

THE FELSTED CENSUS 1901-2001

The National Census took place in April 1901 and includes everyone who was staying in Felsted over a certain night in the first week of that month. Consequently the following figures include some visitors to Felsted and probably also excludes some Felstedians who were staying somewhere else on the Census date.

The two enumerators for Felsted, Mr. Ernest Hicks and Mr. Edward Wright, were divided into two parts for the Census. Mr. Wright does not appear to live in Felsted and Mr. Ernest Hicks, aged 23, was described in the Census as a 'Cycle Agent'. He lived with his parents in the 'Old Post Office' in Chelmsford Road, this house is now called 'Envilles' and is not to be confused with 'Old Post House' which is on the other side of the Chelmsford Road. Mr. Hicks eventually took over the Bell Inn premises and developed his garage business on the site.

The first pages of the Census, as recorded by the two enumerators, are statistics and summarise the population and the number of properties in the parish. In the 1950s part of Felsted parish, which had Rayne addresses and which lay on the north side of the A120, was hived off to Rayne parish, and as a consequence does not include those properties. So, although the Census actually recorded a total population of 1,763 this figure has been reduced by the Rayne properties.

Population	Males 763 Females 690
Total Population in 1901	1453 <i>Total population in 2002 is about 2800. This means that the population has doubled in the last 100 years.</i>
Inhabited houses	326
Uninhabited houses	25
Houses being constructed	1
Total number of properties	352
<i>Houses with less than 5 rooms</i>	154

This last statistic shows that just fewer than half the properties (44%) in Felsted were cottages of four rooms or less.

To reach the average household size, Mr. John Drury who collated and provided this information, has deducted the three school boarding houses and the boarders (Old School, Preparatory School and Elwyns), which would otherwise distort the figures, and the empty and incomplete houses, which leaves 1,343 people spread over 323 properties. This gives an average household size of 4.2 persons. Many families had six or seven children with the highest being nine.

There was no reference at all in the Census data to the main Victorian school blocks in the Stebbing Road as the Reverend H A Dalton Headmaster in 1901, does not appear, and there is no record in the Census of the buildings or of anyone living in them. It could not have been their Easter break, even though the Census date was the first week in April, as the other boarding houses in the village all had occupants on Census night. It does seem rather unrealistic that there was no one at all staying in this large block of properties on Census night.

Acknowledgement:

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