

VI

THE CENSUS AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION

After the 1826 Poor Rate and 1831 Land Tax Assessments, the best source of information about farming in the parish in the C19th is from the census returns every 10 years from 1841 to 1911.

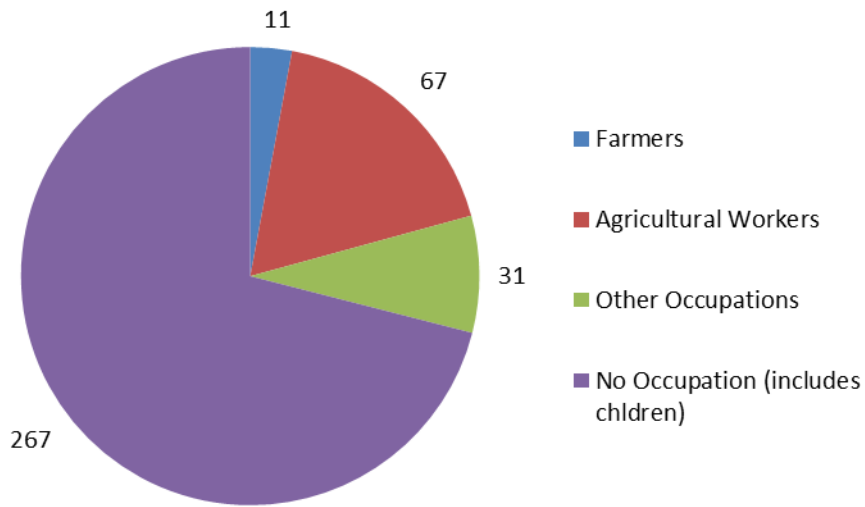
1841 Census

The written entries of the 1841 census are difficult to decipher and no acreages are attached to the 11 farmers identified in the parish. White's Directory of 1842 states that most of the land in the parish is owned by Charles Turner. Thomas Eve and John Burkinshaw (who must be the Joseph John Burkinshaw identified in the 1841, 1851 and 1861 Grasby censuses) are described as "*yeomen with estates*" and William Brocklesby and John Clark are described as farmers. It is reasonable to assume that the other 7 farmers named in the 1841 census farmed modest acreages.

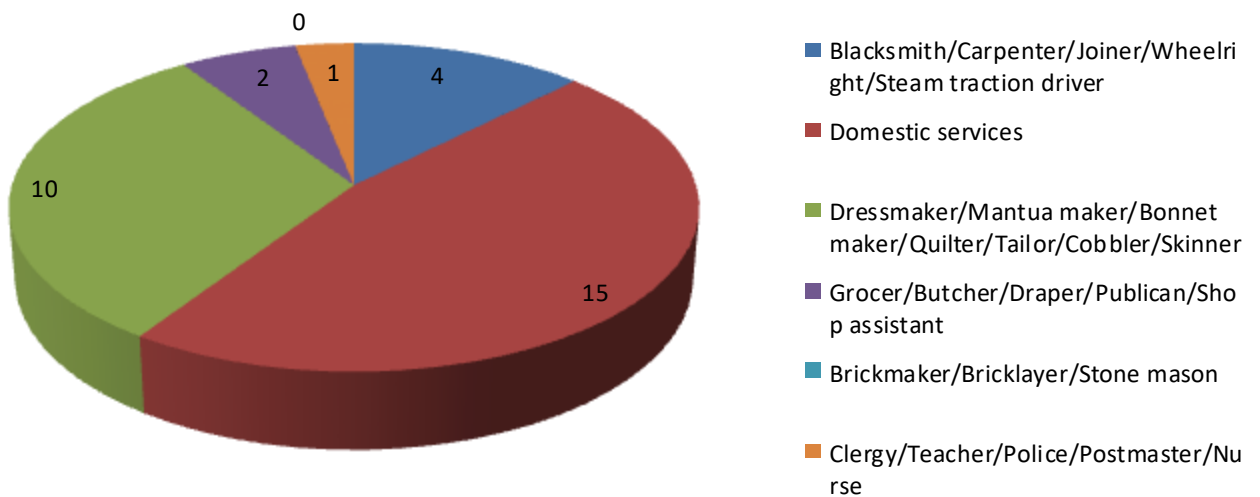
In 1849 Thomas Eve put up for sale 239 acres either side of the Limber Road. Interestingly, the advertisement in the Stamford Mercury also states that he wishes to become the tenant farmer of this land, which accords exactly with Herman Levy's view that many yeomen farmers sold their land in order to become tenants of larger farms. He doesn't appear, however, in the 1851 census, by which time he would have been 65.

One sad entry in the Stamford Mercury in 1844 was an article about the amputation of John Clark's eldest son's arm, after he shot himself when retrieving his gun from the hedge in which he'd placed it while working in the field. He'd taken the gun to shoot crows.

Occupations in Grasby 1841 (Total Pop. 374)



Occupations other than in Agriculture, Grasby 1841 (8% total pop.)



1851 Census

The pattern of farms becomes clearer in the 1851 census. There are 19 parishioners who describe themselves as farmers, 7 of whom employ 33 men out of a total of 4 farm bailiffs, 56 agricultural labourers, 5 farm servants, 1 groom, and 2 woodmen resident in the parish. The total acreage of these farms adds up to 1463 of the 1720 acres in the parish. This leaves 257 acres, presumably farmed by residents outside of the parish, although it is possible that some resident within the parish also farmed land in other parishes, the acreages of which are included in the figures in the census. Interestingly, in 1854 240 acres of wold land in Grasby were put up for sale by George Nelson, owner and occupier, from Limber. Also, in 1855 John Ferraby Esq., of Owmbly House, put his house (described as “new”) with 112 acres up for sale, which included 18 acres in Grasby (Stamford Mercury). These between them would seem to account for the remainder of the land in the parish.

Table 1

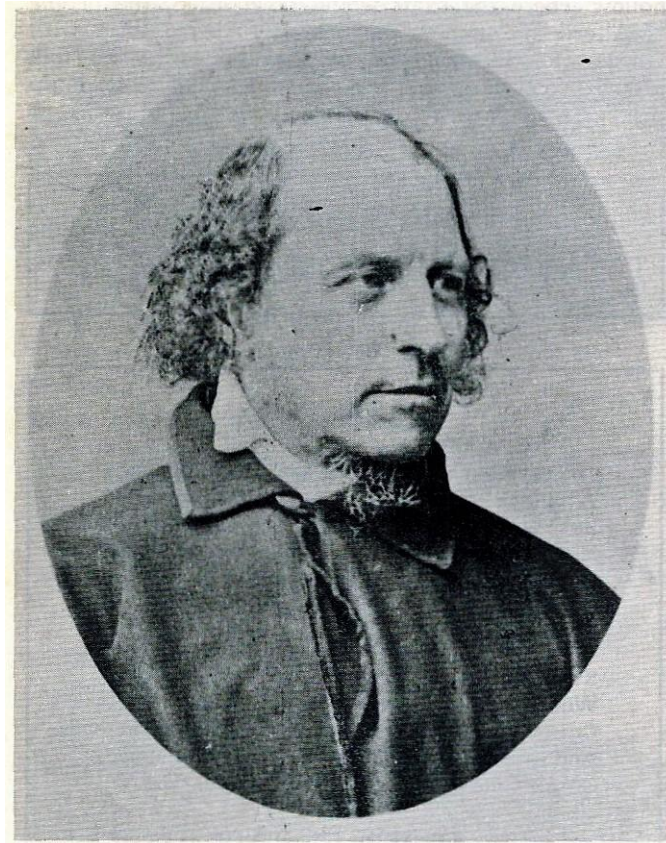
The pattern of farm sizes of resident farmers in 1851

Size of farm	Number of farms
200+ acres	4
30-50 acres	4
20-29 acres	2
10-19 acres	4
Below 10 acres	5

If Young is correct, the last 5 would all have needed additional sources of income. It’s worth noting that there were also 6 parish residents, all from the King family, who were described as cattle dealers.

Matthew Burkinshaw (*impropriator and gentleman*) died in 1834. He owned land in Grasby, Hemingby, Horsington and Metheringham. He left all his freehold estates at Grasby to his son John (although curiously he also left about 62 acres, occupied by John, and a cottage, occupied by Charles Canty* to another son, Josiah, from Wragby). In 1851 Joseph John Burkinshaw lived in Grasby and farmed 329 acres, employing 11 men, including a house servant and a groom. His entry is next to the Rev. Charles Turner in the new vicarage, which could be Manor Farm, an C18th building demolished recently and replaced by a large private residence, but still called Manor Farm.

**Is this the origin of the road name ‘Canty Nook’ in Grasby today?*



Charles "Tennyson" Turner

(Once he had changed to "Turner", Charles never used "Tennyson" as part of his name)

William Brocklesby occupied the "Vicarage Farmstead" in 1851 (presumably in place of Francis Isles) and farmed 288 acres, employing 6 labourers and 5 servants.

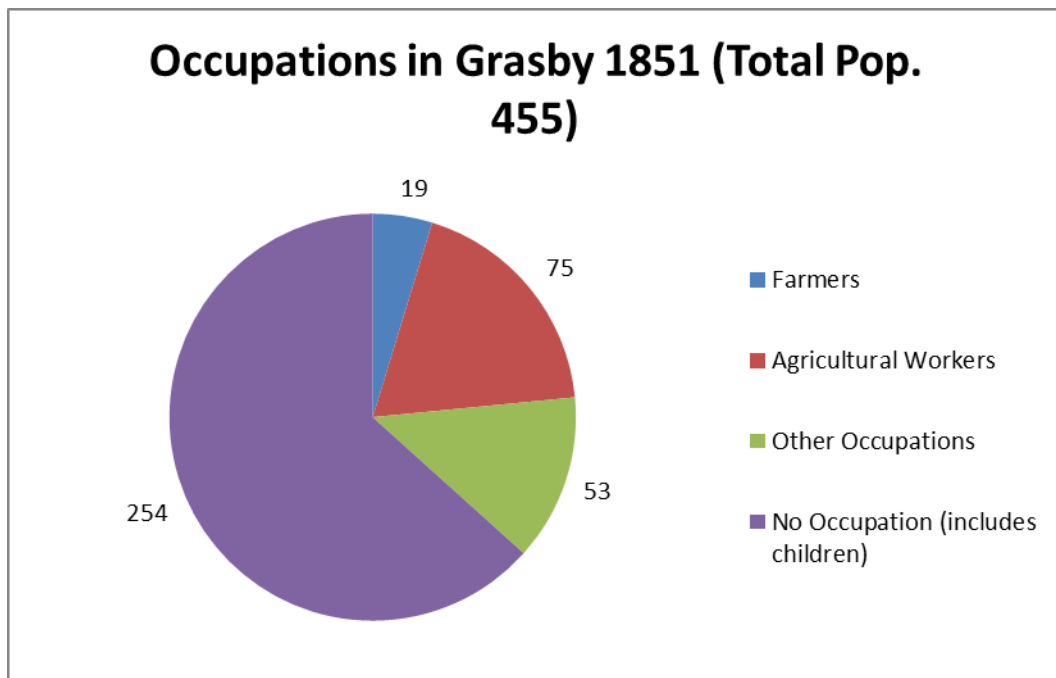
John Clark (born in Grasby) farmed 300 acres, employed 4 men and one servant (his entry is one house on from the Vicarage Farmstead in the census).

William Hill (also born in Grasby and now 76, with a wife of 38, was the only other large scale farmer, with 272 acres. He sold a number of small lots in the village and about 20 acres of land in 1851 (Stamford Mercury). These four farmers managed in total 1189 acres.

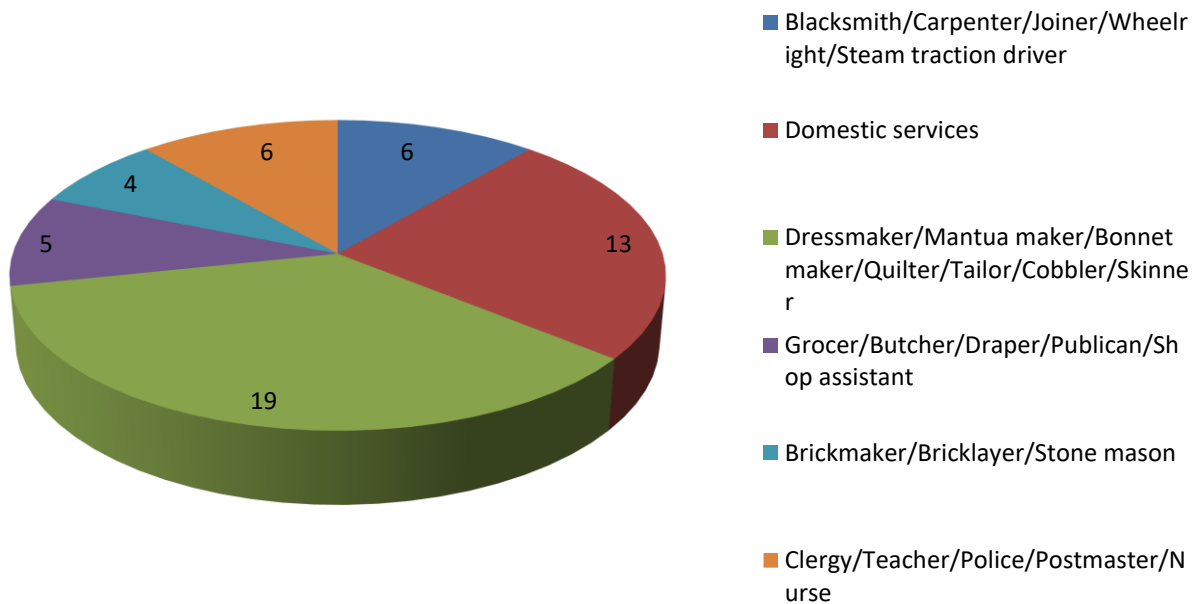
The names of Burkinshaw, Clark, Abey and Hill appear to have links with the parliamentary enclosures and all but Burkinshaw were born in the parish. White's Directory of 1856 states that the "Rev. Charles Turner is lord of the manor, but part of the parish belongs to the Burkinshaw, West and other families". (John West Esq., of Melton Ross, is named as a major land owner in Grasby and Clixby in Kelly's Directory of 1885). "J.J. Burkinshaw is impropriator of the rectory. The

vicarage had 110 acres of glebe, partly allotted at enclosure, when 62 acres were awarded to the rectory, which was appropriated to Birstall Abbey, in Holderness, by the Earl of Albermarle, in 1115”.

William Brumpton, 41, born in Nettleton, was farming 32 acres in 1851. In 1861 William was in a hotel in Hull on census day, but his wife Ann (described as a farmer’s wife) was in Grasby. William Brumpton, 27, born in Grasby, was an agricultural labourer and married to Sarah, a dressmaker, with a very young daughter. By 1871, William, described as a widower and landowner, was living with the young William above and his family. This younger William was now a farmer of nearly 12 acres. The census indicates that this is father and the second son. The eldest son, Charles (unmarried and living at home in 1861), was now married and a blacksmith in Butcher’s Lane. The farming connection with Grasby of the family continued for the rest of the century, with grandson (another William) succeeding his father by 1901.



Occupations other than in Agriculture, Grasby 1851 (13% total pop.)



1861 Census

In 1861 there were 20 farmers, but the picture had changed. Joseph Burkinshaw was the only farmer with a large farm (now 520 acres) living in the village. In 1867 there was a case in the Court of Chancery between the Rev. Charles Turner and Joseph. Joseph was the former's "*general agent to receive rents of and to manage freehold property and generally to manage all money matters and affairs from 1842 to 1861*". The original suit was for account and payment from Joseph Burkinshaw to Charles Turner amounting to £4,000. Joseph had appealed this amount and Charles wanted interest paying on the sum owed. Both claims were rejected by the Court (Stamford Mercury). One would guess that Charles was in need of the money as he had spent £3400 on rebuilding much of All Saints Church, which was re-opened in 1869. Before that, he rebuilt the school in 1855. By 1879, after his death, the village was appealing for larger subscriptions from landowners and parishioners to maintain the school and keep its voluntary status to prevent it from becoming a Board school (Stamford Mercury).

William Brocklesby, who in 1839 married Elizabeth Bennard, daughter of a farmer in Owmbly, was now deceased and Elizabeth was living back in Owmbly with her children.

John Clark had disappeared and no trace of him or his family can be found in the census, other than 14 year old Cecilia (the youngest child in 1851)

who was described as a scholar in 1861 and living with a family in Holbeach.

William Hill had disappeared, presumably deceased. His wife, Elizabeth, had also disappeared from the census records, but she would have been only 48 in 1861 and may have remarried.

John Ferraby crops up again, now living in Wootton Hall, Ulceby. He puts up for sale in 1866 land in Owmbly and 28 acres in the quarry area of Grasby (*“for exploitation”*), tenanted by Mr John Ashton from Owmbly (Stamford Mercury).

Of the smaller farmers in the 1851 census most were still in the village, with the exceptions of George James (bricklayer and farmer of 15 acres), Joseph Barron (farmer of 50 acres), apparently now in Clixby, aged 61 and just a waggoner, and Jonathan Walker (farmer of 30 acres) who was now in Somersby, still a farmer.

Thomas Skelton, a farmer of 20 acres in 1851, was still in Grasby but now only an agricultural labourer. On the other hand Joseph Hayward, now farmer of 5 acres, was just an agricultural labourer in 1851. Robert King (victualler and farmer of 15 acres) was a cattle dealer in 1851, whereas Thomas Curtis, a publican in 1851, was now a cattle dealer and farmer. There were also several examples of residents describing themselves as both agricultural labourers and farmers (the classic small holder or cottager).

There were a few newcomers in 1861:- William Thompson (21 acres) from North Kelsey, William Lingard (25 acres) from Immingham, Francis Harris (gardener with 5 acres) from Searby and Abraham Ward (agricultural labourer with 3 acres).

Nearly half the land tenanted by William Lingard was put up for sale by auction in 1867, including 5.5 acres opposite the Cross Keys (Brigg Road Close), nearly 4 acres just outside Grasby (Kelsey Road Close) and a house, outbuildings, yard, garden and just over 5 acres close to the village next to Station Road (Stamford Mercury). William was not present in the 1871 Grasby census.

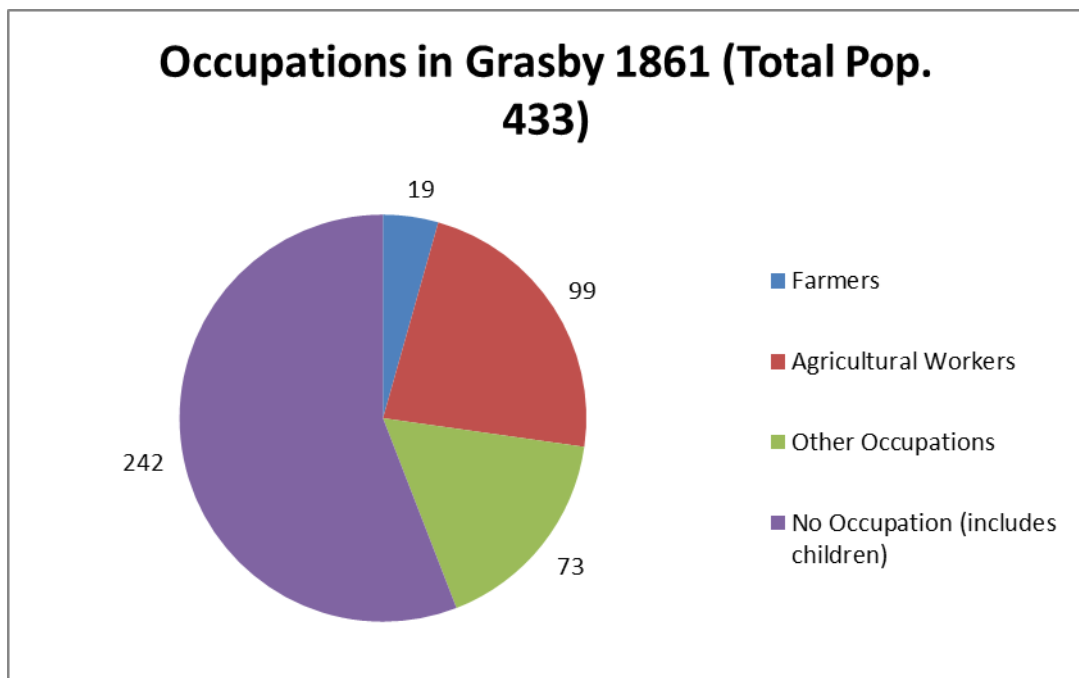
The homes of two farm bailiffs are identified in the census, Gilbert Tyson and his family at Vicarage Farm (presumably in place of William Brocklesby) and William Dann at Grasby Bottoms Farm. Gilbert Tyson had been just an agricultural labourer in Cuxwold in 1851.

Table 2

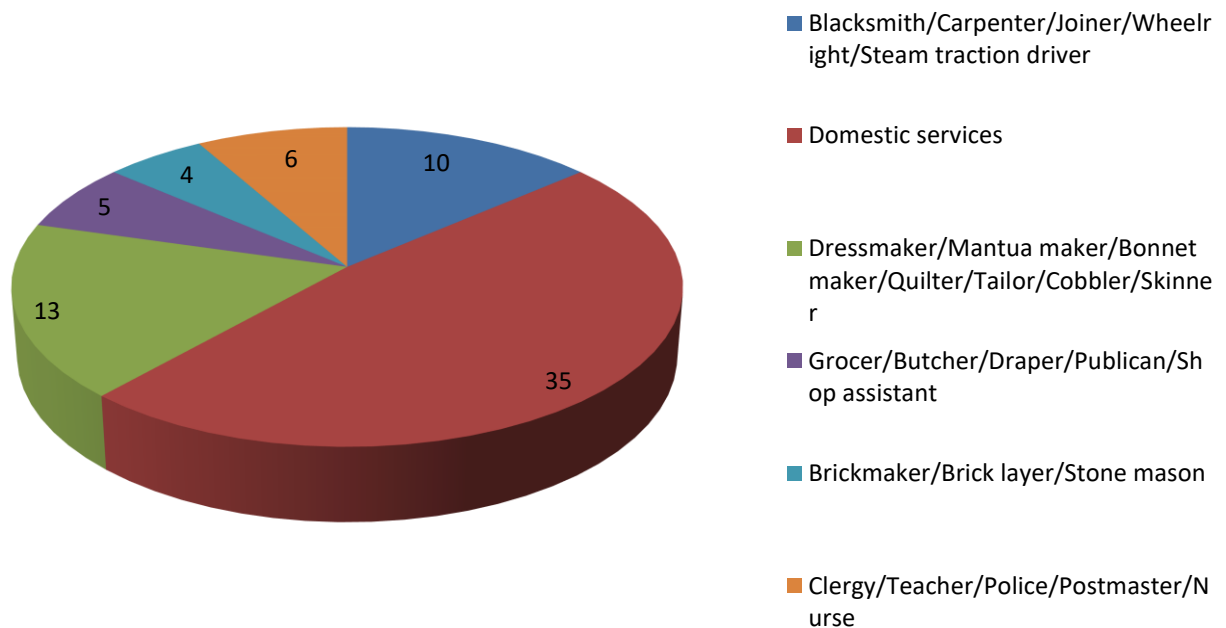
The pattern of farm sizes of resident farmers in 1861

Size of farm	Number of farms
200+ acres	1
30-50 acres	1
20-29 acres	4
10-19 acres	5
Below 10 acres	9

The number of small holdings had increased, but with now 953 acres, as opposed to 257 acres in 1851, being farmed by outsiders (employing, it appears, bailiffs resident in the parish).



Occupations other than in Agriculture, Grasby 1861 (18% total pop.)



1871 Census

By 1871 the last resident large-scale farmer had moved out of the parish. Joseph John Burkinshaw married Mary sometime in the 1860s, quite late in life, and moved to live in Owmbly House. They had a son, John F, in 1865. Joseph was described in the 1871 census as a farmer of 700 acres, employing 15 men and 5 boys. One assumes that much of this land was still in Grasby. In 1873 he put up for sale a farmhouse (possibly Manor Farm), some cottages and 62 acres in Grasby. By this time there were only 10 farmers in the parish with just 155 acres, leaving 1565 acres managed by outsiders.

George West, William Lingard, Joseph Hayward, Robert King and John Abey were farmers in 1861 not present in the 1871 Grasby census. Charles Pike and Thomas Gilliat, both 80, were now just agricultural labourers, as was Abraham Ward. There were 58 agricultural labourers, 4 farm servants and one shepherd in the parish.

William Thompson was deceased, but his widow Maria continued to farm 24 acres with her son William. Charles Hand was farming 8 acres based at Grasby House Farm. His father, Peter, who was both a blacksmith and farmer, died shortly after the census in 1861. Thomas Curtis, 59, was still farming 25 acres with no family. William Burton had taken over from his

father, farming 14 acres. Francis Harris, previously a cottager and gardener, was now a publican and cottager. Richard Cuthbert was a farmer new to the parish, but who had been born in Grasby.

William Dann was still the bailiff at Grasby Bottoms, but he bought Grasby House Farm from Charles Hand in the early 1870s. Gilbert Tyson was no longer a farm bailiff, but he was now living with his son who farmed 5.5 acres. George Baker, originally from Kirton Lindsey, was a new farm foreman living in Pinfold Lane, previously Vicarage Lane, and might have been working for Joseph Burkinshaw. Stephen Shepherd, 66, was still farming 20 acres on his own. He appeared to have no immediate family.

George Middleton was now farming 28 acres. He had been in Grasby since about 1845, having moved from Ashby, and appeared in the 1851 and 1861 censuses as a farmer of 17 and 16 acres respectively. He died in 1879, aged 65, found at the foot of the stairs in his own house. The official cause of death given was “*seized by apoplexy and falling down stairs*” (Stamford Mercury). His family, however, remained as farmers in Grasby until after World War II and gave the unofficial name to Middleton Lane, as it is still known locally today.

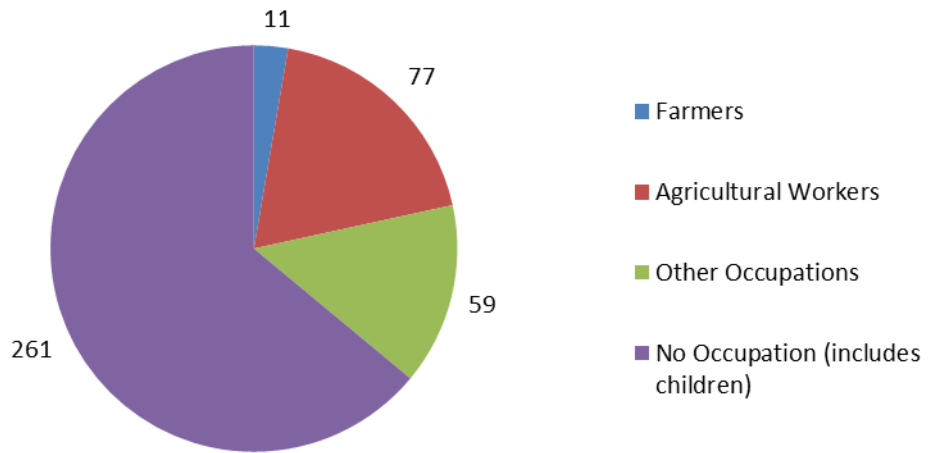
Table 3

The pattern of farm size of resident farmers in 1871

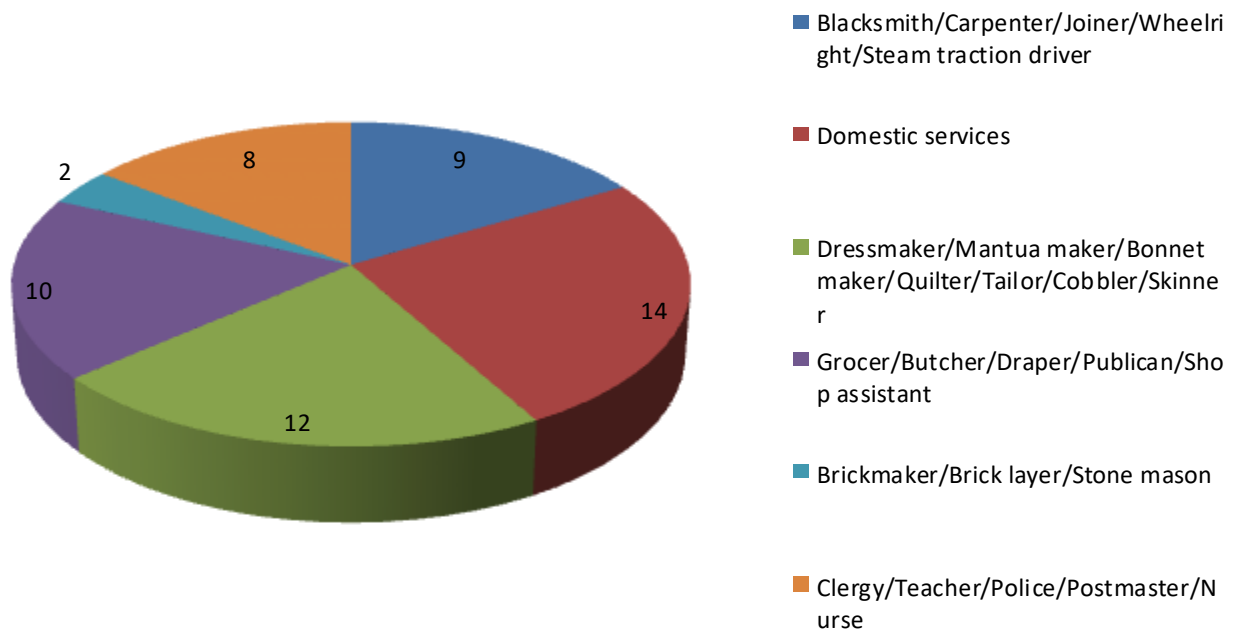
Size of farm	Number of farmers
200+ acres	0
30-50 acres	0
20-29 acres	4
10-19 acres	3
Below 10 acres	3

Although it might appear that small holders were becoming more dominant in the parish, most of the land almost certainly comprised large farms managed by outsiders.

Occupations in Grasby 1871 (Total Pop. 408)



Occupations other than in Agriculture, Grasby 1871 (13% total pop.)



1881 Census

1881 is the last census that provides farm sizes as well as identifying farmers. There were 10 farmers, 1 poulterer, 2 foremen/bailiffs, 55 agricultural labourers, 6 farm servants, 1 shepherd and 4 cattle dealers in the parish. 195+ acres were farmed by residents (the census fails to provide farm sizes for 2 farmers).

Table 4

The pattern of farm size of resident farmers in 1881 was:

Size of farm	Number of farmers
200+ acres	0
30-50 acres	2
20-29 acres	3
10-19 acres	3
Below 10 acres	0

There were several farmers now with slightly larger acreages and none with fewer than 10 acres.

An interesting new name was Jane Priscilla Foster who was farming 50 acres. She was a widow of 45 with a family of two girls, 18 and 16, and two boys, 11 and 9. She was born in Fishtoft and married John sometime between 1851 and 1861. He was born in Asterby in 1828 and in 1851 was living close by in Belchford, the eldest son of his widowed mother, Eleanor, who was running a 470 acre farm with 10 labourers. By 1861 he was farming 260 acres in Owmbly with Jane Priscilla. Ten years later the farm had grown to 350 acres and John was employing 8 men and 2 boys. Jane Priscilla seems to have taken a leaf out of her mother-in-law's book by taking on a farm after being widowed before 1881. At 65 in 1901 she was still farming in Grasby, with her daughter Emily, and is listed as an employer.

William Thompson, 28, had taken over from his widowed mother and was now farming 30 acres, 6 acres more than in 1871. Foster Middleton had taken over the 28 acre farm from his father, George. Thomas Curtis, born in Grasby and now 69, was still farming 25 acres on his own. His address is given as "Temperance Cottage", the site of a farm for 30 years. Samuel Dann had taken over from his father at Grasby House Farm, farming 20 acres.

George Markham was new to farming, but was born in Grasby, son of Philip (also born in Grasby) who was a dealer in coal and skins in 1851.

Philip died in 1855 after a fight outside a pub in Caistor with William Brumpton, of Grasby, who was later charged with but acquitted of manslaughter (Stamford Mercury). George lived with his widowed mother in 1861 and worked in Grasby as a butcher and carrier. In 1871 he was listed as a skinner in Butcher's Lane, but he was farming 18 acres, address Little Drift, 10 years later. By 1891, however, George was deceased and Mary, his widow, was listed as a farmer with her three sons, Philip (27), George W. (23) and Cyril P. (9). In 1901 Philip and George were farmers in their own right. Philip became joint owner and tenant in 1903 of part of an estate of 127 acres, known as Bentley House Farm, which he occupied until at least 1923 when he and his brothers put it up for sale by auction.

William Brumpton, 46, was still farming 12 acres in Station Road, but his father, also William Brumpton, 71, (widower), was now a cattle dealer in Vicarage Road. Richard Cuthbert was still farming 12 acres.

Robert Eaton was a new farmer, a single man of 26 living with a housekeeper, a widow of 28, but no acreage is provided in the census. Uriah Lacey was a poulterer on Vicarage Road. Henry Smith was a miller and farmer.

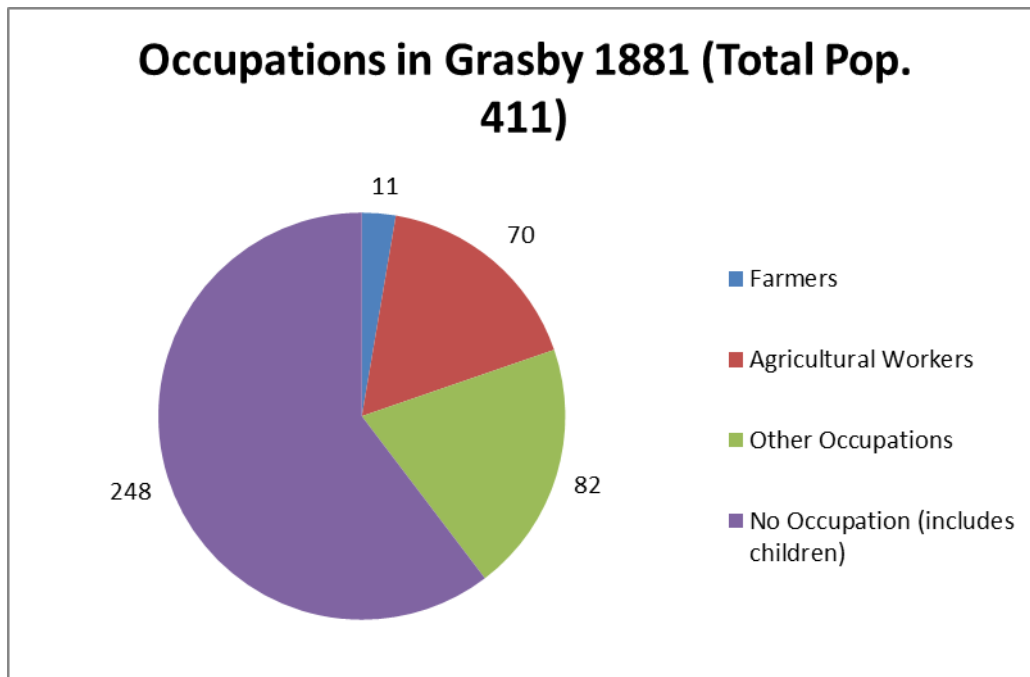
William Kendall was the farm bailiff at Grasby Bottoms and George Barker a "foreman of agricultural labourers". Thomas Lusby, Francis Harris and Stephen Shepherd did not appear in the 1881 Grasby census.

Most of the farmers identified seem to have been located on Station Road and Little Drift, which suggests that the land around and to the south of the village was managed by small holders for the most part and that the land to the north of the village was farmed mainly by outsiders.

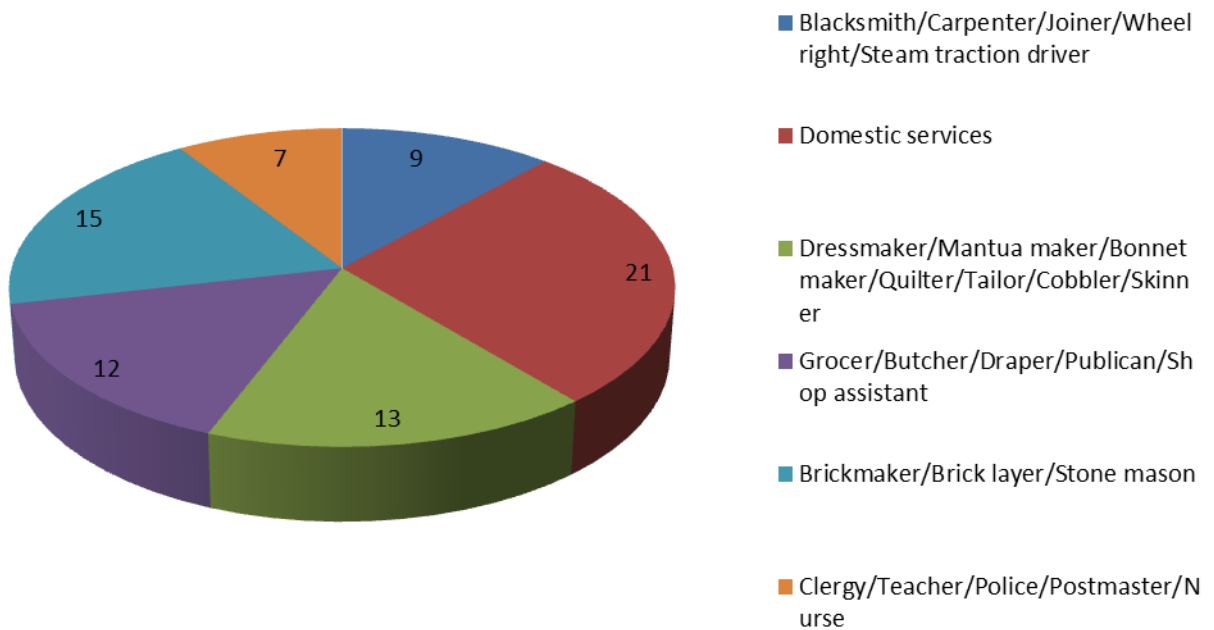
There is an interesting postscript on Joseph John Burkinshaw. By 1886 he was a bankrupt, dependent on his brother and living at 50, Monks Road, Lincoln. He was described as formerly an owner of 174 acres in Grasby, as well as a tenant farmer of 400 acres in Nettleton on a farm owned by Mr. J.L. Fytche, for whom he was also land agent (Fytche was a large land owner locally and in Derbyshire). Joseph gave up the tenancy of the Nettleton farm in 1884, the land in Grasby was heavily mortgaged and he was paying a "life interest" of £80 a year under his wife's marriage settlement. He had by this time unsecured loans totalling £2,482. There was also an ongoing argument with his employer over his land agent fees, which amounted to only £30 a year. Joseph claimed he couldn't even cover his costs for this amount and had been taking £100 a year out of the rents he collected. He put down his bankruptcy to losses in farming over the last 10 years and the depreciation in land values following purchases and reduced

rents, which meant that he couldn't meet interest payments on his loans. He was, in 1886, applying for discharge from bankruptcy which the court was minded to grant as he was of good character and had kept full records and accounts (Stamford Mercury).

Although Joseph doesn't cite this as a reason, a terrible storm in July 1883 couldn't have helped his position. It was reported that one arm of the storm "came down the scarp from Brigg, a mile wide, and caused £1,000 of damage to each of the 20 large farms in the area and many small occupiers were probably ruined. There was a half a mile wide band of torrential rain and a hail storm on either side. Ice was still found up to a week later and was feet thick in the valley at Deepdale"



Occupations other than in Agriculture, Grasby 1881 (22% total pop.)



1891 Census

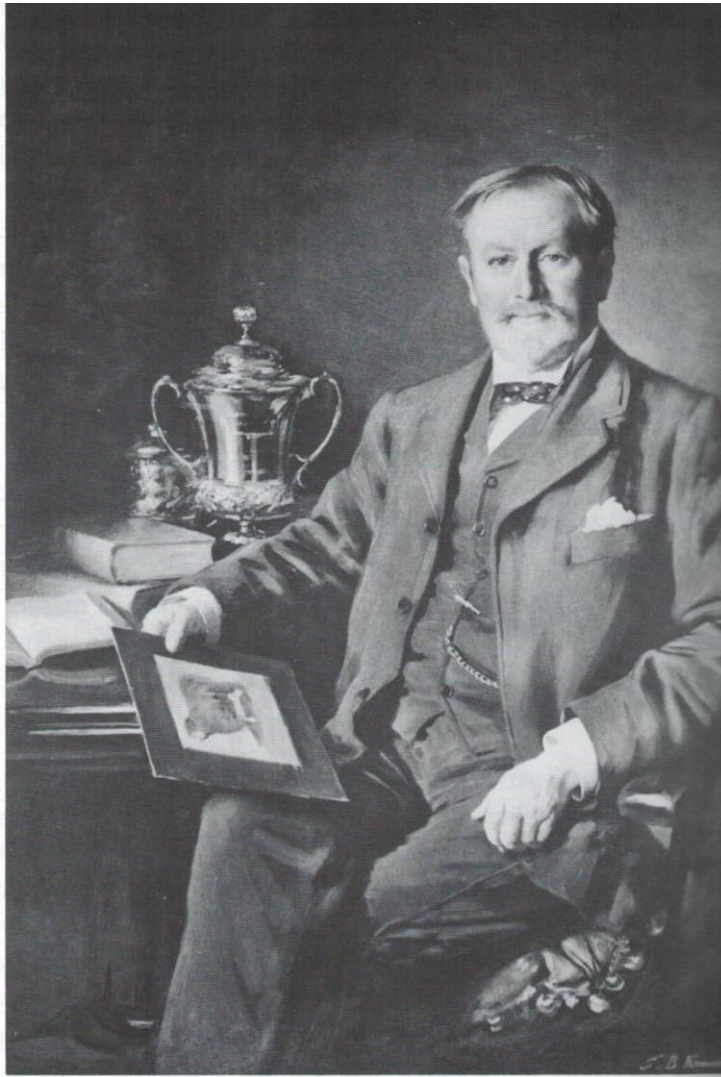
As indicated above, the 1891 census provides no information about farm sizes. The number of farmers had risen from 10 to 14, with also 2 farm foremen, 49 agricultural labourers, 4 farm servants, 2 grooms, 3 horsemen and 2 waggoners in the parish.

Jane P. Foster, William Brumpton, Mary Markham (widowed), William Thompson and Foster Middleton survived as farmers from 1881. Philip Markham (Mary's son) put up for sale a house and farm in Little Drift Lane, and 38 acres of land, in 1895 (Stamford Mercury). Whether this sold at the time is not known. Richard Cuthbert was now a retired farmer. Robert Eaton, Samuel Dann and Thomas Curtis were no longer present (William Brumpton had taken over the lease of "Temperance Cottage" farm). Edwin Smith, just a miller on Brigg Road in 1881, was now a miller and farmer. Henry Smith, miller and farmer in 1881, was no longer in the village. James Middleton, brother of Foster, was now a farmer in his own right, having moved back to Grasby from Searby. William Wilmore had taken over Grasby House Farm from Samuel Dann. William and

his family (father George, mother Ann) lived in Kirmington from 1861 to 1881. Both father and son had been farm labourers.

Other new farmers to the village were: Edward Eyre, farm labourer in 1881, cow keeper in 1885 (Kelly's Directory); Jonathan Barron (born in Grasby), publican of the Blue Bell Inn (halfway up on the east side of what is now Church Hill) and farmer, agricultural labourer in 1881 and 1871 in Grasby and 1861 in Owmbly; George Barker (born in Kirton Lindsey), farm foreman in 1881 and 1871 in Grasby, farm labourer in 1861 in Owmbly; John Brighton, a cow keeper in 1885, (born in Caistor, married Louisa, born in Grasby) interestingly a cordwainer in 1881 and shoe maker in 1871 in Grasby (his father-in-law was a draper and tailor in Grasby, with whom he lived in 1871, so there is no evidence of farming experience before 1891); Thomas Cuthbert who, at 72, is finally a farmer in 1891 having been an agricultural labourer from 1861 to 1881 in Grasby, where he was born; George Clark, a coal dealer and farmer, about whom nothing can be found in previous census returns; and John Ferraby, born in Caistor, who was a groom in Kirmington in 1871 and 1881.

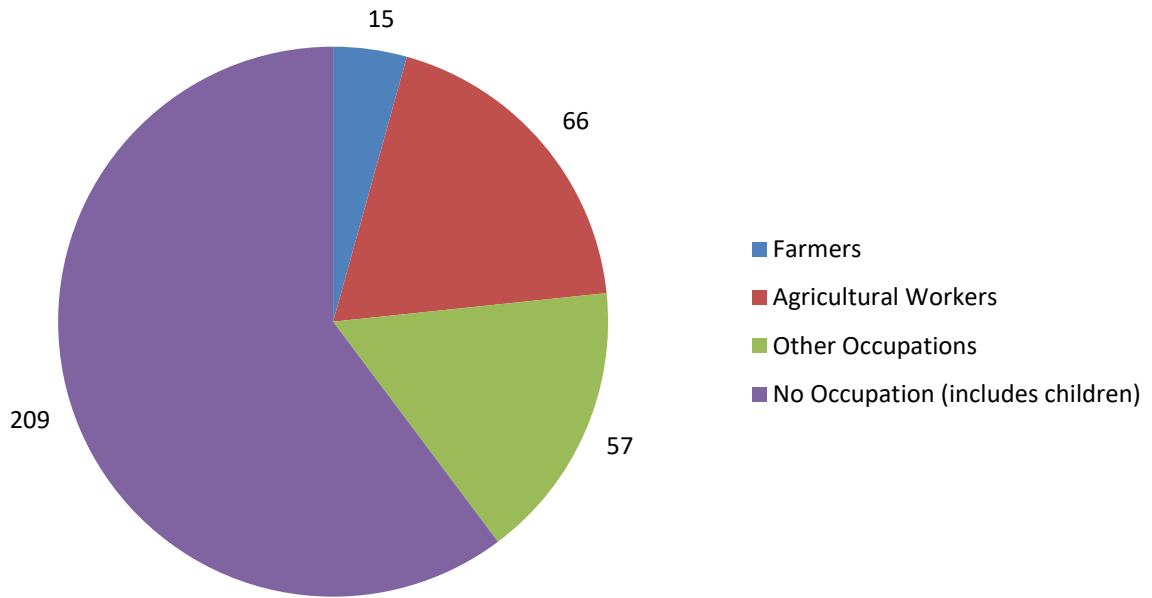
The most celebrated farmer of land in Grasby before the turn of the century was Henry Dudding of Riby, one of the great sheep breeders of the C19th. Born in Panton (a village close to Wragby), he and his brother William took over the farming of 2,500 acres at Panton and Lambcroft from their father. In 1876 Henry took his flock of Lincolns to Riby, where he farmed 800 acres. Later he took on 500 acres from the Earl of Yarborough at Croxby, to which he added 850 acres at Grasby (Agricultural Revolution in Lincolnshire, T.W. Beastall). It is likely that the 850 acres "at Grasby" included genuine wold land on either side in Clixby and Owmbly, adjacent to Limber Woods. An article in the Stamford Mercury in 1899 makes reference to the hunt coming out of the woods and over "Mr Dudding's Grasby farms". Farming a four-course system, Henry Dudding's operations attracted many foreign visitors for whom he was the "premier tenant farmer". His annual sale of stock at Riby was considered second only to the Lincoln Show as a social event. Lincoln sheep, improved and refined by the Duddings and others, won their reputation after about 1876, but signs of methodical breeding and the value of certain prize rams went back some 80 years. His Riby flock became one of the best known in the world, with one of his rams, *Riby Champion II*, selling for 1,000gns in 1900. The prime export markets were Australia, New Zealand and Argentina. In 1906 Senor Manuel Jose Cobo, from Buenos Aries, paid a record price of 1,450gns for one of Dudding's rams (Stennett).



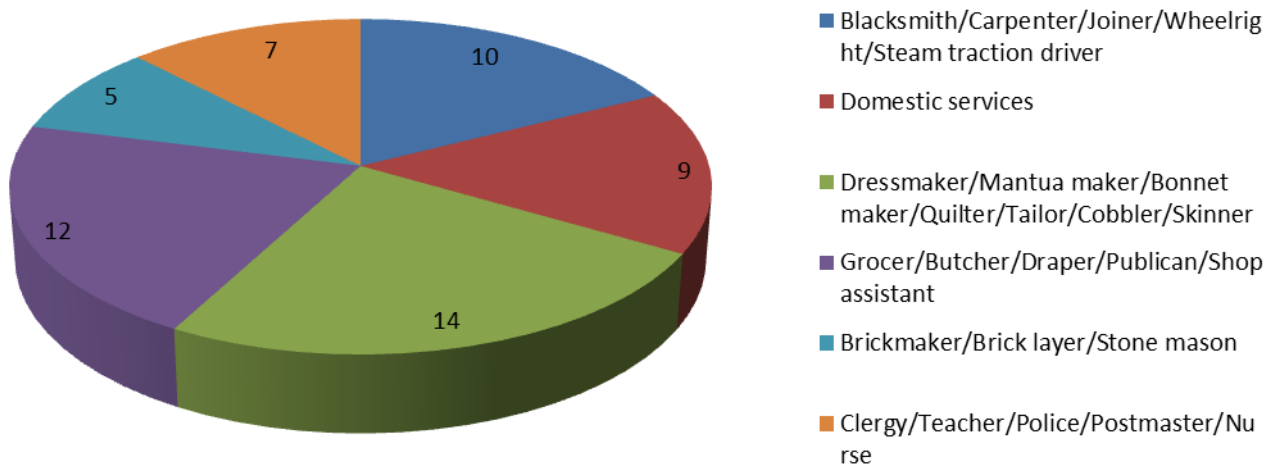
Henry Dudding of Riby

At Aylesby Philip Skipworth and later William Torr also built up formidable reputations in breeding Lincoln sheep (Beastall). One assumes that George Skipworth continued his father's work with sheep breeding.

Occupations in Grasby 1891 (Total Pop. 347)



Occupations other than in Agriculture, Grasby 1891 (18% total pop.)



1901 Census

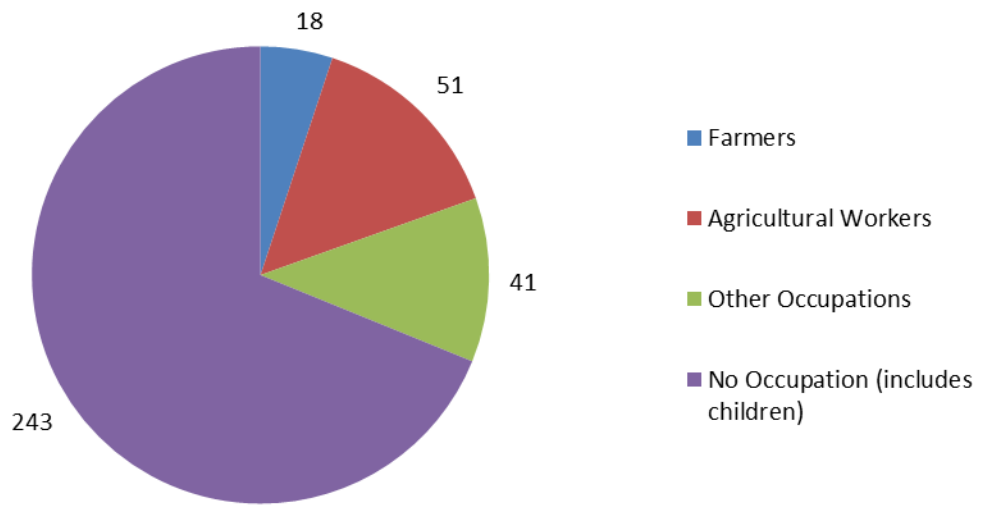
The 1901 census is helpful in that it indicates whether or not someone is an employer (“*own account*”) or not, which gives at least an indication of farm size. The number of farmers in the parish had increased again, from 15 in 1891 to 18 in 1901. There were also 1 market gardener, 2 farm foremen, 34 agricultural labourers, 4 cattlemen, 1 horseman, 1 groom, 1 shepherd and 1 gamekeeper.

There were 8 farmers in 1901 also listed in 1891:- George W. Markham; Philip Markham; Jane P. Foster; William Wilmore*; Foster Middleton; William Brumpton; Edwin Smith (all employers); and George Barker (own account).

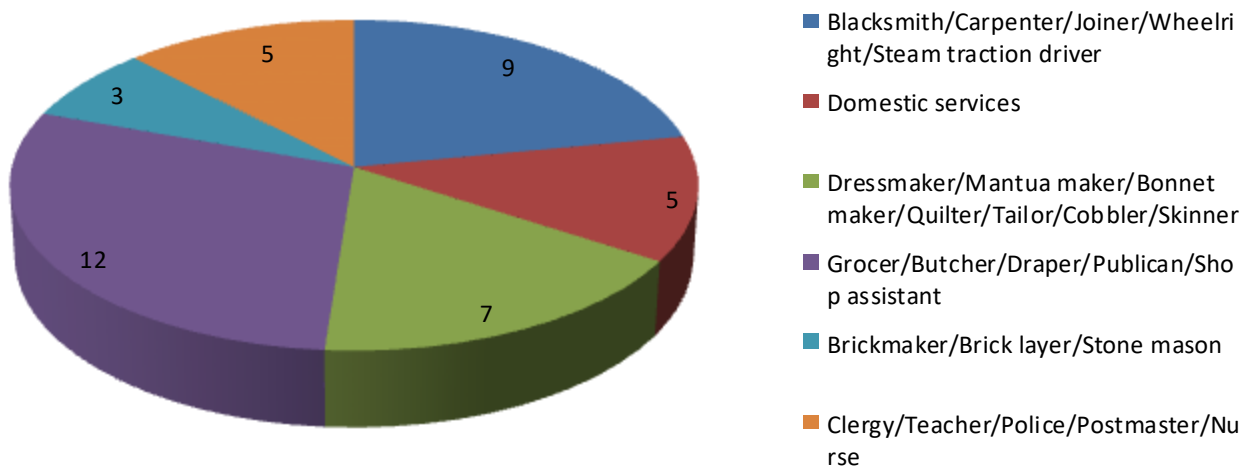


**William Wilmore & family at Grasby House Farm. Assuming that the child is Willie Dann Wilmore (born 1885), the photograph would have been taken c. 1890.*

Occupations in Grasby 1901 (Total Pop. 353)



Occupations other than in Agriculture, Grasby 1901 (13% total pop.)



New farmers were:- Charles Hall, 65; William Taplin, 55; Samuel Spolton – publican and farmer(all employers); and William King, 47 - poultry farmer; Amos Middleton; Charles Coupland; Samuel Clarke, 37; Thomas Markham, 34; Anthony Barker, 40; Robert Keightley, 48; John Lacey, 38 – rabbitier and farmer (all own account).

Those missing were:- William Thompson (moved to Alvington as a farmer and employer); Jonathan Barron (moved to Owmbly as a farmer and employer); John Ferraby (now a labourer in a chemical works, living in Barrow-on-Humber); Thomas Cuthbert (who would have been 82); Edward Eyre (deceased, leaving widow Harriett); Mary Markham (Philip and George have taken over); John Brighton and George Clark, who do not appear elsewhere in the 1901 census.

Henry Dudding is farming over 600 acres of wold land next to Limber woods, with staff located at Owmbly Top (now completely demolished), Grasby Top and Clixby Top).

1841 - 1901 Summary

In the period 1841- 1901 70 residents of Grasby were described as farmers or part -time farmers. Only 4 farmed acreages of more than 200 acres and the last of these had left the parish by 1871. The number of resident farmers has varied between 10 and 19 at any one time, rising from 1841 to 1861, falling between 1861 and 1881, only to rise again at the end of the century. A handful of the resident farmers were probably self-sufficient with acreages between 20 and 50 acres. Others with holdings as small as 3 acres must have supplemented their incomes by other means. Some families, such as the Middletons, Brumptions and Markhams had expanded their farming interests, with sons taking over from their fathers. Some individuals, such as Stephen Shepherd, had farmed for up to 30 years in Grasby but in the end had no-one to take over from them. Others had come into the parish for 10 or fewer years before moving on, sometimes to farms elsewhere. There are a number of examples of agricultural labourers, or people with other occupations, becoming land holders and farmers. In fact, there is no evidence of the small holder disappearing from the scene during this period. Looking at the addresses (such as they are) in the censuses it would seem that most of the small holders lived around and just south of the village e.g. along Station Road, whereas the large farms, run mainly by outsiders, most notably Henry Dudding later in the century, tended to occupy the wold area.

The number agricultural labourers, stockmen and carters/waggoners living in the village remained high throughout the century. A significant number

must have left the village each day to work on farms in other parishes, particularly the more closed ones with less accommodation available.

There is little specific information available about the crops grown and livestock kept during this period, especially by the small holders, within the parish. W. Dixon, however, has provided a 10 year cropping record from 1860 to 1871 for Twelve Month Hill Farm, adjacent to the east side of the parish on part of the Caistor Moor enclosure. The farm was tenanted and comprised nearly 116 acres, of which 34 acres were woodland (as it is largely today). The soil on the farm is a very light sandy loam and the field sizes ranged from just over 5 acres to nearly 12 acres. Every field was cropped other than a small paddock of nearly 3 acres next to the farm cottage. The cropping record shows an almost identical pattern of rotation for each field – two years seeds (= temporary grass), one year wheat, one year turnips, one year barley or oats. Occasionally potatoes were grown in the same field as the turnips, rye was grown in the same field as oats or wheat on two occasions, and barley and oats were also grown together in the same field on several cases. Red clover was specified for the first year of seeds twice, in 1860 and 1862, but not after that. Each year 40 % of the land was under seeds, 20% under wheat (bar one year), 20% under turnips, between 10-20% under barley and 0-10% under oats. There is a fold yard by the cottage and it can reasonably assumed that cattle and sheep were kept, with the cattle overwintered in the fold yard. Horses must also have been kept and it was more than likely that the farm had poultry of one sort and another as well as a pig or two. As W Dixon kept such meticulous records, for this and his other farms, one is left to wonder whether or not he determined the cropping regime on every farm. The 34 acres of woodland was described on the map of the farm as a “*plantation*” as a significant proportion of the trees is conifer. This suggests that it was planted after the enclosure of Caistor Moor (see table below).

Twelve Month Farm Cropping Plan 1860 -1871 (W Dixon)

Field No.	Field size	1860	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	1866	1867	1868	1869	1870	1871
4	5.75	W	T+P	O	SDS	SDS	W	T	B	SDS	SDS	W	T
18	10	B	SDS	SDS	W	T	B	SDS	SDS	W	T	O+B	SDS
19	10	O+W	T	O+B	SDS	SDS	W	T	B	SDS	SDS	W	T
20,21,22	6	<i>P</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>O</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>&</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>N.</i>
23	5.25	RCL	SDS	W+R	T	B	SDS	SDS	W	T	B	SDS	SDS
24	7.75	SDS	W	T+P	B	SDS	SDS	W	T	B	SDS	SDS	W
25	6.5	SDS	W	T	B	SDS	SDS	W	T	B	SDS	SDS	W
26	5.5	T	B	RCL	SDS	W	T	B	SDS	SDS	W	T	O+B
27	7.25	SDS	SDS	W	T	B	SDS	SDS	W	T	B	SDS	SDS
29	10.5	O	SDS	SDS	O+R	T	O	SDS	SDS	W	T	B	SDS
30	11.75	T	O	SDS	SDS	W	T	O	SDS	SDS	W	T	B
14,17,28	34.25	<i>P</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>O</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	
	Acres												

W=wheat; B=barley; O=oats; SDS=Seeds; RCL= red clover; T=turnips; P=potatoes

Sales information about other farms suggests that even the small holders had a mixture of arable and pasture land. Sales information for livestock suggests that the normal range of sheep, cattle, pigs and horses were kept. Kelly's Directory of 1885 indicated that Grasby's chief crops were wheat, barley and turnips, which accords with the information for Twelve Month Farm provided above.

During the C19th the population of the village grew from just 168 to 455 in 1841, before falling back to 347 in 1891. The Wesleyan Chapel was built in 1840 and the Primitive Methodist Chapel in 1841, which was enlarged in 1862. Most villagers in the early part of the century were described as farm labourers, but it is notable that a number of these became tenant farmers in their own right over the next 20 years or so, albeit working only small acreages. Occupations other than those in farming grew from 8% of the total population in 1841 to a maximum of 22% in 1881, but fluctuated considerably throughout the second half of the century. The presence of the usual rural craftsmen– blacksmiths, carpenters, wheelwrights etc. was more or less a constant, as were the professions – clergy, teachers, police etc. The number of retailers grew steadily to reach a maximum of 12 establishments in the 1890s - grocers, butchers, drapers, publicans. Those in domestic service showed the greatest variations in number, without seemingly following any obvious pattern. The 15 farmers in 1841 grew to 35 in 1861, dropped back to 14 in 1871, grew again to 21 in 1881 before falling back to below 10 at the end of the century.

The village did appear to be a minor centre of clothing and shoe “manufacture”. In the 1850s and ‘60s there were 6 mantua makers (in the C17th a loose over-garment of sumptuous material, but the Victorian & Albert Museum has advised that by the C19th a mantua maker was simply another term for a dressmaker). Throughout the second half of the

century there were dressmakers and tailors as well as shoe and boot makers present. It would seem likely that the village services drew in custom from outside the parish to some extent and, although the population rose to a maximum in 1851 before declining by more than 100 people in the 1890s, it was still a much bigger settlement than it had been at the turn of the century and appears to have suffered less from rural depopulation during the agricultural depression and industrialisation than did many villages. Two sons of an agricultural labourer from the village, James Toyne, did, however, emigrate to Australia in the 1850s to try their luck. In a letter to their father, published in the Stamford Mercury in 1853, John and William described their new lives without enthusiasm, claiming that it would be better at home, providing that they had employment. The letter is surprisingly literate for sons of an agricultural labourer and the description of life on livestock farms in the outback is vivid and detailed.

Was Grasby a typical open village as described by some of the Victorian commentators? Was it over-crowded, insanitary, and ill regulated with numerous small proprietors who let tumbledown cottages at exorbitant rents? Was it *“a knot of thatched hovels, all sinking and leaning every way but the right, the windows patched with paper, the doorways stopped with filth, which surrounded a beershop”* (Charles Kingsley)? Victorian scandals like the Gang System were the product and symptom of open and closed parishes. The Gang System depended upon crowds of women and children, recruited from over-populated villages and put to work in neighbouring villages where there were too few labouring families for the purpose of agriculture. From the Victorian viewpoint, the problem was essentially moral. Private squalor was often identified with moral delinquency, and beerhouses received a large proportion of the blame for rural despair and dissipation. Grasby did have two public houses! On the other hand, in the century after 1750 a large proportion of places, otherwise castigated as open parishes, developed into focal centres for a dependent agricultural hinterland, and the range of services offered is surprising. Village tradesmen readily became property speculators, who exploited the demand for accommodation, but the existence of the petite bourgeoisie of shopkeepers and artisans itself often ensured some additional employment and some provision of charities for relief of the poor.

An article in the Stamford Mercury dated 1840 provides some insight into how Grasby was perceived at the time. It reports the theft of 5 sacks of barley and a stack sheaf from Mr J Clarke, as well as straw from Mr Burkinshaw's yard. It goes on: *“To mention minor thefts of eggs, garden produce etc. in this depraved village would be tedious and uninteresting. Grasby, with a population of nearly 550 souls is a church living of £200 a year but the Clerical Guide does not show it has any resident clergyman!”* This could well have been the village's reputation in the early part of the C19th, but the arrival of Charles (Tennyson) Turner and the building of two non-conformist chapels may

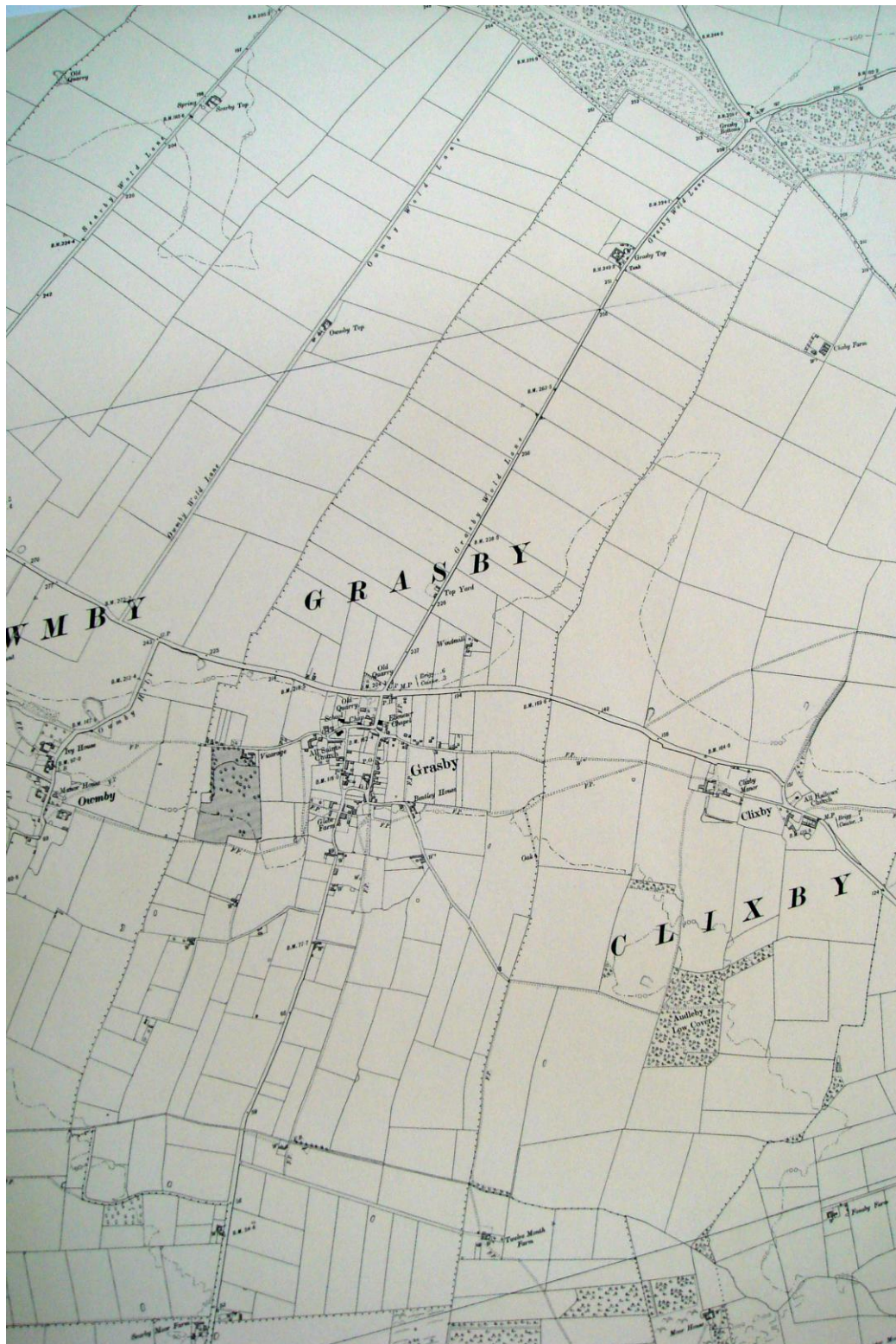
have brought about significant change. Charles actually purchased the Village Inn and put in a “reliable” man in attempt to control drunkenness in the village. Perhaps it was a very different place at the end of the century than it was at the beginning. The fact that the only buildings of any note (other than the church and old vicarage) in the village date from the Victorian period onwards suggests that the pre-C19th building stock may well have been of very poor quality and fitted the open village model.

Analysis of Households in Grasby 1801- 1901

Year	Pop.	Households	Av. no. per Household	Uninhabited	Total
1801	168	31	5.4	?	31
1841	374	90	4.2	6	96
1851	455	101	4.5	4	105
1861	433	107	4.0	4	111
1871	408	104	3.9	7	111
1881	411	104	4.0	5	115
1891	347	91	3.8	10	101
1901	353	96	3.6	6	102

Source : Census

Unfortunately the data on households and population is not available for 1801 to 1841, but the number of households in the village more than trebled while the population more than doubled during this 40 year period. Logic would suggest that there was a clear link between the enclosure of both Grasby and Caistor Moor and the growth in the number of residents and households during this period, which is contrary to the expected pattern of population decline following the enclosure of a parish.



Grasby Parish 1906

The contrast between the field shapes of the C19th and earlier enclosures is clear to see on the Wolds to the north of the village and on Caistor Moor in the south