

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-07154-3 - An atlas and index of the tithe files of mid-nineteenth-century England and Wales

Roger J. P. Kain

Frontmatter

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tithe files of mid-nineteenth-century
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'Clerical Anticipation'. Cartoon by Cruikshank, published by Allen & Co., London, 1797 (see pp. 1–2).

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ROGER J. P. KAIN

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in association with

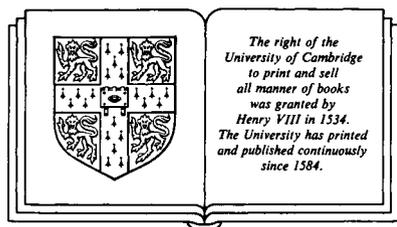
RODNEY E. J. FRY (*cartography*)

HARRIET M. E. HOLT (*research assistant*)

a sequel to

ROGER J. P. KAIN and HUGH C. PRINCE

The tithe surveys of England and Wales



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*For Annmaree and my mother
and in memory of Peter Kain, my father*

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Preface

The tithe surveys of the early Victorian Age, after the great Domesday Book of the eleventh century, represent the most detailed and important national inventory to be taken before our own times. While tithe surveys have been used in a great number of local studies, this is the first reconstruction deriving a national picture from their data. It is a happy coincidence that this book is published in the year which celebrates both the 900th anniversary of Domesday Book and the 150th anniversary of the Tithe Commutation Act which bequeathed the tithe surveys of England and Wales.

In *The tithe surveys of England and Wales* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985), Hugh Prince and I provide an up-to-date guide and work of reference for users of tithe surveys. That book was also conceived as a general introduction to the detailed material which forms the basis of this present work. It is hoped that together these studies will lead to a broader understanding and deeper appreciation of the nation's rural landscapes and agriculture in the middle years of the nineteenth century.

The objects of this *Atlas and index of the tithe files of mid-nineteenth-century England and Wales* are twofold. First, it communicates some of the wealth of quantitative data on mid-nineteenth-century landscapes and farming to be found in the tithe files. To this end, some elements of mid-nineteenth-century landscapes and agricultural systems are reconstructed cartographically, by a set of computer-generated maps, and statistically, by a series of tables in which parish and township data are aggregated, first to counties and then for the whole of England and Wales. Secondly, this work endeavours to reveal some of the richness and variety of written evidence contained in the whole body of 14,829 tithe files. This task is accomplished by means of analytical place and subject indexes arranged county-by-county and by brief essays in which themes commonly encountered in the tithe file papers of each county are described and some flavour of their authors' attitudes is provided by selected quotations. These sections of the work are intended as a research tool to draw attention to source material discussed in tithe files and to assist future scholars to exploit these documents.

This *Atlas and index* represents the principal fruits of a research project financed by the Economic and Social Research Council whose support over a period of more than four years is gratefully acknowledged. Financial help for this work has also been provided by the Leverhulme Trust and the University of Exeter. The assistance of two of my Exeter colleagues is recorded on the Title Page of this work. Harriet Holt helped search the tithe files and extracted information on the nature of tithes and the making of tithe surveys, transcribed statistical data from the files, and listed topics discussed in their papers. I am

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extremely grateful for the careful way in which she undertook all these tasks. Rodney Fry has directed cartographic procedures, compiled all the base maps needed for computer mapping, and all the hand-drawn maps in this book are his work. Other colleagues at Exeter have also been especially helpful in practical ways. John Buckett modified the GIMMS computer mapping packing for the Exeter computer system and adapted it to the special requirements of this project. Gill Skinner and Raymond Burnley wrote the computer programs to compile the indexes (Oxford University Computing Service's help in typesetting these by LASERCOMP is also gratefully acknowledged); Hilary Collett managed the day-to-day tasks of computer mapping; Andrew Teed produced most of the final photographic prints which Terry Bacon made up into camera-ready pages. I am delighted to record my thanks to these individuals and to everyone else who gave of their time. Professor William Ravenhill as my Head of Department for most of the period of this project granted me generous use of departmental resources and has encouraged this work from the very beginning, as have H. C. Darby, W. R. Mead, Hugh Prince and my Exeter colleague, Brian Harley.

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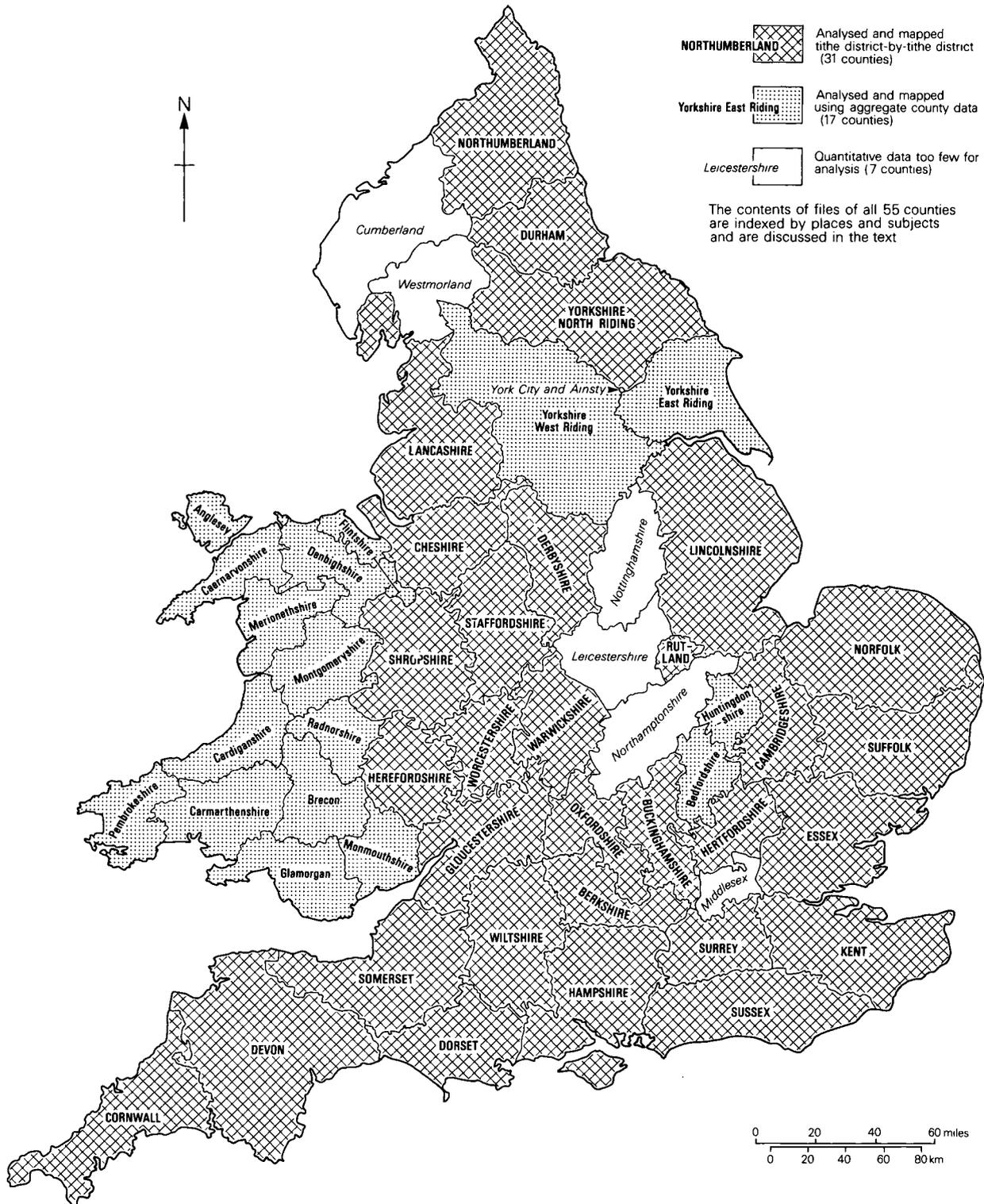
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