1:10560 maps from the Landmark Group distributed by Edina⁶, the series of maps of registration districts and sub-districts boundaries prepared for the Registrar General prior to the censuses of 1861, 1871 and 1891 and the description of enumeration district boundaries given in the Census Enumerators Books for the censuses from 1851, 1861 and 1871. The 1:63,360 maps and Census Enumerators Books are held in The National Archives, Kew (TNA, RG 18/3-155, 198-227, HO 107, RG 9, RG 10).

The work involved changing one or more elements of information about place, parish, county, or three figure census number for 2,461 (10.8 per cent) of 22,729 lines of data in the Burton *et al.* GIS. This editing process saw the redigitisation of 644 of the 22,729 polygons, the deletion of 81 polygons, and the digitisation of 529 new polygons.⁷ The upshot of this exercise was that at its end all the larger administrative units – counties, hundreds, registration counties, registration subdistricts – either had no polygons or virtually none that could not be assigned to them (see table 1). The boundaries of the census parishes or places proved a little more challenging. All but 289 polygons (1.25%) could be assigned to a single census parish or place. Of the remainder, 256 polygons contained elements of two or more census parishes or places but lacked the boundary data to divide them. Thirty-two polygons could not be allocated with confidence to a specific parish or place. Only nine (0.05%) of the 16,310 parish or places listed in 1851 census could not be located sufficiently well to be assigned to one or more polygons.

⁴ The scans were created by the Landmark Group and distributed by Edina, the JISC national academic data centre based at the University of Edinburgh: <http://edina.ac.uk/>.

⁵ *Reports from Commissioners on proposed Division of Counties and Boundaries of Boroughs in England and Wales: Parts I.-VIII*, BPP, 1832 (141)

⁶ Edina is the JISC national academic data centre based at the University of Edinburgh: <http://edina.ac.uk/>.

⁷ Satchell, 'The creation of the 1851 England and Wales Census Parishes GIS'

Table 1. Allocation of polygons to the different administrative units

Unit	Number of polygons allocated	Unallocated polygons	% allocated
1851 Registration County	23177	0	100
1851 Registration District	23175	2	99.99
1851 Registration Sub-District	23172	5	99.98
1851 Census parishes or places	23145	32	99.86
1851 Ancient County	23177	0	100
1831 Ancient Country	23177	0	100
1831 Hundred	23175	2	99.99

This work was undertaken as part of *The changing occupation structure of nineteenth century Britain* project funded by the E.S.R.C. – RES-000-23-1579 and directed by Leigh Shaw-Taylor and Tony Wrigley. The work was aided by an Emeritus Fellowship from the Leverhulme Trust, and two British Academy Small Research Grants (SG 40833, SG 42909) awarded to Tony Wrigley and funding under the BA Academy's Research Project scheme (BARP) awarded to Leigh Shaw-Taylor. Our thanks go out to these organisations and to the Landmark Group and Edina for supplying the Ordnance Survey data. The shapefile comprises the standard ArcGIS .shx, .shp, .sbx, .sbn, .prj and .dbf files. The dbf file is described below.

Attribute data

1851EngWalesParishandPlace.dbf

The dbf table contains the following fields

<i>Field</i>	<i>Data type</i>	<i>Description</i>
FID	Object ID	Unique ID for each row in the table
Shape	Polygon	Polygon/s for each census unit/subdivision
ID	Numeric	Unique identifier for each polygon
CEN1	Numeric	Registration district number as per the 1851 census
CEN2	Numeric	Registration sub-district number as per the 1851 census
CEN3	Numeric	Parish or place-number as per the 1851 census
R_DIST	Text	Name of registration district as per the 1851 census
R_SDIST	Text	Name of registration sub-district as per the 1851 census
PAR	Text	Name of parish
CAT	Text	Administrative unit type abbreviation ⁸
PLA	Text	Name of place
HUND31	Text	Name of hundred, wapentake etc as per the 1831 census
S_HUND31	Text	Supra-hundred unit as per the 1831 census (if there is one) ⁹
A_CTY31	Text	Name of ancient county as per the 1831 census
A_CTRY31	Text	Name of country as per the 1831 census
A_CTY51	Text	Name of ancient country as per the 1851 census
A_CTRY51	Text	Name of country as per the 1851 census
R_CTYNO	Text	Number of registration county as per the 1851 census
R_CTY	Text	Name of registration county as per the 1851 census
R_DIVNO	Text	Number of registration division as per the 1851 census
R_DIV	Text	Name of registration division as per the 1851 census
R_CTRY	Text	Name of registration country as per the 1851 census
CEN	Text	Consolidated three figure census number
SCE	Text	Source of boundary and attribute data
REF	Text	Archive reference for unpublished material

⁸ See below for a list of abbreviations.

⁹ Ancient units above the level of the hundred but below the level of the county e.g. lathes (Kent), rapes (Sussex), parts (Lincolnshire).

The abbreviations used in the SCE field are listed below.

ABBREVIATION	SOURCE
BPP, BOUND. COM. (1831-2)	Reports from commissioners on proposed division of counties and boundaries of boroughs. Part I.1831-32 (141) British Parliamentary Papers, XXXVIII.1, XXXIX.1, XL.1, XLI.1
BPP, BOUND. COM. (1837)	Report of the commissioners appointed to report and advise upon the boundaries and wards of certain boroughs and corporate towns, (England and Wales.) Part I. 1837 (238), British Parliamentary Papers, XXVI.1, XXVII.1, XXVIII.1
BRYANT C31, C51, C71, C81, C91	County mapping by A. Bryant Published returns of the 1831 census, the 1851 census <i>et seq.</i>
D	Drainage map
E	Enclosure map
GREENWOOD	County mapping by Christopher and John Greenwood
L	Estate or other miscellaneous map
LOBEL	Lobel, M.D., ed., <i>The British Atlas of Historic Towns</i> , 3 vols., 1969-1990
O1-1	Ordnance Survey 1:63,360 Old Series
O1-2	Ordnance Survey 1:63,360 New Series, Revised edition (1895-9)
O1-3	Ordnance Survey 1:63,360 New Series, Third Edition (1903-13)
O1-7	Ordnance Survey 1:63,360 Seventh Series (1952-1974)
O6	Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 or larger scale mapping
R	Parochial assessment or 'rating' map
S	Sanitary map
T	Tithe map
REGISTRAR GENERAL'S MAPS C61	1:5280 maps of registration districts and sub-districts boundaries prepared for the Registrar General prior to the 1861 census
REGISTRAR GENERAL'S MAPS C71	1:63,360 maps of registration districts and sub-districts boundaries prepared for the Registrar General prior to the 1871 census
REGISTRAR GENERAL'S MAPS C91	1:10,560 maps of registration districts and sub-districts boundaries prepared for the Registrar General prior to the 1891 census
CEB	Census Enumerators Books, 1851-1871
VCH	<i>The Victoria History of the Counties of England</i> , ed. H. A. Doubleday et al., 1900- in progress.
YOUNGS	Youngs, F.A., <i>Guide to the Local Administrative Units of England</i> , 2 vols., 1980-1991

After R.J.P. Kain and R.R. Oliver, *Historic parishes of England and Wales: An electronic map of boundaries before 1850 with a gazetteer and metadata*. Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive, May, 2001, pp. 35, 37 (with additions).

The abbreviations used in the CAT field are listed below.

Abbreviation	Category of District
B	Borough
C	Chapelry
D	Division or district
EP	Extra-parochial
H	Hamlet
M	Manor
P	Parish
PC	Parochial chapelry
T	Township
X	Uncategorised, uncertain or lands common to more than one district
Y	Tithing

After Kain and Oliver, *Historic parishes of England and Wales*, p. 34

Details of the 289 polygons which could not be assigned to a single census parish or place listed in the Excel file *1851EngWalesParishandPlaceAnomalies.xls*. In addition to the fields listed in *1851EngWalesParishandPlace.dbf*, the Excel table contains the following

<i>Field</i>	<i>Data type</i>	<i>Description</i>
NOTES	Text	Notes concerning the census parishes or places in the polygon
ID	Integer	Unique identifier for the polygon that matches the ID field in the <i>1851EngWalesParishandPlace</i> dbf table
CEN_A	Text	Three figure census number of the first parish or place within the polygon where this is known.
CEN_B	Text	Three figure census number of the second parish or place within the polygon where this is known.
CEN_C	Text	Three figure census number of the third parish or place within the polygon where this is known/ if there is one.
CEN_D	Text	Three figure census number of the fourth parish or place within the polygon where this is known/ if there is one.

Co-ordinate system

British_National_Grid

Projection: Transverse_Mercator

False_Easting: 400000.000000

False_Northing: -100000.000000

Central_Meridian: -2.000000

Scale_Factor: 0.999601

Latitude_Of_Origin: 49.000000

Linear Unit: Meter

GCS_OSGB_1936

Datum: D_OSGB_1936

Citation guidelines

Minimum citation

Satchell, A.E.M., Kitson, P.M.K., Newton, G.H., Shaw-Taylor, L., Wrigley E.A., *1851 England and Wales census parishes, townships and places* (2016). This dataset was created with funding from the ESRC (RES-000-23-1579), the Leverhulme Trust and the British Academy. A description of the dataset can be found in Satchell, A.E.M., *England and Wales census parishes, townships and places: documentation* (2016, 2006) available at:

<http://www.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/occupations/datasets/documentation.html>

Optional extra

The Satchell et al dataset is an enhanced version of Burton, N, Westwood J., and Carter P., *GIS of the ancient parishes of England and Wales, 1500-1850*. Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive (May 2004), SN 4828, which is a GIS version of Kain, R.J.P., and Oliver, R.R., *Historic parishes of England and Wales: An electronic map of boundaries before 1850 with a gazetteer and metadata*. Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive, May, 2001. SN 4348.

Citation notes

- 1 The minimum citation text is the minimum citation necessary to meet our obligations to funders, the UKDA and normal scholarly standards. The optional extra goes beyond this but we recommend adding this to the minimum citation text to make clear we did not create the dataset from scratch.
- 2 If on a second reference to the dataset you need an abbreviated reference, our suggestion is Satchell et al, *EWCP*. *EWCP* stands for England and Wales Census Places.
- 3 Note that if you are using one of the GIS datasets derived from EWCP then you should cite the derived dataset rather than EWCP.

Errors and further corrections

Collectively Kain and Oliver, Burton, Westwood and Carter and Satchell, Wrigley, Kitson and Newton have contributed many thousands of hours to create this GIS and have struggled to make it as accurate as possible. However, we remain interested in refining it still further. If you spot something that is wrong, please email details to campop@geog.cam.ac.uk

A.E.M Satchell (2016, 2006).