Digitisation and Place Information

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• This is a short presentation making two points:
• A wealth of information about places in Britain is now available online, making it possible to base small-scale historical research projects entirely on online resources
• But much detailed work is still needed to enable the fullest use to be made of all this material
  – Presentation uses the example of the village of Sawley, near Harrogate in Yorkshire, drawn from a first year course I run
Each student in my first year course is assigned a different Wikipedia stub article, like this, to expand. Each article is about some village in northern England they have never visited. NB they are editing the actual Wikipedia articles, live.
Sawley is a village and civil parish in the Harrogate district of North Yorkshire, England. It is about 4 miles (6.4 km) west of Ripon. From this position, the Yorkshire Dales are to the west and the North Yorkshire Moors and coast are to the east. The village is located within Nidderdale, an area of outstanding natural beauty. Sawley is one of 27 parish councils who represent the interests of the people who live in the area.[1]

In the 1870s, Sawley was described as "a township-chapelry, with a village and four hamlets, in Ripon parish, W. R. Yorkshire. The township's four hamlets were Cowbush, Hungate, North Pastures, and Rispleth. [2]"

History [edit]

Sawley dates back to the Saxon era[4] where it gained its name from Old English and the Anglian dialect. From this period, Sawley is directly translated as "Willow-tree wood". It is thought to have been the main source of stone for the construction of Fountains Abbey in the 10th century. The world heritage site which is now maintained by

Census data of Sawley dates back to 1871, with the earliest total population figure being 341.[10] The population has been relatively constant with the highest population record being in 1881 with 372 and the lowest available data being in 1951 with 251. According to the 2011 census, Sawley had a population of 299.[11] This is only one less than the 2001 census where the population was 300. Historically, Sawley's industry was mainly based in agriculture with 36.7% of the working population working in this industry.[12] This has dropped in the following years with agriculture now only accounting for 12% of Sawley's industry, based on 2011 census figures.[13] The decline in agriculture follows a similar pattern to the rest of Britain with a major decline in agriculture due to increased trade as well as a shift towards secondary industry and tertiary industry.[14] This now means that the main...
The students are banned from visiting “their” village.

Nothing in Portsmouth libraries.

So research must be entirely online.
Placename data for Sawley from Survey of English Place Names
BBC
Domesday material for Sawley
Giant sequoia near the border of the Sawley Hall, West and East Groves in Sawley

There is one giant sequoia (Sequoiadendron giganteum) near the border of the Sawley Hall, West and East Groves in Sawley (county of North Yorkshire).

The area around Sawley near Ripon is real Redwood Country, there are several groves of Sequoiadendron Giganteum on the Sawley Hall Estate. This distance photo shows groves that I have named East Grove and West Grove, Sawley Hall itself is a three storey imposing country house that must be around 45 to 50 feet to the roof top. You can see the scale of the East Grove trees from this photo, they are to the side and behind the house. They must be circa 45 metres, 150 feet give or take a few feet and in a very exposed position on top of a hill.

The girth of this tree is not known. This tree was planted around the year 1864 ± 10, which makes it around 149 ± 10 years old (Conifers, Dec 2, 2012).

Show on map · Edit data of this tree · Add new measurement · Remove · Edit data of this location
### 2011 Key Statistics for Sawley from Neighbourhood Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Sawley</th>
<th>Harrogate (Non-Metropolitan District)</th>
<th>Yorkshire and The Humber</th>
<th>England</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011 Population: Males (Persons, Mar11)</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>3,144</td>
<td>77,037</td>
<td>2,598,078</td>
<td>26,069,148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 Population: Females (Persons, Mar11)</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>3,155</td>
<td>80,832</td>
<td>2,685,655</td>
<td>26,943,308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 Density (number of persons per hectare) (Persons, Mar11)</td>
<td>Rate</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Households (Households, Mar11)</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>3,128</td>
<td>67,169</td>
<td>2,224,059</td>
<td>22,063,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All households who owned their accommodation outright (Households, Mar11)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All households who owned their accommodation with a mortgage or loan (Households, Mar11)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good Health (Persons, Mar11)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>47.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Health (Persons, Mar11)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot (Persons, Mar11)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically Active; Employee; Full-Time (Persons, Mar11)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>38.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically Active; Employee; Part-Time (Persons, Mar11)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically Active; Self-Employed (Persons, Mar11)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Population data for Sawley 1881-1961 from Vision of Britain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population 20 years earlier</th>
<th>Population 10 years earlier</th>
<th>Current Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How to reference this page:

GB Historical GIS / University of Portsmouth, Sawley CP/Tn through time | Population Statistics | Total Population, A Vision of Britain through Time.

URL: http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10406630/cube/TOT_POP

Date accessed: 29th June 2013
Population data for Sawley 1801-51 from Hist-Pop (Essex)
Population data for Sawley 1801-51 from Hist-Pop (Essex)
FINDABLE: looking for historical information about Sawley via Google

History of Sawley, in Harrogate and West Riding | Map and description
www.visionofbritain.org.uk/place/14171
SAWLEY, a township-chapelry, with a village and four hamlets, in Ripon parish, W. R. Yorkshire; 4½ miles ... GB Historical GIS / University of Portsmouth, History of Sawley, in Harrogate and West Riding | Map and ... Some places near Sawley:

Towns and Villages Around Harrogate | Sawley - Visitoruk
www.visitoruk.com/Harrogate/sawley-C592-V24613.html
Sawley, ten miles northwest of Harrogate, is a long straggling village. ... old timber-framed houses decided to settle on the drier ground near to where the church ...

Sawley Hall - Places & People
www.parksandgardens.org/places-and-people/site/6840
Sawley Hall, Harrogate, England ... The Ordnance Survey map of 1909 shows Sawley Hall with its surrounding ... Historical County: West Riding of Yorkshire ...

About - Sawley.org
www.sawley.org/about.htm
A Brief History ... Sawley lies 6 miles to the West of Ripon, near to the ruins of Fountains Abbey and the famous Studley Water Gardens and ... In 1905, 19 men voted against Harrogate Corporation's offer to supply piped water to the village.

Sawley, North Yorkshire - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sawley_North_Yorkshire
Sawley is a village and civil parish in the Harrogate district of North Yorkshire, England. ... 1 History; 2 Present day; 3 Places of interest; 4 References; 5 External links .... Near the border of Sawley Hall, there is a great sequoia, one of 3,052 ...
FINDABLE: looking for historical information about Sawley via Google

Our high ranking in Google comes not from Search Engine Optimisation tricks but from having a very formal semantic structure.
FINDABLE: looking for historical information about Sawley via Google

Our high ranking in Google comes not from Search Engine Optimisation tricks but from having a very formal semantic structure

... and being this findable leads to massive usage
“Google for old maps”: Old Maps Online
“Google for old maps”: Old Maps Online

The Curators' 100 (http://www.bl.uk/100websites/top100.html):

• **Scotland.org** - Everything from science to sport, Burns to bagpipes plus living and working in Scotland today - a window into life in Scotland

• **Twitter** - An amazing source of historical data with every tweeter helping to build up a picture of the world at large - the challenge here is how to capture it

• **Old Maps Online** - Overlays digitised images of historical maps onto modern maps - this type of visual search is revolutionising the way in which we conduct historical research and will be invaluable for future researchers wishing to dive through layers of history geographically

• **Shit London** – A crowdsourced project which encourages Londoners to send in snaps of the humorous and sometimes drab details of the city, capturing images which would otherwise be overlooked
By contrast, Social Explorer

- Created by NSF-funded National Historical GIS
- Very much a GIS, not a Place Information System
- Clearly contains time series data for counties, but impossible to access them
  - Top 3 Google matches for “percentage black in 1900 in Taliaferro county, Georgia” are from Wikipedia
We have at last fixed the statistical mapping in Vision of Britain, but place matters more than space.
What is not available online for Sawley:

• Nothing from the Victoria County Histories:

• Nothing from a range of pre-1800 statistical surveys, despite much AHRC and ESRC money having gone into transcription projects
CITABLE: URLs for web pages about Sawley

- Wikipedia:

- Vision of Britain (work funded by “Embedding” project in 2010-11):
  - http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/place/14171
  - http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10466830/cube/TOT_POP

- Hist-Pop (Essex University):
  - Census of Great Britain, 1851, Population tables, I. Number of the inhabitants in 1801, 1811, 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851. Vol. II BPP 1852-53 LXXXVI (1632) 18
  - http://histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/PageBrowser?path=Browse/Census%20%28by%20date%29/1851&active=yes&mno=28&tocstate=expandnew&display=sections&display=tables&display=pagetitles&pageseq=221&zoom=3

- Neighbourhood Statistics (ONS site for 2011 census):
  - http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?a=3&amp;b=11128217&amp;c=sawley&amp;d=16&amp;e=62&amp;g=6454419&amp;i=1001x1003x1032x1004&amp;m=0&amp;r=1&amp;s=1372519501953&amp;enc=1&amp;dsFamilyId=2538&amp;nsjs=true&amp;nsck=false&amp;nssvg=false&amp;nswid=1616
  - It turns out parts of the above URL can be left out – but can you guess which?
LINKABLE & EMBEDDABLE:

- Organising information so that computers can find and work with it
- This is some of our information about Sawley from Vision of Britain, but presented as RDF/XML, a language of the semantic web
Sawley as RDF/XML, from Wikidata

http://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Special:EntityData/Q2342439.rdf
Sawley as RDF/XML, from Wikidata

RDF as a lingua franca, enabling us to jointly build ....
The Linked Open Data Cloud

NB diagram has not been updated since September 2011 as became too big
The Linked Open Data Cloud

- It may be that we can do very large scale data analysis across multiple bodies of information within the linked data cloud
  - “ONS is developing an Application Programming Interface which will provide machine to machine access to census data for other web systems.”
  - Contributed to this via CAIRD project with MIMAS
  - Obvious potential for publishing VoB content using Data Cube Methodology developed by ONS
- But what has by now been widely demonstrated is the potential for drawing on the cloud for mash-ups
  - Numerous web sites presenting government data accessed via an API, on top of Google Maps
  - We need to be able to do this with historical information presented on top of historical maps
Not many historical mashups so far ...

Apps : history

Historic Fenlands (giscloud.com) and Google Maps (maps.google.co.uk) mashup
by Andrew Zolnai

This is a mashup of mashup - the overlay on Google Maps for a pre-existing mashup on giscloud.com.

UK House Prices
by Christian Heilmann

A visualisation of the house price trends in the UK based on the information published by the Land Registry. UK House Prices allows you to see the trend in prices in a certain area and compare them...

The Gazetteer for Scotland
by Bruce M Gittings

In continuous development since 1995, The Gazetteer for Scotland is a vast geographical encyclopaedia, featuring details of towns, villages, bens and glens from the Scottish Borders to the Northern
• Technical embeddability of no value if we cannot legally include source material within our own works
• The “open” in Linked Open Data is about copyright
  – Copyright notices need to be machine-readable
• Usually a Creative Commons license variant:
  – CC0: Anyone can do anything (BL catalogue)
  – CC-BY-NC: Must acknowledge + no commercial use
  – UK “Open Government License” ~ CC-BY
  – US government Public Domain = CC0
• Despite continuing issues e.g. with Ordnance Survey, UK government now often exemplary on opening data
• Understandable that commercial companies less so
• But why are academics and learned societies so restrictive?
Despite continuing issues e.g. with Ordnance Survey, UK government now often exemplary on opening data. Understandable that commercial companies less so. But why are academics and learned societies so restrictive?

The nightmare:
- Restrictive policies of purely academic bodies, on books whose authors were never paid a penny, means that many academic online projects led by information scientists are moving forward relying on problematic crowd-sourced alternatives.
- Much of the problem is that many academics are ignorant and scared of intellectual property law, confusing copyright with moral right (the right to be acknowledged – i.e. what we really should care about).
Conclusions

We don’t just need “good stuff” to be digitised; it must also be:

– **Findable**: designed to be reachable via search engines
– **Citable**: have URLs designed as references, i.e. URIs
– **Linkable and Embeddable**: published as Open Linked Data or equivalent
– **Copyable/Mashable**: Under CC0 or CC-BY licensing
– **Sustainable**: Can be relied on to exist indefinitely
  
  (Paul will talk about this)
But if the right information is made available in the right way it will be very popular, and pay for itself ....

Income now covers not just hosting costs but salary of part-time system manager/developer, enabling steady enhancement