

being done ... in improving cottages'. This was going forward so fast that he hesitated to recommend 'any compulsory power if it could be avoided'. Guide-lines from government authorities were acceptable, and he would not personally object to laws, although he knew that others might; however, such things were not really needed, and restrictions might prevent building keeping pace with the population increase. His own cottages, costing £200 a pair to build, were let to the labourers at £3 a year; in addition, they all had gardens and four acres of grassland at an extra (unspecified) rent. All the labourers were 'wonderfully well off', earning at ordinary rates 2s 6d a day, with extra work at harvest time. He knew that Irish labour had to be taken on for harvest, but said nothing of casual labour from the open villages around.

The Commissioners showed most interest in the structure and facilities of Winn's cottages, and his information was specific, giving the impression that he had been closely involved in their planning. He was impatient with principle, theory and recommendation, from whatever source – 'in the houses that I know the rooms that are being built are ample for the purpose for which they are intended'. In practical terms, there had to be in a decent cottage

a good living room or a good kitchen, perhaps 16 feet by 14, and I think it ought to have a back kitchen about 12 feet by 9 or something like that (I am talking of what we do ourselves), a larder, three bedrooms up stairs, and two of them with fire places in, and I think that there ought to be outbuildings, privies, in proportion.

Ceilings downstairs were 8 feet high, those upstairs 8 feet 6 inches, where part of the height was taken out of the roof. Windows were large, with two opening sashes each. He would not give an opinion whether the state might 'fairly enact' that no cottages should be built of lesser dimensions but would not himself build below them in any case. The Commissioners must have sensed that his estimate of £100 per cottage was low; they pressed him on costs, and although the timber used turned out to be expensive imported material, he took the building stone from his own land, and 'put no value on the stone'. He acknowledged that building in pairs further cut costs – besides the party walls, wells were shared, but usually with no more than two houses to each one. Pressed on cottage overcrowding generally around Appleby he cited Winterton as a parish 'almost entirely composed of freeholders', where the new houses built were 'decidedly inferior' to what he had been describing. Winterton he also knew had many lodgers, a class which he believed

was otherwise lacking in his area. He did not think that there was any 'great deficiency' in cottage accommodation there, however; some villages needed a few more, and, he had been told, Lord Yarborough's estates included parishes where they had 'not sufficient cottages' – yet, he emphasised, 'I think that in four or five years' time there will be no such thing as a want of cottages'.²⁷

Rowland Winn's evidence amounts to a sort of testament of faith; it reveals much, and yields more when supplemented by other evidence. Certain points admittedly remain obscure: there is no hint about his reasons for cottage building, beyond a suggestion of pride in high standards, and little is revealed about costs, except that Winn was either reluctant to state the actual level of what can only have been very generous, not to say prodigal, spending – or that he did not know. The latter is implausible. His preference for voluntary rebuilding and his assurances that so much was under way that compulsion was unnecessary were the predictable reactions of his class; had there been 'no drift from the land' and no farming depression in the 1870s there could have been little question of cottage provision appearing inadequate, even to the landlords. His assurances that open townships like Winterton 'did not exist to any great extent', and his unwillingness to give details of 'some parishes that I know in North Lincolnshire where the number of cottages is too small' were probably political: he could not have helped but know what reports from government sources had publicised for some thirty years, and the country gentry came across frequently as JPs and guardians of the poor. Appleby's open neighbours, Broughton to the south and Winterton to the north, had respectively 74 and 156 more agricultural labourers than the farmers claimed to employ in 1851.²⁸ His passing mention of Yarborough villages with insufficient cottages may refer to Broughton where the family had some land, but had not built more than a handful of houses.

Rowland Winn might with justification have made far more of the standards he set in rebuilding Appleby. They conformed to the highest specifications advocated by contemporaries, and represent the cottage building movement at its best. Less modest landlords would have boasted more widely; Winn appears not to have courted publicity in any form, there being no notice of the cottages in periodicals such as *Building News*, *The Builder* and *The Architect*, although he must have been influenced by the plentiful accounts they carried of similar development elsewhere. Comparison of a specimen Appleby cottage with, for example, the recommendations of Canon James reported in *The*