

## A NOTE ON THE POPULATION AND SETTLEMENT OF BREE

There are four villages in Bree, with Bree Village itself having 100 human houses and a similar number of hobbit holes. Given a similar population in the other villages, and making a generous allowance for outlying farms, a total of 800 - 1,000 human households is just possible at an absolute maximum, and an equivalent number of hobbit ones. A minimum number is about 300 households each.

With an average number of four to a household or hobbit hole, a total population of both peoples would range from 2,000 to 3,000. A density of 100 per square mile, analagous to that suggested for the densely settled parts of the Shire, would mean an area of between twenty-four and eighty square miles or a square with sides of from five to nine miles. My preference is for a population of 2,000 hobbits and 2,000 humans with an area of about forty square miles measuring from north to south about five miles and from west to east about eight.

The Chetwood which stretches out in an arc to the North and East of Bree, is perhaps fifteen to twenty miles deep, as it took the Travellers two days to cross, though they did not go in a straight line but zig-zagged all over the place to evade possible pursuit. The area is clearly well looked after as an economic resource with frequent paths and so on. It must be a major economic resource for Bree-Landers, who would get from it both fuel and building material from the trees and food and clothing from the flesh and skins of wild animals. It is just large enough to cross in a day. Perhaps hunters made a temporary camp near its outermost boundaries in summertime.

Perhaps skins are also exported to the Shire in return for tobacco, cloth and other manufacturerd goods which accounts for the importance of the Inn in Bree-Land as a trade centre.

(This article was written by Edward Crawford, who is a member of the International Socialists, and lectures in Economics at the Chiswick Polytechnic.)

WHILE ON THE SUBJECT OF BREE, THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE, BY TERRY JONES, FORMS AN INTERESTING PENDANT TO THE ABOVE.