

## FEMALES IN THE NAVENBY CENSUS

Bracketed number at the end denotes number of inhabitants listed

In 1841, there are no means of support, or jobs, listed. (943)

In 1851, many females were left blank, or down as wife, or as (husband's job) wife, house servant, kitchen servant, charwoman, mangler, schoolmistress. (1547)

In 1861, things become a bit more interesting: stay maker, milliner, landed proprietor, maid of all work, and despite the head of one household being a humble agricultural labourer, his wife was a private schoolmistress, and his 2 teenage daughters, "teachers". Most girls still went "into service" unless they came from a family of good financial standing, or were unable to work. (1718)

In 1871, women appeared to be living a bit longer, and we get "annuitants" who were women in receipt of private regular payments from perhaps land or property, or even well-off relations. Then we get "paupers", who presumably got nothing! We have a lodging house keeper, who ran the licensed lodging house, and of course a school-mistress. There are so many dressmakers and laundresses that it reminds us of that old joke: "when we are really poor we shall have to take in each other's washing to make a living". Still many servants, mainly domestic. The majority of females are left blank under the occupation column. (1001)

In 1881, we don't appear to have quite so many dressmakers and laundresses, and whether by Government ruling or personal preference, our female forbears begin to have descriptions for what they actually do or did. E.g. retired innkeeper, tailoress, farmer (a spinster), governess, bar maid, music teacher. And then: "formerly"...."widow of".....and sadly, "wife of a lunatic", which surely must have been prised out of her by the census taker. (1776)

In 1891, things are becoming marginally more interesting. Here we see the women's lives in greater detail. A female watchmaker! Appears to have taken over from Father, and the rest of the children except one gone elsewhere. A milliner, a nurse, and a retired nurse. Still many dressmakers, presumably making for those who could not; several "mother's helps" and a lady who did shirt sewing and knitting. To run a house in those days, without any domestic appliances took time; quite often, if there was the money, seamstresses and mother's helps were employed on a daily basis, as and when required. (947)

In 1901, some of our present day "local" names begin to appear more often. There are

more children than previously, presumably because more are surviving infancy, and thus the Mothers are well occupied in the home, not even dressmaking or laundering for outsiders. It is noticeable how many "incomers" there are, now living in Navenby but born elsewhere. We see the usual elderly female farmers, farmer's daughters, and teachers, but single or older females are now branching out, for example Innkeeper and draper's assistant. The widow of the local saddler ran the shop; the wife of the railway stationmaster was a shopkeeper in her own right; the Wesleyan Minister's wife employed a "lady's help". We now see the young Hilda Craven (Mrs. Smith) age 8. (1664)

In 1911, there were still not so many dressmakers and laundresses, but young girls were still employed as domestic servants (Hilda Craven, see above) There is at least one dressmaker's apprentice, which shows progress. Wives assisted in their husbands' businesses; both wife and daughter assisted the owner of the Great Northern Hotel on Station Road. There are now several nurses, general, sick, and "monthly" for confinements. Wives of travelling pedlars were themselves called travelling pedlars. The Rectory appropriately employed a parlourmaid. Things were looking up. (1717)

In 1939, on the eve of the second World War, we have a special glimpse of our village and its inhabitants. For the women, little has changed, although it soon will do for the younger generation and those to be born. Meanwhile, our ladies are still mainly housewives, and carry out their "domestic duties", pointing out that they are "unpaid". We still have a few shopkeepers, a chemist's shop assistant, teachers and a fish fryer (whom we have met before somewhere). One young girl is noted down as a "day girl" which has nothing to do with school, but tells us she helps out in somebody's house on a daily basis and does not "live in". Here for the last time until 1921 we see Hilda Craven, age 47.

We look forward with great interest to the release of the 1921 census.