Study Number: 4935
Fishing Community and Industry : East Anglia and North East Scotland, 1870-195(
Thompson, P.

Interview	Sex	Year of birth	Location of interview	Occupation	Date(s) of interview	Name of interviewer	Transcript complete	Number of pages
Fish/001	M	1897	Leigh-on-Sea (Essex)	Fisherman	07/1974	Trevor Lummis	Yes	69
Fish/010	M	1888	Gorleston (Norfolk)	Fisherman	10/1974	Trevor Lummis	Yes	65
Fish/100	M	~	Aberdeen	Fish market trader	29/01/1978	Paul Thompson	Yes	23
Fish/101	F	~	Aberdeen	Fish filleter	29/01/1978	Paul Thompson	Yes	23
Fish/102	M	1904	Aberdeen	Fisherman	18/10/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	12
Fish/103	M	1920	Aberdeen	Fisherman & Clerk	20/10/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	23
Fish/104	M	1914	Aberdeen	Fisherman	20/10/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	29
Fish/105	M	1913	Edinburgh	Fisherman	01/02/1978	~	Yes	23
Fish/106	M	~	~	~	~	~	No transcript	0
Fish/107	M	~	~	~	~	~	No transcript	0
Fish/108	M	1895	Lerwick (Shetland)	Fisherman, knitwear merchant	08/1971	Paul Thompson	Yes	28
Fish/109	M	~	Walls (Shetland)	Fisherman & crofter	~	~	Yes	9
Fish/011	M	1897	Gorleston (Norfolk)	Fisherman	28/11/1974	Trevor Lummis	Yes	53
Fish/110	M	1892	Isle of Whalsay	Fisherman	08/09/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	31
Fish/111	M	1887	Isle of Whalsay	Crofter	~	~	Yes	28
Fish/112	M	1913	Isle of Whalsay	Fisherman	08/09/1977	Paul Thompson	No transcript	~
Fish/113	M	1910	Isle of Barra (Shetland)	Fisherman & crofter	08/09/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	20
Fish/114	M	~	Isle of Barra (Shetland)	Fisherman	06/09/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	20
Fish/115	M	~	Lerwick (Shetland)	Fisherman	06/09/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	30
Fish/116	F	~	Lerwick (Shetland)	House companion	06/09/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	13
Fish/117	M	~	Edinburgh	Fisherman	30/01/1978	Paul Thompson	Yes	30
Fish/118	F	1900	Isle of Lewis (Shetland)	Clerk & voluntary work	1971	Thea Thompson	Yes	77
Fish/119	~	~	Isle of Lewis (Shetland)	BBC TV 'Programme on Lewis - The Last Stronghold of	21/01/1979	~	Yes	6
Fish/012	M	1899	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Fisherman	~	~	Yes	53
Fish/120	F	~	Isle of Lewis (Shetlands)	Teacher	12/07/1971	Thea Thompson	Yes	40
Fish/121	M	1904	Isle of Lewis (Shetland)	Fisherman & crofter	08/07/1971	Paul Thompson	Yes	26
Fish/122	M	1901	Isle of Lewis (Shetland)	Fisherman & crofter	31/08/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	41
Fish/123	M	1898	Isle of Lewis (Shetland)	Fisherman & crofter	01/09/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	18
Fish/124	M	1891	Isle of Lewis (Shetland)	Fisherman & crofter	02/09/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	25
Fish/125	F	~	~	Hotel worker	~	~	Yes	38
Fish/126	F	~	~	Housework	~	~	Yes	38
Fish/127	F	1904	~	Printer	~	~	Yes	38
Fish/128	M	~	Aberdeen	Fisherman	20/10/77	Paul Thompson	Yes	23
Fish/129	M	1909	Fraserburgh	Fisherman	15/10/77	Paul Thompson	Yes	4
Fish/013	M	1893	Gorleston (Norfolk)	Fisherman	02/10/1974	Trevor Lummis	Yes	82

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Fishing Community and Industry : East Anglia and North East Scotland, 1870-195(
Thompson, P.

Interview	Sex	Year of birth	Location of interview	Occupation	Date(s) of interview	Name of interviewer	Transcript complete	Number of pages
Fish/130	F	~	Lerwick	Housekeeper	~	Paul Thompson	Yes	9
Fish/131	M	~	Isle of Whalsay	Fisherman	~	Paul Thompson	Yes	23
Fish/132	M	1916	Scalpay	Fisherman	24/08/77	Paul Thompson	Yes	4
Fish/133	M	1895	Marrister, Whalsay	Fisherman	28/10/83	Paul Thompson	Yes	2
Fish/134	M	1900	Scalpay	Fisherman	26/08077	Paul Thompson	Yes	3
Fish/135	F	1915	Isle of Whalsay	Fisherwoman	31/08/77	Paul Thompson	Yes	2
Fish/136	M	1900	Lewis Day Retirement	Fisherman	31/08/77	Paul Thompson	Yes	1
Fish/137	F	1910	Lewis Dat Retirement	Fisherwoman	31/08/99	Paul Thompson	Yes	1
Fish/138	M	1909	Westlea, Hamnavoe	Fisherman	08/09/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	2
Fish/139	M	1914	Scalloway, Shetland	Fisherman	19/19/77	Paul Thompson	Yes	4
Fish/014	M	1886	Kessingland (Norfolk)	Fisherman	04/10/1974	Trevor Lummis	Yes	87
Fish/140	M	1892	Isle of Whalsay	Fisherman	08/09/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	2
Fish/141	M	1893	Winterton	Fisherman	~	Paul Thompson	Yes	74
Fish/142	M	1906	Penman Inn	Fisherman	13/9/80	Paul Thompson	Yes	2
Fish/143	M	~	Newst Patknockie	Fisherman	08/09/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	29
Fish/144	M	~	Peterhead	Fisherman	17/6/75	Paul Thompson	Yes	8
Fish/145	M	~	Buckie	Fisherman	19/20/77	Paul Thompson	Yes	6
Fish/146	F	~	Gord, Quendale	Daughter of fisherman	08/09/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	22
Fish/147	F	~	Quendale, Shetland	~	~	Paul Thompson	Yes	29
Fish/148	M	1977	Scalpay	Fisherman	24/08/77	Paul Thompson	Yes	2
Fish/149	M	~	Lerwick	Fisherman	5/9/77	Paul Thompson	Yes	2
Fish/015	M	1885	Winterton (Norfolk)	Fisherman	28/111974,	Trevor Lummis	Yes	57
Fish/150	F	~	Aberdeen	housekeepers	28/1/78	Paul Thompson	Yes	2
Fish/151	M	1904	Wests Cults, Aberdeen	Doctor	~	Paul Thompson	Yes	3
Fish/152	M	1905	Aberdeen	Company owner	13/10/80	Paul Thompson	Yes	2
Fish/153	M	1903	Fraserburgh	Fisherman	16/10/77	Paul Thompson	Yes	2
Fish/154	M	1910	Fraserburgh	Fisherman	14/4/77	Paul Thompson	Yes	18
Fish/155	M	1941	St Coombs	Fisherman	15/10/77	Paul Thompson	Yes	2
Fish/156	M	1940	Fraserburgh	Fisherman	15/9/80	Paul Thompson	Yes	1
Fish/157	M	1932	Ullapool	Fisherman	15/9/80	Paul Thompson	Yes	1
Fish/158	M/F	1915/	Aberdeen	Fishing family	28/1/78	Paul Thompson	Yes	2
Fish/016	F	1885	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Netmaking	~	~	Yes	56
Fish/017	M	1906	Great Yarmouth	Fisherman	~	~	Yes	65
Fish/018	F	1880	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Cleaner	13/03/1975	~	Yes	31
Fish/019	F	1894	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Housework	~	~	Yes	85

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Thompson, P.

Interview	Sex	Year of birth	Location of interview	Occupation	Date(s) of interview	Name of interviewer	Transcript complete	Number of pages
Fish/002	M	1899	Leigh-on-Sea (Essex)	Fisherman	15/07/1974	Trevor Lummis	Yes	63
Fish/020	M	1887	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Fisherman	~	~	Yes	64
Fish/021	M	1886	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Fisherman	~	Trevor Lummis	Yes	91
Fish/022	M	1897	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Fisherman	12/03/1975	~	Yes	53
Fish/023	F	1888	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Let rooms	07/02/1975,	~	Yes	28
Fish/024	M	1892	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Fisherman	~	~	Yes	85
Fish/025	F	1890	Winterton (Norfolk)	Housework	25/03/1975	~	Yes	76
Fish/026	M	1896	Great Yarmouth	Fisherman	13/03/1975,	~	Yes	29
Fish/027	M	1899	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Fisherman	13/03/1975	~	Yes	49
Fish/028	M	1880	Great Yarmouth	Fisherman	24/03/1975,	~	Yes	36
Fish/029	F	1885	Great Yarmouth	Splitter in curling sheds	13/05/1975	~	Yes	54
Fish/003	M	1888	Leiston (Suffolk)	Fisherman	27/07/1974	Trevor Lummis	Yes	84
Fish/030	F	1898	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Housework	12/05/1975	~	Yes	58
Fish/031	M	1910	Gorleston (Norfolk)	Fisherman	04/1975	Trevor Lummis	Yes	58
Fish/032	F	1886	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Cleaner	~	~	Yes	29
Fish/033	M	1902	Caister (Norfolk)	Fisherman	~	~	Yes	29
Fish/034	M	1888	Gorleston (Norfolk)	Fisherman	18/06/1975	~	Yes	70
Fish/035	M	1898	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Fisherman	17/06/1975	Trevor Lummis	Yes	61
Fish/036	M	1888	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Fisherman	17/06/1975	Trevor Lummis	Yes	52
Fish/037	M	1903	Harwich (Essex)	Fisherman	25/05/1975	~	Yes	40
Fish/038	M	1879	Brightlingsea (Essex)	Fisherman & yachtsman	26/07/1971,	Paul Thompson	Yes	57
Fish/039	F	1892	Harwich (Essex)	Head finery ironer	~	~	Yes	40
Fish/004	M	1889	Caister (Norfolk)	Fisherman	11/1974	~	Yes	46
Fish/040	M	1902	Tollesbury (Essex)	Fisherman	29/10/1975	Trevor Lummis	Yes	47
Fish/041	F	1888	Langley (Norfolk)	Takes in washing	~	~	Yes	50
Fish/042	F	1895	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Housework	~	Trevor Lummis	Yes	53
Fish/043	F	1894	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Fishnet stores worker	~	Trevor Lummis	Yes	39
Fish/044	F	1890	Cromer (Norfolk)	Housework	~	Trevor Lummis	Yes	40
Fish/045	M	1905	Tollesbury (Essex)	Fishery officer & yachtsman	~	~	Yes	68
Fish/046	F	1907	Harwich (Essex)	Shopwork & housework	~	~	Yes	34
Fish/047	M	1893	Brightlingsea (Essex)	Fisherman & yachtsman	~	~	Yes	62
Fish/048	M	1900	Tollesbury (Essex)	Fisherman & yachtman	~	~	Yes	53
Fish/049	M	1887	Lowestoft (Essex)	Fisherman	09/03/1976	~	Yes	36
Fish/005	M	1889	Norfolk	Fisherman	30/09/1974	Trevor Lummis	Yes	64
Fish/050	M	1899	Aldeburgh (Suffolk)	Fisherman	08/03/1976	~	Yes	52

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Interview	Sex	Year of birth	Location of interview	Occupation	Date(s) of interview	Name of interviewer	Transcript complete	Number of pages
Fish/051	F	1906	Great Yarmouth	Nanny	10/03/1976	Trevor Lummis	Yes	45
Fish/052	F	1896	Cromer (Norfolk)	Housework	10/03/1976	~	Yes	38
Fish/052	F	1896	Cromer (Norfolk)	Housework	10/03/1976	~	Yes	38
Fish/053	M	1903	Southwold (Suffolk)	Fisherman	09/03/1976	~	Yes	52
Fish/054	F	1901	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Net factory	~	~	Yes	50
Fish/055	M	1892	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Fish buyer	16/05/1975	~	Yes	43
Fish/056	M	1897	West Mersea (Essex)	Fisherman & yachtsman	~	~	Yes	57
Fish/057	M	1900	West Mersea (Essex)	Fisherman & yachtsman	~	~	Yes	28
Fish/058	M	1891	Mersea (Essex)	Fisherman	~	~	Yes	23
Fish/059	M	1898	Mersea (Essex)	Fisherman & yachtsman	~	~	Yes	23
Fish/006	M	1896	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Fisherman	~	~	Yes	53
Fish/060	M	1896	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Fisherman	~	~	Yes	38
Fish/061	M	1904	Lowestoft (Suffolk)	Fisherman	01/03/1980	Paul Thompson	No transcript	0
Fish/062	~	~	Buckie (Banff)	~	~	~	No transcript	0
Fish/063	M	1904	Buckie (Banff)	Fisherman	~	~	No	15
Fish/064	F	1920	Buckie (Banff)	~	~	~	No	5
Fish/065	M	1914	Buckie (Banff)	Fisherman	~	~	No	9
Fish/066	F	1910	Buckie (Banff)	~	~	~	No	7
Fish/067	M	1894	Buckie (Banff)	Fisherman	~	~	No	11
Fish/068	F	~	Buckie (Banff)	Housework	~	~	No	7
Fish/069	M	~	Buckie (Banff)	Fisherman	1974	Paul Thompson	No	3
Fish/007	M	1890	Bacton (Norfolk)	Fisherman	30/09/1974	Trevor Lummis	Yes	74
Fish/070	M	1901	Buckie (Banff)	Fisherman	~	~	No	7
Fish/071	F	1904	Buckie (Banff)	~	~	~	No	2
Fish/072	M	1901	Buckie (Banff)	Fisherman	~	Paul Thompson	No	8
Fish/073	M	1903	Portsoy (Banff)	Fisherman	1974	Alun Howkins	No	43
Fish/074	F	1903	Portsoy (Banff)	~	1974	Alun Howkins	No	43
Fish/075	M	1903	Portsoy (Banff)	Fisherman	1974	Alun Howkins	No	4
Fish/076	F	~	Portsoy (Banff)	~	1974	Alun Howkins	No	4
Fish/077	M	1910	Buckie (Banff)	Bank manager	1974	Alun Howkins	No	1
Fish/078	M	1894	Buckie (Banff)	Fisherman	~	Alun Howkins	No	2
Fish/079	M	1915	Portessie (Banffs)	Fisherman	~	Paul Thompson	No	29
Fish/008	M	1896	Gorleston (Norfolk)	Fisherman	~	~	Yes	50
Fish/080	F	1919	Portessie (Banffs)	Cleaner	~	Paul Thompson	No	29
Fish/081	F	~	Buckie (Banff)	~	~	Paul Thompson	No	7

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Interview	Sex	Year of birth	Location of interview	Occupation	Date(s) of interview	Name of interviewer	Transcript complete	Number of pages
Fish/082	M	1904	Buckie (Banff)	Fisherman	03/02/1976	~	Yes	18
Fish/083	M	~	Buckie (Banff)	Shipbuilder	03/02/1976	~	No	5
Fish/084	~	~	Buckie (Banff)	Bapist Service	01/1976	~	No transcript	0
Fish/085	M	1911	Fraserburgh (Banff)	Fisherman	18/10/1973,	Paul Thompson	Yes	61
Fish/086	M	~	Fraserburgh (Banff)	Fisherman	15/10/1977,	Paul Thompson	Yes	29
Fish/087	F	1897	Fraserburgh (Banff)	Housework	15/10/1977,	Paul Thompson	Yes	31
Fish/088	F	1897	Fraserburgh (Banff)	Fish seller	17/09/1980	Paul Thompson	Yes	42
Fish/089	M	1912	Peterhead (Shetland)	Fisherman	16/10/1977	~	Yes	14
Fish/009	M	1895	Caister (Norfolk)	Fisherman	~	~	Yes	59
Fish/090	F	1905	Peterhead (Shetland)	Fisherman	16/10/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	42
Fish/091	M	1938	Peterhead (Sheyland)	Fisherman	15-	Paul Thompson	No	3
Fish/092	M	1902	Aberdeen	Fisherman	18/10/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	32
Fish/093	M	1901	Aberdeen	Fisherman	18/10/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	18
Fish/094	M	1915	Aberdeen	Fisherman	18/10/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	21
Fish/095	F	~	Aberdeen	Housework	18/10/1977	Paul Thompson	Yes	21
Fish/096	M	1894	Aberdeen	Fisherman	28/01/1978	~	Yes	22
Fish/097	M	1910	Aberdeen	Fisherman	29/01/1978	Paul Thompson	Yes	24
Fish/098	F	~	Aberdeen	Fish filleter	29/01/1978	Paul Thompson	Yes	24
Fish/099	F	1883	Aberdeen	~	29/01/1978	Paul Thompson	Yes	21

SSRC Social Science Research Council — Application for a research grant — R1

in confidence — please type throughout

1 applicant Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss — initials — surname

DR. — P.R. — THOMPSON

2 department

Sociology

3 institution

University of Essex

4a official address

Wivenhoe Park
Colchester
Essex

4b official telephone number (give STD code from London)

(0206) 44144

5 position held

Reader in Sociology (Social History)

6 type of application (tick appropriate boxes) — project or programme: ☑ — new: ☑

7 brief title of research (up to 12 words)

The Family and Community Life of East Anglian Fishermen

8 abstract of research (up to 150 words)

A study, using both documentary research and the interview method, of the family and community life of East Anglian fishermen in the late 19th and early 20th century; in order to provide, firstly a social history of a major regional industry now in decline, secondly a study of the urban culture of the fishing towns, and thirdly an investigation of the influence of work and organisation upon family life.

9 total grant required (£)

~~5989~~
5971

10 proposed starting date

1 October 1973

11 proposed duration

Two years

12 staff
(specify title or level of each appointment; also names if known)

	average salary £	super-annuation (eg FSSU) £	Graduated Pension & National Insurance £	duration of appointment	total for period £
a research workers					
Research Officer (Mr. Trevor Lummis)	1,923	190	150	18 months	3355
research workers					total £ 3,355
b other staff (including clerical, typing, programming)					
Senior Secretary: Transcriber (Mrs. Janet Parkin)	1,416	140	80	12 months	~~1664~~ 1636
other staff					total £ ~~1,664~~ 1636

	salary or expenses and fares
c Senior Visiting Fellows (name and present position)	
Senior Visiting Fellows	total £ 0

d staff associated with the project (but for whom no claim is made)

Applicant and Mrs. Thea Thompson

13 travel and subsistence costs
(these should be explained in the account of the proposed investigation)

	travel	sub-sistence	total
inside UK	£100	50	150
outside UK			
travel and subsistence			total £ 150

14 equipment and materials
(specify and say whether recurrent or non-recurrent: imported equipment should be quoted net of import duties)

	£
Spare parts and repairs to tape recorder	180
Tapes	200

equipment etc	all recurrent	£ 180
	all non-recurrent	£ 200
	total	£ 380

15 other costs (specify)

	£
Printing, stationery and telephone	200
Maritime Museum of East Anglia	250

other costs	total	£ 450

16 financial summary of grant required

	£
	3355
research workers (12a)	~~3345~~
other staff (12b)	~~1664~~ 1636
Senior Visiting Fellows (12c)	0
travel and subsistence (13)	150
equipment etc (14)	380
other costs (15)	450
total	£ ~~5,989~~ 5971

17 estimated incidence of total expenditure in each calendar year (Jan–Dec)

19/73	900
19/74	3800
19/75	~~1209~~ 1271
19/	
19/	
19/	
total	£ ~~5,989~~ 5971

18 What direct or indirect financial support will be provided by the applicant's own institution?

value £ 2,500

description Accommodation; equipment (based on original SSRC grant); applicant's time.

19 Is this research currently being supported by any other outside body or is this application being submitted elsewhere?
If so, give details. Decisions about applications to other bodies (including those made after the award of an SSRC grant) should be reported to the SSRC as soon as available.

No

Proposed Investigation

Before completing this section, please consider carefully the notes on page 1. You do not have to confine yourself to the space provided on pages 7 and 8. If you do want to write more, please do so on paper the same size as this, keeping within margins the same size as those on this application form, heading each page 'Proposed Investigation (cont'd)', numbering the pages in sequence and clipping them to the back of the application form. These pages should be submitted in duplicate. If you want the Council to consider other material (such as working papers, offprints, etc) along with the application form you should send 40 copies.

In the course of our current SSRC project on 'Family Life and Work Experience before 1918', which is described in the attached off-print from SSRC Newsletter, we have collected a number of interviews with respondents from fishing families, chiefly in the Scottish islands. These raise questions about the relationship of work to family and community life which we should like to explore further.

The historical and sociological study of the Hull deep sea trawlermen by Jeremy Tunstall, The Fishermen (1962), suggested that the tough, dangerous nature of fishing as an occupation resulted in a type of marriage relationship which was at best distant, and commonly unstable. Women were valued simply as providers of food and sex when ashore and, like 'soft' landsmen in general, were not highly esteemed. After long weeks at sea fishermen would indulge themselves in spates of drinking, rowdiness and, when in conflict with the owners, violence such as the mob arson of the 1901 Grimsby strike. This picture in many respects corroborated the findings of the classic study by N. Dennis et al, Coal is Our Life,(1956) of another exceptionally tough occupation. The miners too were distant towards their wives, demanding a relationship of service rather than of co-operation, and they were equally noted for their militancy in industrial disputes.

The possibility that tough and dangerous work conditions of themselves generally produced these family and community attitudes was questioned by our discovery that in the Shetland Islands the crofter-fishermen are exceptional in the integration, gentleness and flexibility of their family lives. It is the only part of Britain where the corporal punishment of children is generally disapproved. To a remarkable degree, children are treated as young adults, staying up when there is company, and being disciplined by 'reasoning' rather than by force. This social integration into the adult world goes with economic integration, in the expectation that they will help in the work of the croft. Similarly, there are indications of a striking flexibility of sex roles in the household, which can again be linked with the economy. The Shetland crofter-fisherman had to learn to cook and clean for himself at sea and while he was away his wife had to run the croft. On the other hand, as an inshore fisherman he was not away for long periods, so that he did not become a marginal figure in family life.

Although our sample for the SSRC project allowed for only ten Shetland interviews, we have been able to confirm our findings with supplementary material, including interviews with younger couples carried out for a student project. In addition, there are two early 20th century statistics which again suggest that Shetland family life had exceptional features. The county returned the lowest infant mortality rates in Britain. It also had the highest percentage of women farming in their own name.

A simple economic explanation, however, was again made dubious when it became clear that in the Western Isles, despite a similar dependence upon crofting and fishing, family and community life was very different. Here the discipline of children was severe and the subjection of women extreme. Such flexibility as existed in the division of household and croft labour was more often used by authoritarian husbands to reduce their wives to the position of labouring servants. What were the reasons for this strikingly different situation? One possibility was in the much denser communities of

Proposed investigation (cont'd)

the Western Islands, and the greater importance of communal township organisation in agriculture, which encouraged the emergence of male heads of family as a controlling group. Another difference was the greater strength of puritanical religious influences, whether Catholic or ultra-Calvinist, which might favour the subjection of women. A third possibility was the survival of traditional regional differences derived from the stronger element of Scandinavian settlement in the Shetland Islands.

This last possibility raises a further point. Although fishing communities have been subjected to a series of radical economic changes during the last two centuries, some of which have affected their family and social life, they are generally described as very traditional. Their common geographical isolation would certainly encourage this characteristic. While in some regions fishing settlements may have simply shared in the conservatism of their farming hinterland, elsewhere there are indications that they were cut off even from this. It is a saying of the Moray Firth coast, for example, that 'The cod and corn dinna mix'. The proverb may have been an ideal rather than an actuality, for in East Anglia at least there is evidence of seasonal movements of labourers between agriculture and fishing. Nevertheless many of the fishing towns do appear to have preserved a traditional culture which is distinctive. It is of considerable general interest, because it appears to preserve in a semi-fossilised form many features of urban life which go back to the 18th century or earlier. Some coastal boroughs were among the last strongholds of electoral corruption. In East Anglian fishing towns there is still evidence in the late 19th century of a boisterous demagogic Tory Anglicanism, disorderly church congregations, and a general tolerance by the police of both weekly drunkenness and seasonal celebrations marked by apprentice riots. It would be interesting to know more about this type of urban community and the values and social structure which allowed it to survive.

The study of the family and community life of fishermen thus not only raises fundamental issues concerning the relationship between work, religion, social structure and the family, but also promises to reveal information of general interest to historians. We have already collected considerable information about Scottish fishermen and we have a few interviews with Cornish fishing families. For the west of England there is some very helpful documentation for the early 20th century in the books and reports of Stephen Reynolds (e.g. A Poor Man's House (1909); Seems So! (1911); Board of Agriculture and Fisheries 1913, Cd 6752). Some research into Welsh fishing communities has been started at the University of Wales Institute of Science and Technology. The economic and to a lesser extent the social history of the North East Scottish fishing history is the subject of a number of studies. For English deep sea trawlermen there is Tunstall's book, although the emphasis of this is contemporary rather than historical. For the East Anglian fishing industry, however, there is no social or family history, and apart from John Leather's useful economic history of the Colne fishing and yachting (The North Seamen (1971)), very little literature of any kind which goes beyond the technical development of boat design.

Most East Anglian fishing communities are now close to extinction. In the early 20th century, however, they represented a major element in the fishing industry. Altogether about a third of all English fishermen resided in the three East Anglian counties and the value of their catch in 1913 was comparable to that for Scotland as a whole. Daily tonnage landed at Lowestoft and Yarmouth exceeded that at Hull and Grimsby. Lowestoft and Yarmouth were the principal ports of the highly capitalised steam drifting industry, which was at the height of its prosperity. The majority of their herring catch was exported and some of it was landed directly on the continent. Fishing as a whole was an export industry of some importance and the bulk of foreign trade was from East Anglia. In contrast to these two highly developed ports, however, there were a series of much smaller inshore fishing

Proposed Investigation (cont'd)

settlements, some still operating on a traditional family basis. Closer to London, there were also the Colne and Blackwater ports where a variety of seasonal specialisms, such as stowboating, winkling and oyster dredging, were supplemented by dredging for field manure, salvage work, and also recreational boating. Yachting in particular was an important source of employment at a time when fashionable owners operated continuously throughout the summer with crews of up to 35. In these ports many fishermen found themselves reduced to a position comparable to that of a casual labourer and at the same time in close personal contact with men of exceptional wealth. Thus in addition to its intrinsic importance, the East Anglian fishing industry presents a striking variety of social structure which would be of additional value in testing the connections between economic, family and community life.

Our present proposal is for a study of the social history of East Anglian fishing communities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This would allow us not only to examine the urban culture of these fishing towns and other aspects of the fishing industry special to East Anglia, but also through comparison to refine the hypotheses which we have summarised in the Scottish context. We propose to base the study both on documentary research and on interviewing. Preliminary examination, however, suggests that the documentary resources will not be extensive and that rather fuller information on most problems will be obtainable through interviewing.

In order to allow comparison we propose to use an interview schedule based upon that which we are using at present, which is attached. The sections on domestic service will be redundant for most interviews. On the other hand we should enlarge the section on community to include a number of specific local questions, and we should add a section on the social life aboard ship. We propose to base this partly on the questions used in current research by Mr. Campbell MacMurray of the National Maritime Museum on the careers of deep sea merchant seamen. As with the present project, we should use the schedule as flexibly as possible in practice, returning to the respondent on two or more occasions in order to cover the range of information. We estimate an average length of recording of three hours.

We propose to concentrate part of the interviewing in two fishing towns, of which one would be either Lowestoft or Yarmouth and the other an Essex port. In each case at least twenty respondents would be interviewed, half male and half female. We should wish to cover the various grades of fishermen, including skippers, and it might also seem desirable to interview some other respondents who had a critical role in the economic or social structure if they proved to be available. In addition, up to thirty other interviews would be carried out in other settlements. These would be chosen with comparative purposes in mind. We are confident that despite the general decline of fishing in the region a sufficient number of suitable respondents could be traced by the variety of methods of personal and official contact which we have used in the current project. There would, as exploratory discussions have revealed, be considerable local interest in such a research project, and we would be able to benefit from contacts suggested by the Maritime Museum of East Anglia and also by Mr. George Ewart Evans.

The project would be organised as follows. Mr. Trevor Lummis would be appointed as full-time Research Officer at the termination of his present appointment on 1 October 1973. He would be responsible for carrying out the interviews and documentary research. He would also write up a preliminary report which would summarise the findings in a regional context. I am confident of his ability both as an interviewer and as a scholar from association with him in the current project. It may be noted that he happens to have had the personal experience of several years as an Able Seaman which gives him in this case added qualification.

Proposed Investigation (cont'd)

We estimate that with some 200 hours of recorded interview we should allow for the employment of a full-time transcriber for one year. In this estimate we have taken into account the recent criticism made of a previous application. If Mrs. Janet Parkin is unavailable for this work on termination of her appointment as transcriber of the current SSRC project in December of this year we hope to be able to find a suitable alternative. The travel costs would be incurred during fieldwork. Lastly, an allowance is made for the estimated costs of depositing a set of copies of the recordings at the Maritime Museum of East Anglia, which would be anxious to add them to its permanent collection.

The association of Mrs. Thea Thompson with the project would be to advise, particularly in the light of her current work on child-rearing practices in the early 20th century, which would benefit from this additional comparative dimension. I propose also to incorporate in a future study of my own the additional evidence which the proposed project would bring to the interpretation of the connections between economic, family and community life discussed above.

In conclusion, we believe that the proposed study would be valuable for four reasons. Firstly, it provides an opportunity for the study of the social history of a former major regional industry at a time when sufficient respondents remain. These respondents are already old and it is doubtful whether such a study could be usefully undertaken in ten year's time. Secondly, it would add important supplementary material to the national survey in which we are currently engaged with the support of SSRC. Thirdly, it could assist the historical study of urban culture. Lastly, it would contribute to the investigation of a fundamental historical and sociological problem, the influence of work and economic organisation upon family and social life. We very much hope that the Council will enable us to undertake it.

Curriculum vitae and relevant publications of applicant and research staff (if known)
Applicants may like to list other publications to illustrate the quality of their previous work, and or to give the name and address of an academic referee who could comment on it.

Paul Richard THOMPSON

Born	1935
1949 - 53	Bishop's Stortford College
1955 - 58	Corpus Christi College, Oxford
1958	First Class Honours in Modern History
1959	Senior Scholar, Corpus Christi College, Oxford
1961 - 64	Junior Research Fellow, the Queen's College, Oxford
1964	D. Phil. "London Working Class Politics and the Formation of the London Labour Party, 1885-1914"
1964 - 68	Lecturer in Sociology (Social History), University of Essex
1968 - 71	Senior Lecturer
1971 -	Reader
1968 - 69	Senior Research Fellow, Nuffield College, Oxford
1972	Visiting Professor, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA

RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS:

The Work of William Morris, Heinemann and Viking Press, 1967

Socialists, Liberals and Labour: the Struggle for London, 1885-1914, Routledge and Kegan Paul, and University of Toronto Press, 1967

William Butterfield, Routledge and Kegan Paul and M.I.T. Press, 1971

(With Peter Kidson and Peter Murray) A History of English Architecture, Penguin Books, 1965

"Liberals, Radicals and Labour in London, 1880-1900", Past and Present, April 1964.

(EDITED):

Oral History: an Occasional Newssheet, Numbers One and Two, 1970-71.

Victorian Society conference reports including:

Social Change and Taste in Mid-Victorian England, 1964

The Victorian Poor, 1967

Victorian Seaport, 1968

IN THE PRESS:

"Voices from Within", in H.J. Dyos and Michael Wolff, The Victorian City: Images and Realities, Routledge and Kegan Paul, due September 1973. (This article has been written from some of the material collected in my current research supported by SSRC.)

CURRENT RESEARCH:

Social History of Britain, 1900-18, in a series edited by Professor Eric Hobsbawm and published by Weidenfeld and Nicholson. I intend to complete this book by summer 1973. Interviews begun in connection with this research with the assistance of the University of Essex, the Nuffield Foundation and Nuffield College, led to the proposal for an independent national survey on "Family Life and Work Experience before 1918", which has been supported by a grant of £18,000 over 5 years by SSRC and terminates in December 1973

CURRICULUM VITAE

Trevor Lummis

Born	1930
1944 - 48	Factory stock assistant
1948 - 57	Able Seaman in Merchant Navy
1957 - 63	Employed in building industry
1953 - 65	Newbattle Abbey College of Adult Education
1965 - 69	University of Edinburgh
1969	M.A. (Honours) in History, Class IIi
1971 -	Part-time Research Assistant, Department of Sociology, University of Essex
	Part-time student for M.A. in Sociology (to be completed September 1973)
	Thesis subject "The Labour Aristocracy in 19th century Britain", will be based partly on interview material from the current S.S.R.C. project.

PUBLICATION

"Charles Booth: Social Scientist or Moralist", Economic History Review, February 1971.

/MJG

10th February, 1978

Mr. Ian Miller
Social Science Research Council
1 Temple Avenue
London, EC4Y OBD

Dear Mr. Miller,

Please find enclosed herewith, three copies of the final report on grant HR 2656/1, 'The Family and Community Life of East Anglian Fishermen'.

Dr. Thompson has asked me to apologise for the late submission of this report, but unforseen pressure of work within the Department has caused a considerable delay in the typing of the final report, and we are sorry about this.

Yours sincerely,

Secretary to
Dr. Paul Thompson

Social Science Research Council

FINAL REPORT

Notes on writing the final report

(Page nos. refer to pages in report)

Please fill in the details requested on pages 2 and 3.

Notes on page 4 onwards

There is no standard way in which the details of the research should be presented, but the following points should be covered in your report, which is expected to provide the Council with an account of the work carried out, the problems which presented themselves during the grant, and the steps taken to overcome them;

(a) the background to the research, both academic and in terms of your own previous work;

(b) the original objectives of the project;

(c) the methods and techniques used to accomplish these, and the strategies adopted to carry through the project; the reasons for adopting these methods, techniques and strategies; the data collected; data analysis;

(d) an evaluation of these methods, both in their own right and in relation to the original objectives of the research, as this is of considerable help to SSRC Committees in improving their own procedure and criteria for judging research. Investigators are encouraged to give particular consideration to any practical and methodological problems which they encountered during the course of the project, and the extent to which there has been reformulation or modification of the original research objectives and strategies;

(e) the findings and any conclusions which emerged from the project, together with an account (in either tabular or descriptive form), of the relationship between them. Where no such conclusions have yet emerged you should include a paragraph explaining why this has not been possible, and when you would expect to reach these;

(f) what steps have been taken or are envisaged to disseminate the results of this research i.e. through publications (see page 3), conferences, seminars, direct contacts with government departments or other bodies;

(g) any future action or further research which is suggested by your experience with this project.

NB

(h) the preparation and submission of the final report is the responsibility of the principal investigator. Where the bulk of the report has actually been compiled by other research staff, the principal investigator should contribute a substantial introduction giving an overview of the research as a whole;

(i) there is no fixed length for a final report, since research projects vary considerably in scope and the amount of writing-up which they entail;

(j) since a final report should cover the points outlined in (a) - (g) above, PhD dissertations, book drafts and other materials prepared for other purposes are not acceptable as alternatives to final reports. Where an investigator wishes to include unpublished work not already submitted to the Council in the normal way, this should be appended to the final report;

(k) **the final report is due, in triplicate, within 3 months of the termination of your grant.**

Social Science Research Council

FINAL REPORT
on grant
HR 2656/1

please type throughout

Please indicate whether there has been any change in investigator, research staff or institution since the grant was awarded

1 investigator(s) Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss: DR | initials: P.R. | surname: THOMPSON

2 department
SOCIOLOGY

3 institution
UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX

4a official address

Wivenhoe Park
Colchester
Essex

4b official telephone number (give STD code from London)
(0206) 44144

5 title of project
The Family and Community Life of East Anglian Fishermen

6 aims and methods of research (up to 300 words)

A study, using both documentary research and the interview method, of the family and community life of East Anglian fishermen in the late 19th and early 20th century; in order to provide, firstly a social history of a major regional industry now in decline, secondly a study of the urban culture of the fishing towns, and thirdly an investigation of the influence of work and organisation upon family life.

7 period covered by report
1 January 1974 - 31 December, 1976

8 total grant awarded over period
£6,709

9 research staff (name, status and period of appointment)

Senior Research Officer: Mr. Trevor Lummis 18 months

Senior Secretary:Transcriber: Mrs. Janet Parkin 15 months

10 publications

Please list all publications which have arisen from the project or are in preparation, with details of author, editor, publisher and date of publication. If there are no such publications, please enter NIL. (If you need extra space please continue on paper the same size as this.)

Trevor Lummis: 'The Occupational Community of East Anglian Fishermen', British Journal of Sociology, March, 1977.

Two separate contributions by Paul Thompson and Trevor Lummis are to be included in A Social History of British Fishing, 1890-1939, which Quartet Books will be publishing in 1978.

11 Final Report

Before completing this section, please consider carefully the notes on page 1. Additional pages should be on paper the same size as this, within margins the same size as those on this form, heading each page 'Final Report (cont'd)', numbering the pages in sequence and clipping them to the back of this form. If you wish to submit any other additional material not already sent in to the Council, two copies should be sent in with this report.

The research project 'The Family and Community Life of the East Anglian Fishermen' which is the subject of this report was undertaken with two major aims. Firstly, it was to be a fundamental study of the social history of a major regional industry and through this a contribution to wider historical and sociological debates. Secondly, it was intended to supplement the national "Family Life and Work Experience" archive which has been created at the University of Essex with detailed material from one region and industry, and so to extend its utility as a research source for urban and industrial history and sociology, as well as to collect historical evidence which would otherwise be irretrievably lost within a decade.

One underlying purpose was to examine the connection between men's occupational experience and domestic life, family and community. J. Tunstall's The Fishermen (1962), an historical and sociological study of the Hull deepsea trawlermen, argued that the hard, dangerous and exclusively male life of the fishermen leads them to devalue domestic and family life. He found that 'male' values of toughness and solidarity were primary and while at home men spent the major part of their leisure in the company of their own occupational group. Mining is another industry which is male-dominated, hard and dangerous and the effect of this on family life and role separation was emphasised in an earlier study by N. Dennis et al, Coal is Our Life, (1956) which in many respects accords with Tunstall's evidence and conclusions on the fishermen. Although miners are much more noted for their industrial solidarity and industrial militancy than the fishermen, Tunstall also draws attention to the level of collective violence and arson which marked the fishermen's strike in Grimsby in 1901.

That there is a simple or direct link between economic organisation and the social and domestic form was not supported by evidence collected for the SSRC 'Family Life and Work Experience Before 1918' project which preceded our present research. Interviews revealed that, despite a similar economy based on crofting and fishing, the Shetlands and the Western Isles the quality of family life and the role and position of the male were quite different. In these cases other regional distinctions such as religious differences seemed to suggest potential

explanations. These indications were, however, based on a relatively small number of interviews which needed supplementing. The interviews came, moreover, from regions whatever the distinctions between themselves, could hardly be representative of fishing communities in Britain as a whole. To develop these insights a more substantial investigation was needed, of a major industry in a region where the economic organisation and the social structure of the wider society was more typical of the country as a whole. The East Anglian fishing industry, offered an under-researched, accessible subject ideal for comparison with Tunstall's study. In addition to this there appeared to be an intrinsic value in collecting and interpreting data on aspects of the fishing industry peculiar to East Anglia, for example, the urban centres appeared to preserve earlier forms of electoral corruption, disorderly church congregations and various forms of boisterous communal celebrations. It was hoped to uncover the social structure and values which enabled these forms of behaviour, more common in the early nineteenth century or earlier, to continue into the twentieth century.

The degree to which these aims have been accomplished and the changes forced on the researchers by the availability of suitable informants are dealt with in context with methods and data (they were detailed in our 2nd report 1/1/75 to 31/12/75). It can be summarised, however, by stating that any changes we were obliged to make were in sampling strategy rather than in academic objectives.

The one major method of this research has been the open-ended tape-recorded interview, commonly known as "oral history". An extensive interview schedule was used which provided the overall structure of the interview and an 'ideal' of the complete interview. The interview method was needed partly because of its intrinsic superiority over other methods in providing data interlinking occupational, social and personal attitudes and experiences, and partly because of the paucity of informative contemporary records.

The fact that the fishermen of East Anglia lacked trade unions, did not enter into mass conflict with their employers, and were not the central subject of Royal or Parliamentary Inquiries means that there is little in the way of contemporary official documentation into their working or social conditions. The journals devoted to the fishing industry concentrate on matters of commercial interest: the size and value of the catches landed at the various ports, along with technical issues of interest to the industry such as overfishing; legal constraints on fishing seasons or agitation for these issues by meeting or Parliamentary

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lobbying. The occasional biography of a 'worthy' of the industry provides the odd piece of social information on the origins and career of a leading figure - but there is nothing of a sustained or substantial nature that could be used to pursue the original aims of the project. Sampling the local newspapers produced the same result - the occasional isolated item which could be used, but nothing systematic. Generally fishermen seem not to have been newsworthy except for occasional incidents of drunkenness or failures to sail with their ship. On the other hand the preliminary documentary investigation did show that local newspapers carried potentially useful information in their accounts of local bankrupcies. This source is now being used in conjunction with another documentary source - published lists of fishing vessels - in an independent research exercise, an attempt to analyse the structure of ownership within the industry. Both these sources will be considered at greater length below.

Research investigation of sources at the County Record Offices, the Great Yarmouth Maritime Museum and the Public Record Offices, also proved unproductive. In the main the only documentary evidence generated by the East Anglian fishing industry seems to have been connected with the official registration of fishing vessels or for strictly commercial reasons: and because of the extensive part played by small enterprises, even the latter type of documentation is very sparse.

The fishing industry has been the subject of a number of books and articles but very few of these directly concern themselves with East Anglia. There are useful general accounts of the development of the industry; of the migration of the fishing fleets from the South to the North of the country; changes in fishing gear and boats; changes in the types of fish caught; and for the statistics of the industry. It might be noted, however, that the statistics of the industry can be readily obtained from the annual Parliamentary Reports. These statistics ought to provide the hard 'facts' about the industry, but unfortunately it has been recognised that they are so defective as to be more appropriately regarded in some respects as a branch of historical 'fiction'. Fishing statistics are reliable in both aspects of the industry that they were intended to document. It was hoped that by recording the actual position at sea of catches, it might become possible to locate breeding grounds and lifecycle of the fish and the intensity of the fishing in various grouds, through paying rewards for tagged fish and compiling a record of fish landed in each area. But skippers would not give away the location of their catches:

" . . . and I've heard people ashore say when they landed us 'Where the Hell have you been? Where did you get them?' Well, you always told a lie over that. You never spoke the truth about where you'd been catching fish. If the fisheries man come round, or the customs, whichever he was - he used to out with his book and pencil, 'Morning skipper, where you been?' You'd tell him twenty or thirty mile out, you never spoke the truth on that. No, because if you found a good living, a good bit of fish, - wouldn't you be silly to go and broadcast it. My word, yes. The next day you'd have three parts of the fleet there". Int. 35.

As for the tonnage landed, this was an 'estimate' by the fisheries officer. The officer was often a coastguard or retired or even a working fisherman who compiled the figures for his district. The officer for Brightlingsea, for example, was a working fisherman from another port, from Tollesbury, and he was also responsible at the same time for the figures from a third port, Mersea. He literally had to 'guess' the catches landed daily. A parallel situation was reported by J. Johnstone who, in British Fisheries: their Administration and their Problems (1905) estimated the underreporting of shell fish alone in his own district of Lancashire at well over 100%. Acknowledgement of the shortcomings are to be found also in the reports in the Parliamentary Papers. Thus statistics provide an uncertain starting point for any detailed local study.

Secondary sources may nevertheless be considered adequate for preparing a simple outline of the progress and development of the industry from the point of view of gear, fishing grounds and general commercial organisation. But certainly none of them provide any reasonable basis for considering the social history of the period through a sociological framework.

From this it is clear that the research is fundamentally dependant on information tape-recorded from the respondents. There was, in the view of the researchers, no alternative to this method for this investigation; and however much documentary evidence may be used in support, the overall validity of the research has to stand or fall on the reliability of four informants' testimony. Any attempt to evaluate oral history as a method, in the abstract, is difficult. It does not lend itself readily to the simple categorisation which allows, for example, census data or survey material to be subject to statistical analysis. Such evidence can at least be analysed with an assurance

Final Report cont.

that it meets the requirements for known probabilities of mathmatical error, even if it does not guarantee any congruence with social reality The oral history method rests on one fundamental fact: evidence can be sought from individuals who participated in the events which are to be investigated. The crucial question is whether such accounts take one closer to the reality of the period than would some alternative method.

To evaluate the oral history method is to become involved in the question of memory per se. See Paul Thompson's forthcoming The Voice of the Past: Oral History, Oxford University Press, 1978. Ultimately the reliability of memory may be a question for the biochemist or psychologist rather than the historian. It is however agreed that after the immediate selection of impressions of an event, there is relatively little loss of memory in subsequent years. This can be corroberated from within oral history by examples from informants who have been reinterviewed after a period of some twenty years. It is also clear that whatever the epistemological difficulties connected with the use of memory historians have no alternative to relying on it, whether they use the oral history method or not. Even 'contemporary' documents are frequently based on what one person told another; and the great parliamentary inquiries into the conditions of various industries, which provide the raw material for so many historians, are founded on the oral examination of witnesses, who were often asked not only to assess current conditions in the industry, but also to recount their own experiences of an earlier period.

If, as there is a general problem of memory, it should be observed that not all memory is equally vunerable to distortion. Political historians appear to distrust personal account because of failures to remember precise details of particular meetings or processes of decision making. Their scepticism may be well founded: politicians need to protect and to rationalise their own activities in the light of their desired public image; actual memories of single events are very difficult to disentangle from other similar events; it is expecting too much of memory to demand an accurate account of one political meeting from a person who has spent his life involved in hundreds of such meetings. But none of this reflects on the reliability of oral history for the type of social history undertaken in this project. Respondents are asked to report on the details of their lives which were repeated daily: their diet, clothing, standard of housing, discipline in the home, schooling and similar routine details of their leisure and working life. It is in these areas of regular daily life that recall is particularly strong and reliable.

Oral evidence of this social nature derives its value not from the statistical validity of the sample or from the 'reliability' of the pre-tested questions but from the richness and interconnectedness of the evidence collected from each respondent and its direct authenticity in terms of the respondents own social experience. It would be out of place in this report to discuss the adequacy of ordinary social survey methods: they have little relevance to oral history, simply because they are impossible to apply. Because the mean date of birth of informants for this project is 1893, we can only be dealing with an 'accidental' group of survivors. Any sample must be a non-probability sample. There is no systematic method by which bias can be corrected. But this is not a serious objection to the type of research undertaken here. We are not attempting to discover the distribution of particular features throughout an entire society, but to understand the quality of life of a particular occupational group in one region of the country, and how their occupational experiences relate to social and family life. We are concerned how and why these informants perceived social reality as they did. Lazarfeld argues that in research of this kind, which he terms, "reason analysis", it is mere 'pseudo-science' to use random samples or control groups. While not wholly accepting this view, his point remains sound that in order to understand the motivation of a particular group you must study it directly.

What the extended interview technique lacks in statistical reliability is more than compensated by the coherence of its evidence and by the opportunity it affords to consider any causal links. To complete an interview usually requires at least two visists to a respondent and so involves four or five hours of contact time. This can be achieved only with willing informants. With the survey method, by constrast, in order to keep to a valid random sample respondents have to be 'persuaded' to 'cooperate': which in many cases can only result in a hurried skip through a questionnaire and a series of monosyllabic responses which in themselves are ill-considered. This low-level of 'authenticity' in survey responses is inevitable because respondents cannot develop a shared interest in the survey and its aims and in the truth or falsity of its outcome. But this is not the case in oral history. The collection of evidence is carried out through a careful and sympathetic enquiry into the informants' own life experiences. Some are happy to do this without any curiosity as to the wider aims of the project or as to why anyone should want to know about their lives; but there are others who rapidly come to understand the kind of detail needed and begin to volunteer information. They become

Final Report cont.

consciously committed to trying to give a careful and accurate picture of their own past. And even the less curious respondents, no doubt simply because they are willing informants and are not public figures with reputations to protect, normally show care in their answers. There is every reason to suppose that the quality of information supplied is of the highest possible integrity.

Integrity of intention, however, valuable and constructive in itself is of course no guarantee of accuracy or truth. Our main instrument in securing accuracy has been the use of a series of detailed factual questions about daily life and its context. This has at least two effects. Firstly, it does elminate some of the 'willing' respondents. These are people who agreed to be interviewed assuming that a half-an-hour of anecdotes the 'Good-Old-Days' would serve our purposes. Some respondents turned into 'unwilling' informants because they could not be 'bothered' to apply themselves to the effort of recalling the past in detail, as opposed to simply relating what had remained, usually through frequent retelling, in the forefront of their mind. It should be stressed that an interview satisfactory for this project could involve a great amount of effort on behalf of the informant. A detailed questionnaire, also makes deliberate distortion of the past by an informant a virtual impossibility. Questions of detail on domestic routine, job sequence, hours of work, rates of pay at different ages and leisure activities similarly soon expose a weak or confused memory: and in such cases respondents were not reinterviewed/from the quota and were excluded as unreliable. Some respondents who on first acquaintance appear to have a lively memory prove to be confused when trying to put their memories into sequence/to recall particular information required by the interviwer. There is a distinction /the active and conscious memory of between an individual, and his or her 'recall':/ an ability to recover memory that is in response to the prompting of the interviewer. That such memories have not been actively recalled for years may make them less vunerable to distortion through subsequent experience and attitudes. Very often they may not be integrated into the respondents active view of the past. It is a common experience for interviewers to be offered by an informant a generalisation like "In them days men never did a thing in the house". This generalisation is the respondents honest 'opinion' and constitutes the kind of "response" which is normal in standard survey work. But the same informant will, when asked detailed questions about daily routine in the house in childhood, reveal a considerable list of domestic chores carried out by their father. It is the integrity

of this power of 'recall' rather than that of current 'memories' - which have been more influenced by others and by the mass media - on which the authenticity of the material collected is founded.

Besides drawing on the advantages of cooperation and detailed 'recall', the oral history interview has another kind of authenticity. The informants describe reality in their own terms and from their own reference points. This is essential if any useful information is to be collected. It is impossible to encompass individual's social reality by the mechanical means of pre-tested field coding. These methods, even in such experienced hands as the English Census enumerators, produce a 15% error rate in simple material 'facts', like whether a dwelling has hot running water (see Open University D101 SSB 1 Summer School Booklet p.23). If as simple a communication as this is prone to such a degree of error, the chances of reliably accounting for more complex social world of a respondent by this kind of brisk methodology are indeed remote. The open-ended interview has the double advantage of allowing the combination of a series of detailed questions, which enable accuracy and memory to be gauged, while at the same time giving room for informants to express their views of reality with their own concepts and their own vocabulary.

The problems of structuring information collected in this way are very real. Transcription is an essential aid. With a transcript all the comments bearing on one aspect of an informant's social perceptions - for example of class - can be drawn together for consideration. A painstaking process of interpretation is necessary for the real social boundaries of the respondents' world to be accurately delineated. For example, a man who calls himself 'middle class', while in other parts of the interview consistently acknowledges his own working class identity, may see that some people were worse off, and others better off, than himself and thus define himself, quite logically, as being in the middle. He is not to be confused with the man who sees himself as middle class because he entertains social pretensions. The real social boundaries of our informants proved in fact to be only loosely connected with the hierarchies normally described by the social scientist. For example, they frequently placed shop assistants above boat-owners. Only an interview long and sympathetic enough to elicit an informants' real reference points can allow an accurate understanding of the significance of terms like 'middle class'. Yet without this understanding, any categorising is bound to miss its most essential dimension: how informants see the divisions in their social world and what this means to them in terms of social stress or discontent.

Final Report cont.

Transcription is therefore the first step towards structuring the material. It is also necessary to face, at the start of analysis, the possibility of unknown bias in the composition of the sample. At least one bias is obvious. Most of the respondents who come are found because they are known in their community as ex-fishermen. This usually means that they have had a long connection with the fishing industry and spent most of their life in it. The 'fisherman' who worked in the industry for a few years, and then left because he did not like it, is more likely known by a subsequent occupation; and so either not alerted to the project, or, unconfident of being able to help because he is conscious of his limited amount of experience. There is therefore a bias in favour of those who positively liked working in the industry or at least found it tolerable. Those one or two respondents in the sample who did leave the industry in the 1920's did not in fact differ in any degree from those who spent a life time in the industry; but they left either for other opportunities or as the result of domestic pressures, rather than because they were opposed to the conditions. This lack of 'unfavourable' respondents may well appear to leave the sample biased towards a favourable impression of the industry, and it should be assumed that any bias is in that direction. But the crucial issue is not whether unfavourable accounts of the industry would have been more prevalent if those who had a brief acquaintance with the industry had been interviewed, but whether those interviews would have radically altered the overall impression of the industry gained from those who were interviewed. Such a question may simply remain unanswerable unless at some later stage of the research it becomes possible to estimate the relative proportions of long and short service men.

The original proposal was for an equal balance between the sexes. That this intention proved impossible to fulfill was perhaps the most unexpected difficulty of the actual fieldwork. Our previous experience of oral history has normally been of greater difficulty in finding male informants rather than female. We can only repeat our earlier assumption that this difficulty has arisen from focussing on a male-dominated occupation with which women do not identify. One is directed to elderly retired fishermen because their former occupation is known, but the former occupation of a widow's dead spouse is not known. This was particularly so in Yarmouth, where there has been a great deal of re-housing with the consequent loss of community contacts. The final distribution of the sexes was 20 females and 40 males. Although this change was forced upon us through the excessive amount

of time required to trace women informants, the change in distribution has proved in some respects helpful. It became clear as research progressed that work experience and social perceptions of the fishermen were providing some unexpected aspects and that a larger sample of males would provide compensating advantages.

The precise historical period for study was described in the research application as 'late 19th century and early twentieth century'. It might be noted that the difficulties encountered in finding suitable respondents to fill our specified quotas could have been overcome quite simply by including respondents from a younger cohort and extending the period of the research into the interwar years. We made a conscious effort to focus our research to the period ending with the outbreak of the 1st World War and extending back to the limits of living memory. This probably doubled the amount of time spent in finding respondents, because many traced in the appropriate age group had to be eliminated because their recall was insufficiently full or precise for systematic oral history interview.

Our decision to stick strictly to an earlier time period obviously involved both gains and losses. Perhaps themost obvious gain is in the intrinsic value of the archive itself. 30% of the respondents were born during the 1880's. This group provides unique and irreplaceable testimony on domestic conditions, parental attitudes and community practises for the 1880's and 1890's. They also provide direct evidenceof working conditions from the 1890's onward. By concentrating over 80% of the interviews on those who actually started work before the 1st World War, the archive is a rich source full of cross references. The price paid for this concentrated research into the most distant period is the absence of more than incidental evidence on life in the interwar years. More evidence from these years would have provided an interesting comparative standpoint for the pre-war period. Fortunately, respondents who started work in the 1920's and 1930's will be available for some year to come, and the possibility to such further research will remain open.

Some decisions were also necessary on the geographical distribution of informants. The final country totals were as follows:

Norfolk	17 Males	7 Females	24
Suffolk	12 Males	10 Females	22
Essex	11 Males	3 Females	14
			60

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Our original proposal had been to concentrate twenty interviews in either Lowestoft or Yarmouth, and another twenty in an Essex town such as Harwich or Brightingsea, with up to thirty further interviews taken from the smaller fishing communities. As we explained in our second report (1975), this strategy was abandoned for two reasons. Although close together, Yarmouth and Lowestoft were quickly found to be very distinctive communities; and as the two towns combined to constitute the major location of the fishermen and of the herring industry at its most prosperous, it seemed unwise to concentrate on one only. The geographical emphasis of the research therefore, shifted towards Norfolk and Suffolk and away from Essex. This was confirmed when we encountered unforeseen difficulties in finding suitable informants in Essex: a difficulty not unconnected with our determinations to try to concentrate the archive on the pre-war experiences. Even so the age structure of the Essex respondents is weighted towards the younger age cohort. Harwich had to be abandoned as a focal point for the Essex interviews because none of the older men had survived. The Essex interviews now come chiefly from Tollesbury (4) and West Mersea (4). These two communities can be considered as effectively and industrial and social unity, since they are close together, with some intermarriage, and fish the same grounds. We should emphasize that although there were fewer fishermen in Essex than in the other two counties, it is much more difficult to pick out the 'typical' fishermen or fishing experience. The shrimp, cockle and oyster fishing combined with yachting to create a variety of experiences which could only be fully explored in a series of separate local studies. Nevertheless, we are confident that in deciding to concentrate on the experience of the fishermen/yacht hands of the Blackwater estuary of mid-Essex, we have made the best use of the resources at our disposal.

The occupational composition of informants interviewed was distributed as follows:

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		FATHERS	RESPONDENTS	TOTALS
DRIFTING	OWNERS	7	2	9
	SKIPPERS	7	3	10
	CREW	2	11	13
TRAWLING	OWNERS	2	0	2
	SKIPPERS	6	5	11
	CREW	4	2	6
INSHORE		20	14	34
OTHERS		12	23*	35
TOTALS		60	60	120

* INCLUDES 20 FEMALES

We were successful in finding representatives of all occupational levels of the industry. We have not separated the 'inshore' fishermen into skippers, owners or crew. In the inshore fishing off the Norfolk and Suffolk coasts the boats were restricted in size because they worked off the open beach, and usually carried only two men, with little to distinguish owner and crew. The situation was more confused in Essex. Inshore vessels were larger; but the classification is made more arbitrary by the fact that many inshoremen also worked as yacht hands, so that the skipper-owner of a smack might serve as a cook on a yacht, whereas a non-owning fisherman skipper might be skipper of the largest and most prestigious yacht. Status and income lines are thus complex, although there can be little doubt that most economic success and status could be acquired at yachting. The social perceptions and industrial experience of the fishermen has, however, proved to be one of the most interesting aspects of the research and will be developed below.

The interviews collected average three hours in length, as we anticipated; but individual interviews vary in length from just over one hour to five hours. In some cases interviews are shorter because of the particular life experience of the informant: for example, a fisherman without any religious affiliations or political interests would require scarcely any questioning on two sections of the schedule. The amount of detail recalled by a respondent of any one aspect of life also varies, and the overall length of the interview will reflect the narrative and descriptive skill of the informant. This variation of response in individuals does have disadvantages when the material is to be categorised and tabulated for internal consistency. This disadvantage has largely to be accepted with the use of an open-ended interview. (In principle, it can be corrected by using one methodological change. A brief survey type check list of key points for which tabulation and correlation is proposed, which can be completed through supplementary questions at second or third visit. But if more than a few such questions are imposed, this device will simply result in the defects of the survey method discussed above - careless and indifferent answers - without the compensation of statistical validity.) Nevertheless, in presenting the material as much use has been made of tabulations as the qualitative nature of the material and a small sample group will allow, in order to reduce the dangers of unconscious bias in interpretation. Tabulation is based on a process of categorisation, which demands careful consideration of all the relevant material in an interview. Once categorised for one table, the particular assessment of the interviewed becomes 'fixed'; it cannot be subconsciously 'slipped' into another category in a further correlation as frequently happens when impressionistic phrases like 'most', 'a few' or the 'majority' are used in the place of any systematic quantitative evaluation. Categorisation and tabulation thus ensure that the internal consistancy of the evidence is displayed with all reasonable rigour. Where it is argued that there is a trend in the sample, that trend is illustrated by the number of cases in each cell, and the confidence which the argument deserves can be assessed accordingly.

A further advantage of tabulation to an oral history project is that it allows comparison with quantitative social distributions known from other historical sources. For example, the simple demographic

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testimony given by informants can be analysed to 'test' the representativeness of the sample. In general enough is known about family size, mortality trends and the special effects of location for these to provide a paradigm for similar information drawn from oral testimony. If the oral testimony from the sample is congruent with the known patterns, this helps to confirm the validity of the sample. Thus, the paragraphs which follow are based on the information given by respondents about the number of siblings in their family.

All references are to Table One "Reported Family Size and Mortality". The meaning of the column headings is as follows: "Average number of siblings per respondent" refers to the gross number of births reported. "Reported number of sibling deaths" is the number of deaths of siblings reported by the respondents and averaged by family. It would have been impossible to distinguish between stillbirths, infant mortality and children who "died young". Often some of the reported deaths occurred while the respondent was still an infant, or indeed, before they were born. What the figures most accurately reflect is the number of acknowledged births and the losses to the family of children up to the age of twelve or thirteen.

Table A gives the figures for the whole sample, providing a general base-line. Proceeding from that point, we should not expect to find any difference between the reported experience of male or female informants. Women were chosen because their fathers were fishermen or were married to fishermen before 1914, so respondents of both sexes are drawn from the same communities. This is born out by Table B which shows that the sex of the informant has made little difference to the reported experience. However, given the known historical background, we should anticipate some difference in the figures when they are analysed by location as in Table C. This reveals the expected trend with a higher mortality rate in the urban than in rural areas. Family size does not however, show the relative distinction that one might have expected, and this may be explained in various ways. It may result from chance bias which is quite possible with a sample of this small size, and is slight enough not to be worrying. But alternatively, it might be argued that fishermen were a 'traditional' group and continued to have family sizes above the norm, so that fishermen, urban and rural, had larger families than the average for the rest of the population.

While, since the majority of the 'non-fishermen' in the sample come from rural areas, there is a bias towards fishermen in urban areas, so that the lack of a general trend may be due to the influence of distinctive occupational behaviour. Another aspect of this is that the Essex interviews, which are mainly rural, show a distinctly smaller family size than those from Norfolk and Suffolk (see Table E). This may represent some distinctive change in regional attitudes to family size; or it could be connected with the distinctive experience of the yachtsmen and their exposure to higher class life styles. The smaller family size and lower mortality rate of the Essex interviews is also partially explicable by what is a genuine skew in the sample: the Essex interviews tend to be heavily weighted towards younger informants and this implies smaller families and lower mortality rates. That this trend is true of the sample as a whole can be seen from Table H. Here the sample has been split into three cohorts by the birthdates of the respondents. The movement of sibling mortality is what would be anticipated from a valid sample. The increase in family size in the final cohort is on the other hand unexpected, and it may possibly be due to the experience of the high prosperity of the industry during the final cohort.

It would, of course, be foolish to expect such a small sample chosen in an 'accidental' way to provide a copy book example of the validity of sampling procedures. But once the oral evidence has been broken down into a structured format it can be seen just where the sample conforms with known facts and trends; and with results such as those above it is then reasonable to proceed to look at the internal distinctions within the sample group with some confidence that significant trends revealed will not be merely accidental. Naturally, it would not be possible to generalise from the sample; but it is certainly possible to use tables as a pointer to distinctions within the material which need explaining.

Our next example comes again from the same basic testimony on siblings. The contents of Table D break down the information by the three types of fishing and also the group who were not fishermen (typically farm workers, labourers and ancilliary workers in the fishing industry). The most noticeable thing about this table is how the two occupations which kept men away from the home for long periods - drifting and trawling - had the highest mortality rates among children. The lowest category, 'inshore', is further divided in Table I because

of the anomalous position of yacht hands, and this brings the inshore fishermen who worked from his home much closer in profile to the non-fishermen. Indeed, the grouping is incredibly close; seven and eight percent for the groups whose fathers are at home, and 16 and 17% sibling mortality for the two groups whose fathers are away from home. These tables therefore strongly suggest the importance for successful child-rearing of the presence of fathers in the family home - a factor not noted in contemporary evidence -and serves to lead back to a closer scrutiny of the qualitative evidence of home life to see whether it is possible to establish the reasons for this.

The very high mortality rate for Norfolk as a whole in Table E is the result of quite exceptionally high rates reported from 'urban' Norfolk: that is from Great Yarmouth, which has a reported sibling death rate of no less than 24%. This rate is a reflection of the social conditions of the old slum area of the town: three families living in the "Rows" reported a total of 46 sibling births and 22 sibling deaths. This is a startling figure, but given the conditions of family life, it seems probably that these figures are more or less accurate. Rowntree, in his survey of York conducted in 1899 found that in one Parish 33% of all children born died before their first year of life. Given this figure for an entire parish the existence of individual families who lost more than 50% is a certainty; and in our case the loss of siblings extends beyond the first year. By approaching the 'statistics' of mortality through the individual family experience, one is made aware that the official statistics, which in themselves reveal startling differences in mortality rates between adjacent districts, through their method of presentation conceal still greater variations in family experience.

Tables F and G show the figures broken down by class or status levels. The level of reward across status barriers in the fishing is confusing and leads to extremes of poverty being found at all levels. Nevertheless, given that there is a differential in average income between status positions we should anticipate this to be reflected in variations of death rates, and these are in fact clearly shown in these tables. We can assume that the high mortality rates at least partially reflect social deprivation, resulting from inadequate income. Although it is noticeable that there is only a slight graduation in the family size of the different status groups, which adds support to the impression gained from

the qualitative material that the fishermen as a group shared values and cultural norms. Certainly the final family size shows less fluctuation than reported sibling deaths. The reported number of births by groups ranges from 5.9 to 9.5, and surviving family size from 5.8 to 7.8. With such figures in mind, it is appropriate, at this point, to turn to a consideration of one of the principal questions with which we were concerned: the nature of class perceptions in the fishing communities.

"There were no class distinctions, you just had a bit more money" (Int: 12). The firmest and most certain conclusion to emerge from interviewing informants about their class perceptions is that social stratification was not one of their major concerns. In fact it had a very low level of salience. Most respondents had to be 'worked at' in order to elicit any information of use in reconstructing their class perceptions: and this was not due to any reluctance to discuss the topic. Even very forthcoming informants who were willing to propound vigorously on any aspect of their life or experience tended to dismiss all probes about stratification with responses such as "there was just the rich and poor". The dichotomous model was marginally the most common, but this rarely accompanied by a conflict view of society. If one classifies as 'conflict' even the most casual references to any aspect of snobbery or division, there are only 12 interviews which show any evidence of seeing social stratification in terms of conflict and seven of those held a trichotomous model. These points will be pursued below.

The quotation above draws attention to the difficulties in eliciting the real boundaries of an informant's social world by detailed questioning and by suggesting higher or lower income groups as a point of contrast. Respondents will often - and quite properly - identify different income levels if one prompts them, only to demolish their import with an expression of indifference to these income differentials; or they will simply state that "everyone was poor", that "there were no snobs", or some similar expression implying a unified social world.

In constructing the parameters of the class perceptions our guiding aim has been to represent the stratification as reported by the respondent. This is called 'Perceptible Class': for example, the respondent who stated that there were three classes and then proceeded to

detail three strata within the working class, but did not acknowledge the existence of other class groups, was classified as having a trichotomous class model. Other informants saw a simple division between 'White Collar' and 'Ordinary Working Class' and, under prompting, placed other occupations in one or other of these two basic categories: these are classified as holding a dichotomous model. In other words a trichotomous model should not be assumed to reflect a full social categorisation covering the upper class, middle class and working class as conventionally understood. It indicates simply that the respondent saw that number of 'perceptible' breaks in his consciousness of the social structure.

Informants were also questioned about their relative position within their own class and their responses to this have been tabulated as strata within the working class. Once again, it is important to distinguish between perceived structure - which is shown in the tables - and its social significance to the respondents. They will express their views on the relative earning power of different working class occupations and place a fishermen's earnings in a comparative context, while at the same time insisting that there was no social difference; or that money made no social difference - it was a matter of behaviour and the important social division within the working class was between the 'rough' and the 'respectable'. The tables on strata which follow present perceived income levels rather than socially felt divisions. Some 30% of the respondents saw no strata in the working class at all. And in fact, the difficulty of estimating a fisherman's earnings, which could vary so much from vessel to vessel and from season to season, was probably the root of the genuine difficulty which fishermen found of perceiving their social reality in a stratified context.

Tabulating the 'class' perceptions of the respondents presents some problems which do not exist in other sections of the material. When dealing with the level of chastisement in the home, or the age of leaving school, or with patterns of religious attendance as a teenager, one is dealing with a definite phase in the life of the respondent which is distinct from other phases and, providing the power of recall is there, cannot be easily confused with patterns of behaviour from later in life. Class attitudes cannot be so confidently separated in this convenient way. Childhood experiences are not unimportant and some informants relate childhood episodes when asked about class structure; but it is more likely that social experience as an adult finally determines class attitudes.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to decide just at which period of life the reported class attitudes are located and to what extent they are a contemporary rationalisation of past life as seen in retrospect. But there are clues in some of the interviews that suggest that major changes in class attitudes are also remembered. Informants frequently make distinctions in time, and distinguish between the world when they were children and when they were young adults, or how life was before and after the First World War. Moreover we can be certain that the majority have not rationalised their political viewpoints from their contemporary position, but have reported how these were before 1914, independently of very radical subsequent alterations. Thus there is no reason to assume that earlier class attitudes are beyond recall.

A further problem is in the choice of the most appropriate dimensions for structuring their perceptions. The interview sample was founded on the occupation of the respondent's father because we intended to go back to the limits of oral evidence and wished to evaluate the social world of the earlier generation from the standards and attitudes in the home. To this end most of the tables are categorised in this way. But given the difficulties of locating in any precise way the stage at which class perceptions are formed, tables are also included which categorise the information by the occupation of the respondent.

The first set of tables deal with the basic class model of the respondents. Table Two 'A' shows this distribution by County. There is no reason to suppose that these administrative areas impose any really relevant pattern on the evidence. Certainly there is a steady increase in the trichotomous model moving from South to North, especially if one allows for the fact that Suffolk has the highest proportion of female respondents who, from Table B, can be seen to be twice as likely as the males to hold such a view. Ten per cent of both males and females are shown as having a single class view of society. But taken with Table C it can be seen that these respondents are all from urban areas (in fact Yarmouth and Lowestoft). The 'single class' view is mainly associated with poverty and a very limited experience of the extent of the social world. "We were all poor then", or "Nobody was snobby in those days", are typical remarks of those who see only one class and who, if prompted with a reference to an obviously professional occupation, simply reply that "they never had anything to do with them". From the respondents references to the "poor" one could impute the existence of at least one other class (the rich).

But this appears to be a genuinely limited viewpoint and is presented as such. If, however, they are for the purposes of simplification grouped with the dichotomous image, and the three and four class models of society are conflated, there is virtually no difference in the distribution of significant class between town and country. Given the hierarchical structure of society in rural areas and the power exercised by the upper class, this result is unexpected. 'Rural' however, includes fishing villages such as Winterton, Caister and Kessingland. Only seven of the respondents came from 'purely' agricultural villages, and of those one reports four classes, five three classes and one "D/K". This distribution within the 'rural' category between the perceptions of those in inland agricultural villages and the coastal fishing villages is quite remarkably unanimous and it indicates clearly that the atmosphere of the two types of village was quite distinctive.

Tables F, 1, 2 and 3, present the evidence in age cohorts by date of birth. Whether one takes the whole group, or male and female separately, there is a general tendency for the trichotomous model to be replaced with a dichotomous one. This parallels the distribution by county and it might be thought that as the Essex sample tended to be younger than the Norfolk or Suffolk respondents, this result was due to the skew in the age distribution throughout the region. Tables H, 1, 2 and 3) show the cohort by county. Although this increases the number of cells to an absurd degree, it does reinforce the likelihood that the changes in social imagery were due to real changes in social experience, for it is evident in all the three areas. The 12 respondents (20% of the sample) who reported even a minor sense of conflict are 24% of the earliest cohort, 15% of the middle cohort, and 23% of the final cohort. This finding is an encouraging of the quality of the evidence, in that it shows that the lowest sense of conflict comes from the cohort whose childhood and early working life coincided with the period of greatest prosperity. It is interesting to note that many respondents, who deny any degree of class conflict or distinction in the pre-1914 period, do add that people became more 'snobby' or class conscious after this period. The interviews suggest that this was partly due to the migration of owners and even skippers to new housing areas, the growth of office staff and second generation owners being less clearly identifiable as fishermen. Lack of opportunity for upward mobility through the contraction of the size of the fishing fleet in the inter-war years may also have hardened the lines of stratification.

Support for our view that the evidence of changing attitudes to class is not purely accidental, and that it is reasonable to place some trust in the informants' own distinctions between their social attitudes then and now, can also be found from an earlier study on racial attitudes (M. Deutsch and M.E. Collins, "Interracial Housing: a psychological evaluation of a social experiment", University of Minnesota, 1951). Deutsch and Colins found that the racial attitudes of respondents living in racial segregated and in integrated housing areas showed systematic differences according to their present location. But when questioned about their racial attitudes before moving into these special housing areas there was no systematic difference in reported attitudes between the two groups. This provides very clear evidence that the respondents had not rationalised their recall of earlier attitudes to fit their new views.

Tables DD and EE show the material classified by the occupation of the male respondents only. These confirm a slight trend towards the dichotomous view, but it is too slight to be given any weight, and especially if some allowance is made for the possible effect of later experience on respondents'accounts.

Of equal interest is the informant's perceptions of strata within their own class. Indeed, this dimension may well be of great psychological importance to the individual's sense of well-being and satisfaction than the existence of broader class distinctions. The immense gulf between the position of the upper class in Edwardian society and the working classes meant that comparisons between them had little immediate relevance for many people. In the same spirit contemporary skilled workers are more likely to strike against the closing of differentials with the unskilled than the widening differentials expressed in directors' fees or stockmarket gains. Success or failure within their own socio-economic class could bite harder because it reflected ability to cope with their own world and 'legitimate' expectations.

This interpretation is supported by the evidence on strata within the working class as seen by the fishermen. Table C is the most revealing as it presents male respondents by their own occupation and thus directly reflects the consequences of their employment. In East Anglia the trawlermen had a lower level of earnings than the driftermen before the First World War. Consequently the trawlermen place themselves in the middle of the working class, despite the fact that the majority of these

informants were skippers or mates and were paid on a share system. The driftermen, by contrast, who were working in a boom industry at the time, saw themselves as being at the top level of the working class or even in the middle class. The majority of inshore men were agreed that they stood at the head of working class life - a factor which might account for their widespread Conservatism, rather than their image of their own position at the bottom of a wider class system. It may also suggest how they could hold so clearly a dichotomous 'rich/poor' model of society without seeing this in terms of conflict. Their satisfaction came from being better off than all those against whom they measured themselves. They did not choose to contrast their own incomes with those of the yacht owners whom they served as crewmen. It is also interesting to notice the substantial percentage of driftermen and trawlermen who denied the existence of strata within the working class: a view rarely shared by the inshore men.

The accuracy with which the respondents identified their own strata within the working class, and a clear indication that this was based on income rather than on status, is found in Table three E. This shows the perceptions of trawlermen and driftermen by status. It reveals less tightly grouped perceptions than Table C, which groups perception by industry. Table E is apt to be misleading in that it shows that 'crew' rated themselves higher than the 'skippers' in the working class and such a conclusion is obvious nonsense. This apparent result comes from being obliged to combine the driftermen and trawlermen because the small size of the sample. In fact all the skippers who rate themselves as 'mid' working class are trawler skippers while all the 'crew' who rate themselves as top of the working class are driftermen. In other words they were aware of a nicety of the economic divisions between the two sections of the fishing industry and relate that situation with great accuracy.

So far we have considered the oral evidence, as presented in tabular form, on class and strata. Where economic distinctions are necessary the evidence is consistant with data from other sources on the fishermens' incomes and indicate that the reported perceptions are compatible with the industry and the period. Our informants' view of the world of that time does not seem to have been falsified by the intervening years.

Social mobility, which we shall consider next, is an important factor in the character of class perceptions within a community. One of the

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questions which we wished to examine was the extent to which the fishing industry was an open one in which entry to the position of skipper and eventually to ownership was a matter of talent, and to what extent family connections determined opportunities for upward mobility. Within the industry this question is effectively limited to the drifting and trawling sectors. Inshore boats vary in size according to location to such a degree that informations frequently do not distinguish boat owners among their siblings. They are often simply described as "All fishermen, all fishermen". It was obvious that to list all such siblings as 'crew' would simply distort any inferences which may be drawn from the other sections of the industry and that it was advisable to keep the inshore sector separate. There is less risk of this in the trawling and drifting. Ownership was exceptional and a matter of considerable pride and most cases are likely to have been reported. Usually, too, these respondents report which siblings were skippers and which were not. There may be some under-reporting but not so much as to seriously effect the overall reliability of the evidence.

Non-reporting is however, the most serious defect of our evidence on social mobility. There are a number of reasons for this short-coming: simple omission by the interviewer, lack of co-operation by the respondent or simple lack of knowledge. For example, an informant may be the youngest of a family of a dozen or so born over a span of twenty years. Often the eldest siblings had married and left home before the respondent was aware of them and knowledge of their occupations was not available. This was particularly so in the case of female siblings who were often obliged to leave home to work in domestic service - some lost contact with other members of their family. The level of 'don't knows' is much higher for the females than the males.

Once again we have taken the level of internal consistancy as a significant consideration. As a test of consistancy the evidence has been tabulated separately for male and female respondents.

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It is clear from Table 4* that fishermen were very much part of the manual working class regardless of their status within the industry. Whether male or female, the children of fishermen normally stayed within the manual occupations, regardless of whether their father was an owner or a crewman. There is, however, as one might expect a greater entry into the white-collar occupations by the children of owners than of crew members, especially in the case of females. It also emerges from the evidence that there was a correlation between the status of a fisherman's father in the industry and his chance of success in becoming a skipper or owner. In no case did the children of a non-fisherman or crewman become an owners. See Table 4 A 1. This finding runs contrary to the views of our informants about the amount of ownership before the First World War, and also from our own impressions based on research into the distribution of ownership from documentary sources. The contradiction may be more apparent than real. The key point lies in the changing fortunes of the two generations to which the separate bits of evidence relate. The evidence taken from the fishing vessel registers and common accounts shows that ownership was widespread and individual: there is sufficient evidence, both documentary and oral, to establish that good skippers were offered loans with which to buy a vessel. In the rapid expansion of the drifting industry great opportunities existed for men who had the self-confidence to act as skipper and enough initiative to take their ticket. It was during this boom period that the majority of the present respondents started their career.

*This table has been constructed by taking the reported occupations of the informants family. In the case of males non-fishermen have been classified by social classes A, B, C, D, E and F. Females have been similarly classified where appropriate with three exceptions. Domestic servants have been given a separate category (Dom.S.) as have women who never had a paid occupation (N/W). Beatsters (BST), that is the women who repaired the herring nets, have also been given a separate classification in order to demonstrate their links with status groups within the fishing industry. The first major occupation after leaving school has been taken to classify siblings. This is considered the most significant as it indicates the level of their, or their parents, expectations and the level at which their education and/or social qualifications could gain them entry. Fishermen are the exception to this rule. Here each sibling is classified according to their highest achieved status as a fisherman as this is the only way to examine the relevance of their father's position in the industry to their own achievements.

The industry then suffered a decline in the 1920s and 1930s. Owing to this decline the generation of men who started their careers before 1914 faced a limited number of opportunities when they were of an age and experience to become skippers and owners. The table, by taking the final status of fishermen respondents and their fisherman sibilings as the point of classification, has transposed occupational experience from the pre-war to the post-war decades. It thus reveals a lower level of upward movement than would have shown for the period before the War. Even so, it is noticeable that the proportion of siblings of the trawlermen and driftermen becoming skippers is virtually identical, regardless of the status of their fathers.

This supports the generally held view that the position of skipper depended principally on personal qualities and abilities and that kinship connections were not significant. It is also interesting that, although the sons of skippers provide only the same proportion of skippers as the sons of crewmen or of owners, they provide a much higher proportion of crew members than the others (52% as opposed to 29% for crew, and 26% for owners). This adds weight to the impression from the qualitative evidence that the skippers were the 'heart' of the fishing industry in East Anglia. Not only did their sons follow them into the industry in larger numbers than the sons of other grades in the industry, but their daughters provided the greatest number of beatsters, that is the women who repaired the driftnets (see Table C 2). The position of skipper seems to have been an embodiment of working class success and one which persuaded children to follow - or to endeavour to follow - their father's example. Not surprisingly perhaps, the prospect of a fishing career proved much less attractive to boys whose fathers were crewmen, slightly less than half of them following their father's occupation. This compares with 64% for owners' sons and 75% for skippers' sons. Although some owners could have undoubtedly afforded it, there seems to have been little concept of upward mobility amongst boat owners in terms of entering a different occupation through education: their children entered the world of work with few advantages over their poorer neighbours, save what their fathers reputation and contacts in the fishing industry could confer on them.

Siblings whose fathers were not fishermen* during their childhood went almost equally into shore jobs and into the fishing industry. Thus, the choice of fishing as an occupation may have some connection with the influence of the father; although the high level of wages before 1914 also brought lads into the industry from farming backgrounds.

Inshore fishermen have been kept separate from the other fishermen in this analysis. They too provided, along with the skippers, the main source of subsequent fishermen recruitment. 74% of their siblings entered the fishing industry. This is comparable with the 75% for skippers, 63% for owners and 48% for crew in the deep sea industry. It should be made clear that the inshore fishing was also in decline and that the siblings did not necessarily enter the inshore fishing industry: many of them worked from Lowestoft or Yarmouth, and some migrated as far as the Humber, Milford Haven and Fleetwood, leaving the inshore fishing, as one informant put it, to old men and boys.

Looked at from the point of view of employment ashore, the continuity in the fishing community of the constrictions of working class cultural and social aspirations is apparent. Only 3% of the whole group went into "white-collar" occupations. The numbers are too few to place any weight on the actual distribution between the groups tabulated, but the evidence implies a common experience and cultural and social homogenity; and this is supported by other quantifiable evidence, such as the age of leaving school and part-time work while at school, as well as by qualitative evidence. The only distinction is that within the working class, the sons of skippers and owners who did not go to sea were more likely to enjoy the opportunity to enter a skilled trade, a luxury which many of the poorer families could not afford.

The analysis of female sibling occupations is inhibited to some degree by the much higher level of non-reporting. It is possible that the unreported cases could have radically reshaped the distribution. From the

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* It might be noted here that many of the fathers classified as 'non-fishermen' had worked as fishermen earlier in their lives. They have been classified as working ashore where this was their occupation during all, or most, of the respondent's childhood. This is because the level of domestic comfort as remembered by the respondent was dependent on the level of earnings of the shore occupation, and not of the fishing.

pattern of responses that those groups with a high level of non-reporting - inshore, crew and non-fishermen - display, taken with the pattern of reported cases from the other groups with similar locations. it would be a reasonable assumption that the 'D/K's' would be mainly distributed among domestic service and other manual occupations, with a substantial minority never working at all due to lack of local opportunity. Once again, however, it is clear that there was a very low level of movement into white collar occupations. See Table A.2. The commitment of the skippers' children to the fishing industry is again one of the more self-evident features, with their families supplying the greatest number of beatsters. As might be expected from a region with very little industry the most common occupation for girls was domestic service. The local papers are full of advertisements for domestic servants to go and work in other parts of the country - mainly in London and locations inbetween. And one informant who became a nanny recalled that many families who came to the area on holiday deliberately used the period to interview and engage young servant girls.

The daughters of owners had some advantages from their father's position. They were less likely to go out to work and more liable to enter clerical or professional (typically teaching) occupations. The category D-F also serves to hid some real distinctions, because the owners' daughters were more likely to work in a shop than to work in a fish-house or a similar lowly manual occupation.

The reported experience of their mothers is congruent with that of the daughters, when allowance is made for the difference in the opportunities available to the two generations. A slight digression is necessary here. It should be noted that to be consistant the pre-marriage occupations of the mothers should have been classified by the occupations of <u>their</u> fathers as this is the key factor in determining their job opportunities. This proved impracticable due to low reporting of mother's fathers' occupation. Table B.2 on mother's occupation after marriage is therefore more reliable. Again the link between the skippers and owners and the beatsters is clear. This work was often done at home, and beating - for which an apprenticeship was necessary, was considered superior to factory or domestic work. There was also a tendency for these more prosperous sections not to work at all after marriage. This, however, may also be a function of geographical distribution, and lack of employment opportunities may explain the very high number of non-working wives of inshore fishermen, rather than a belief that they already enjoyed adequate earnings from their husbands. A

significant cross-comparison may also be made with Table 1, where the level of reported sibling mortality was found to correlate positively with wives at work.

It should be noted that there are qualitative differences concealed in the work coded as domestic service. Before marriage this usually refers to full-time employment as a living-in servant. After marriage it refers to part-time work of at least two distinctive types. In the poorer families domestic service after marriage refers to part-time work as a daily cleaner or a washerwoman either on the employers' premises or in their own. Among the more prosperous families, or at least those with a more spacious home, domestic service generally means letting rooms to summer visitors, and the cooking and cleaning required for such letting. It has been included as domestic service because summer letting did not approach, either in financial returns or social recognition, the level of the full-time boarding-house keeper.

Table C explores some of the geographical distinctions that one would expect to find from a representative sample of sibling occupations. Urban and rural are rather crude divisions here for they ignore the great difference in the employment opportunities available between rural agricultural villages, and rural fishing villages. Nevertheless, the general pattern is clear: fewer opportunities for women outside domestic service and beating (rural 'fishing' only) in the rural areas. In spite of the fact that the respondents were chosen because they were fishermen, among their siblings there were fewer fishermen from rural areas and they provided a far smaller proportion of skippers and owners in proportion to their percentage of the labour force. This probably reflects the fact that fishermen from rural areas had a tendency to return to the land after a shorter period of years at sea.

The general reported distributions of sibling occupations - which is the largest numerical sample the project can generate - is thus such as to give confidence in the reliability of the evidence. A further effort to 'test' this material for consistancy was, however, made by tabulating the responses separately for male and for female informants, in Tables D and E. The assumption was that from a representative group there would be no substantial differences by sex in the information collected. There are bound to be some distinctions due to the differences in the background of the two sexes: 40% of the females came from non-fishing backgrounds compared with only 20% for the sample as a whole; age and location

distribution is also somewhat uneven. But given the great similarity in socio-economic groups and the sampling from one region, it was hoped that this would not be too serious a problem. And in fact these differences were found to be quite accurately reflected in the lower level of male siblings in the fishing occupations reported by female respondents. The level of 'Don't knows' is noticeably higher for female siblings from both sexes: there are also, rather more surprisingly, more 'don't knows' from the female respondents. Both these factors may be linked to the greater economic opportunities in the fishing communities than in the surrounding rural areas, from which young people were obliged to move to find work. It may also be some indication that the more tight-knit fishing communities were better able to maintain kinship links and information. The high level of non-reporting of female siblings vitiates any really systematic comparison. There is, for example, some indication that males might use 'domestic service' as a general category for their female siblings, even though the level of 'Beatsters' is reported as it would be anticipated. Indeed, this local employment opportunity may explain why the 'fishermen' remember their sister's occupations more readily than do the female respondents, who more often had to move out of the rural villages to find work. One other possibility suggested by the tables is that there may be some overall tendency to under-report sisters by male informants, as only 2.7 sisters per male respondent are recorded, compared with the 3.4 of female respondents. The fact that females report more siblings altogether, 6.9 against 5.8, tends to confirm this suspicion.

Nevertheless, given the small size of the sample the general consistancy in the distribution of occupations, even when the material is distributed among a great number of cells, is such as to demonstrate that there is no basic imbalance in the sample population. We can thus approach with some confidence the preliminary findings on politics which we shall next consider.

* * *

It has been written that although since the Ballot Act of 1872 "we cannot make precise correlations between the electoral behaviour of small localities and the appropriate statistics of personal income, occupation, religious affiliation and so on, it does not rule out the possibility of exploring the motivation of political behaviour in Britain by the historian's customary process of assembling the evidence, however fragmentary and inconclusive, and making the best of it". (H. Pelling, The Social Geography of British Elections, 1967,p.2) The strength of oral evidence is that it will enable such evidence to be correlated with the industrial and social experience of local respondents. We intend in further work to explore these links. Here, however, we shall again concentrate on the internal coherance of our evidence of political behaviour among the fishing communities.

Table 5A provides, by industry and county, the overall pattern of response: 39% Conservative, 20% Liberal, 3% Labour, 12% Apolitical, and 26% don't knows. Table 5B provides an analysis of response by decade, with cases allocated to each cohort through their date of birth: those cases earlier than 1881 being virtually all the 'fathers' and those after 1880 virtually all respondents. The most obvious first feature of this table is its conformity with known patterns. Where political allegiance is expressed it gives the majority to the Conservatives, and very little support to Labour - although a number of respondents said that they changed their allegiance to the Labour cause "sometime after the (First World) war".. The cohorts prior to 1881 contain those cases who reached voting age before, or in the first years of, the twentieth century, and the Conservative mood is reflected in their preferences. The only cohort to show a nearly equal preference for the Liberals is the cohort of 1881 - 1890, which grew topolitical voting age in the decade preceding the First World War and in the period of Liberal government from 1906. It is here that the first reports of Labour sympathies are found. Thenext cohort never had the opportunity to vote before the First World War, even if they had reached voting age before 1914. In this and the next cohort there is a noticeable decline in support for the Liberals, although the support for the Conservatives remains substantial. In other words the reported political experience is congruent with the known broad pattern of political history, even when such a small sample is distributed into a large number of cells - a process which should have revealed any peculiarity in the distribution of preferences.

East Anglia in general, and the fishermen in particular, however, may not have shared all the moods and shifts of the political nation at large. Table 5E presents the evidence by industrial groups within the fishing community, excluding female respondents. This table should be referred to throughout the discussion, which will follow.

We have already noted the large proportion of Don't knows, and apoliticals in our sample. Because of the undoubted overlap it is convenient at this stage to conflate the two categories into 'Non-Politicals' and to examine the distribution. It might be considered that the mere fact that a respondent is a Don't know indicates that politics played little part in their own or their family's lives. Female respondents were asked what their political sympathies were in an attempt to get round the problem of their being without the vote. But their level of 55% Don't knows is twice that of the male informant, and no doubt reflects their inevitable lack of involvement. The evidence for males supports such an interpretation: the driftermen (away for months at a time) contain 55% of non-politicals, the trawlermen (away a week at a time) 46% non-politicals, and the inshore fishermen (at home regularly) had only 12%. Although inshore is in fact a mixed category including Essex yacht hands who were also away from their homes for a period of months, it will be seen from the qualitative evidence these hands did receive some active stimulation to cast their vote. Unfortunately, this rather neat line of reasoning is spoilt by the non-fishermen - of whom 34% were also non-political. Perhaps such a level of non-political reporting reflects a social norm of non-interest in politics in East Anglia, from which the inshore fishermen is atypically concerned and articulate.

It is generally accepted that in the period before the First World War the majority of fishermen were Conservative, and that within that general orientation **drifter**men were more inclined to the Liberal cause than the others. Table 5 indeed shows the whitefish industry (trawlers and inshore) as overwhelmingly Conservative, while the driftermen are less markedly so. The only group giving majority support to the Liberals are the non-fishermen, and this pattern is due to the proportion of agricultural workers among them - once again the votes reflect the known preferences of that group. The driftermen were supposed to favour the Liberals because of their support for Free Trade: the bulk of their catches were sold overseas and they feared that tariffs might lead to retaliatory action detrimental to their interests. One hesitates to

support this view with too slight evidence, but it is interesting that of the nine respondents who were difficult to categorise by industry because they spent so much time indiscriminatorily in both the trawling and drifting industry, four (45%) of them were firmly stated as apolitical. This compares with 22% as the highest in any other group, even when these nine cases are spread amongst them. This degree of noncommitment from the industrially ambiguous does at least tend to support the popular view that fishermen did follow the politics of their branch of the industry.

Although we have argued earlier that the fishermen were not clearly class-conscious, Table D does show that 'class' had some effect on their voting behaviour. The trend revealed is slight for each status group has about a third of its members supporting the Conservatives, but the support for Labour and the Liberals nevertheless tends to increase with a decline in status. This interpretation can again be supported through an examination of some of the qualitative evidence; and it is this which we shall next consider.

Great Yarmouth was a safe Conservative seat for most of the period. In the eight elections from 1885 to 1910 it was lost to them only once: in 1892 when Sir Henry Tyler was defeated. According to Pelling this was due to the fishermen turning against him because of his failure, as director of the Great Eastern Railway, to improve the railway facilities to the port. But it seems clear that the fishermen were generally Conservative. There is evidence that this support was maintained, or at least encouraged, by widespread 'treating' of voters and in 1906 the successful Conservative candidate, Arthur Fell, was allowed to keep his seat in spite of the fact that it was proved that hisagent had been 'treating' voters.

The oral evidence reflects this system of 'buying' votes. Six of the twelve respondents who lived in Yarmouth report various levels of treating:

(Did the employers try to influence the voting?)

"Oh yes. I mean - in fact when there's a municipal election or anything like that, the likes of you go into a pub and say 'Go on have a pint, vote for Mr. So-and-So'. Oh yes, there was tons of that. Oh yes, any amount of it. Chaps used to work on that, you know, they would be in a pub and then when they see this bloke going in another pub they'd walk in after him 'Go on, have a drink vote for Mr. So-and-So' oh, they used to be three parts half and half over that". Int. 10

Apart from the 'treating' which was proved by the inquiry of 1906, it is also clear that cash changed hands to pursuade men to cast their vote:

"Now say me and three or four more are sitting in the pub, we're having a drink see. And they close at eight o'clock the polling booth. Well about half past seven a couple of these blokes come in, said 'Have you been and voted yet?' No. 'Come on, you have to come and vote. Come on', he says, 'it's worth half-a-crown each for you if you come and vote'. Well, he'd give half a crown each and away they'd go and vote". Int. 24.

Two other respondents remember people coming to the house to solicit - and to pay for their father's vote:

"In those days they used to come after you to go and vote. And you'd hang on 'til the last minute. If my father was in from sea he'd hang 'til the last minute - and then they'd come to the door after you, 'cos you'd get five bob if you went and vote. And I'll tell you who that was for - Fell". Int. 3029.

The other (3026) relates a similar story, stating that his father received 2/6d. from Fell, although he does add that his father was a Tory anyway. It is perhaps possible the corrupt payments did not substantially affect the way in which votes were cast, and it was more that votes were seen as possessions with a market value, which if "they" wanted "they" would have to pay for

It seems too, that this 'tradition' continued beyond the 1906 election:

"How long did this paying for votes carry on in Yarmouth do you think?

Oh dear, not in these latter years. No. No, it's a good many years since that was given.

But it was quite a common practise was it?

Yes.

All the parties used to do that?

Yes. My brother used to say 'Don't give 'em the two bob Beany, give 'em a shilling. They used to be given the money to give out. 'Course what they've had to spare they've been in this very room and shared it. They have". Int. 29.

The respondent did not move into that house until 1916 so the practise of paying for votes must have at least survived the First World War - a possibility which has been rarely recognised in histories of political corruption. There can be little doubt thatpayment for votes was widespread, and was by no means ended by the bribery scare of 1906.

Not surprisingly the atmosphere from the country districts reflects the difference in social environment. There is no mention here of bribery or of treating in any form. On the other hand, there is implicit in the evidence a fear of the employer and a need, real or fancied, to keep ones' political colours well hidden. One respondent (3011) said that he had heard stories of employers putting pressure on their employees but that he did not believe them. On the other hand he did not know the politics of his father - who used to go and vote - he only knew the politics of his uncle who also lived in the village. It is significant that his father was a farm worker, while his uncle had a small-holding which gave him the independance to express his views openly. This ignorance of paternal politics was quite common among rural informants.

"Were you a Liberal when you were a young man?

Well, I never voted when I was young you know - and I never did know how my father voted, he wouldn't tell you. No. He wouldn't tell you what he was.

Do you think some men wouldn't say how they voted because they were frightened of getting the sack?

Oh yes.

Was there much of that?

Yes. Because - some of these farmers - 'course they were nearly all Conservative at that time of day. They'd sometimes ask the men how they are going to vote, or something of that. Of course they wouldn't never tell 'em. No. Because nearly all the farm labourers that time of day were Liberals, see". Int. 5.

Although rural politics could certainly raise passions, one respondent said that in their small village it led to blows - the general tone was secretive and covert.

Of the 22 respondents from Suffolk, 18 came from the parliamentary constituency of Suffolk North, which includes the only other (comparatively) large urban area besides Yarmouth. Although the two ports are only twelve miles apart the tone of their politics is quite distinctive. There is no hint of 'treating' or of corruption in any of the Lowestoft interviews, although one or two do mention that that sort of thing took place in Yarmouth. Their memories are coloured much more with a consciousness of an expectation on the part of the employers that their employees would vote the way they wanted them to vote. Whether this amounted to outright pressure or merely a sense of deference is less clear, for the majority of them had very little to say about political behaviour. Respondent 12, however, was a smacksman, as was his father,

and his views reflect the more stable and long term relations that existed in the sailing trawlers, compared to the more pecuniary motives and changes of employment in the drifting.

"Do you know what your father's views were at that time?

Oh he was always Conservative. Yes, he was a Conservative.

Was this true of most fishermen do you think, or not?

Well - it all depend on the candidate, I think, more than anything. And it then - it more or less - depended on your employer. You see, I think that your employer used to expect, well of course they did, they never knew but they used to expect that you would do what he voted for. Particularly if he was a good employer, a good shipowner and that, well you didn't worry, politics didn't worry you, whichever one you voted for didn't bother. Never took it as a serious thing...

So the employer would let his politics be known?

Be known. Hope that the others would do the same.

Do you think that they tried to pressurise anyone?

No. Never. No, I don't think there was anything like that for the simple reason they never knew who you voted for...They never knew. So I mean there was no pressurisation at all, not on any particular person to - you know, you - if you had a good boss you respected him, you liked him, he liked you, you see at that time of day - particularly if you were skipper of a ship - that was your home. That wasn't the case like it is now that your skipper one week and sacked the next. You were kept, that was your home, you was boss of that ship like. Provided that you could earn a reasonable living that owner would more or less give you that ship to work".

The different industrial relations between owners and crews in trawling and drifting is a complex matter, but there does appear to be a link between the large number of small smacksmen in Lowestoft and the tone of local politics, which was more akin to that of the surrounding rural areas than to the neighbouring urban area of Yarmouth. But in Lowestoft there is a more obvious tendency to political indifference, rather than the strand of secrecy implicit in many of the comments from rural areas, which probably indicates a commitment which could not be openly expressed.

Virtually the only political policy issue which is advanced as an explanation of party preferences is Tariff Reform. This reason was advanced in both the oral evidence and contemporary sources for the allegiances of the fishermen, at least, in the few cases where any reason was given. Thus this respondent, whose father was a trawlerman, remembers that he voted Tory because the trawling industry wanted Tariff Reform to prevent the landings of foreign fish. He sees these interests being defended by political pressure on the fishermen:

"Do you think that the employers put any sort of pressure on the fishermen to try to make them vote one way or the other in the old days?

Yes, they did. 'Course they did. They did - they put pressure on the drifter people particularly

More so than the trawlers?

Well, as I say, they couldn't the trawlers so much 'cos they were only in one night you see, you'd have three parts or more of the fleet at sea in the trawlers, but the drifters they'd all come in that day, then they'd get 'em to vote...Well, they used to let the crews come ashore and vote and all this here, the owners did, let 'em lay so they'd get the votes in - the herring driftermen". Int.6.

The view that these policies divided the fishermen may be broadly true, and the Tables support it, but there are aspects of the evidence which suggest that this is an oversimplification.

The allegiance by 'policy' interest of the industry is complicated by social status. One of the Norfolk respondents states that the fishermen were -

"...all very thrifty people, and as they began to thrive and to save up a little bit they found it paid them to tend a little bit to the Conservative side. But those who didn't care quite so much, they remained on the Liberal side - but I never went to politics 'cos my father used to tell me as a boy, never argue on politics or religion". Int.4.

He did not know (or would not disclose) his father's politics, but Caister was a centre of drifting crews and boat-owners, and if he was correct in believing that they were 'tending to the Conservatives' as they prospered, they would have been abandoning the party whose policies were the best guarantee of their continued commercial success. The only family we found which was actively involved in local politics was one where the father was a Tory councillor in Lowestoft, and he was the owner of four drifters. The interview gives no indication why he held this view, although it does support the general view that he was exceptional and most driftermen were Liberals.

In our view, although there was some force in the Tariff issue, the explanation is far too simplistic. According to information from local and trade papers the business leaders - drifter owners and fish salesmen - of the herring industry fought in the Conservative interest. Thus despite the force of the political division between branches of the fishing industry, the Liberals remained the party of the poor and the Conservatives the party of the rich. This is not to say that 'poor' fishermen did not support them: they did. In addition to the reasons for this which have already been discussed, another attitude mentioned is that the

Conservatives had the money; and - so the reasoning goes - were in politics for the good of the country, rather than from self-interest. The rich were needed too, to provide jobs: a view most strongly expressed by the inshore section, and above all in the Essex interviews.

These show the most solid support for the Conservatives. Amongst the yacht hands of Mersea, Tollesbury and Brightlingsea this is explained as a direct result of their employment:

"Were many of the fishermen Conservative then?

Most of 'em on here. That's the best for us for yachting, yes, 'cause if you get a Liberal or a Labour government half of them wouldn't pay - I don't trust 'em.

So you reckoned that it looked after your job a bit better?

Oooh lots! Lots better for us. Crikey yes".

As well as a general feeling that the rich were an essential part of the employment structure, this one group was exceptional in acknowledging that direct pressure was applied to them.

"I always used to vote Conservative. Well when your father was, nearly all the boys was the same.

Do you think that it had anything to do with mixing with the people on the yachts?

That played a lot of it. I mean all these yachting people were well-to-do people weren't they? They're all Conservatives, I mean they were nearly all very rich people that owned these yachts. That's how it came about really.

You did it to support them, did you?

To support them, yes. Well you see if you supported them, you'd get a job the next year, otherwise you didn't you - perhaps you'd be out of it.

Would any of the old skippers take any notice of your politics?

Some of them would, and some wouldn't. Some of them would say 'Well you do as you like'. But some of the others - some of the old skippers they'd try and get the governor votes, the owner you see, and if you didn't - well you went the next year if you voted Labour and he was a Conservative and you wouldn't get the job. Thats how it used to go on". Int.59.

There is little doubt that such experiences reported carried through into the 1920s and 1930s, for the political experiences of many of these informants had barely started before the First World War. This next respondent, born in 1905, remembered similar pressures.

"Were most fishermen Conservative do you think?

Well the majority of 'em were. The majority of 'em were - for this reason. All the men in these - they had to rely on yachting. They were monied people and they had to be Conservative to get a job. Now -

> I can remember when I first got married in 1928, I - my wife was never a Conservative, or I think she had an open mind about politics really, I don't think she was more for one than the other. But I know I was yachting at that particular time and there was a woman - that I know - she was chairman of the ladies Conservative party, and she stopped my wife in the street one day and she said - you don't come to our Conservative meetings do you? So my wife said no. Well look she says, I think that you should, because if you don't become a Conservative your husband will never get a yachting job. See, it just shows you, I mean they had to be Conservative". Int.45.

That this type of political outlook was longstanding is attested by two interviews from very elderly men. One, born in Tollesbury in 1872, confirmed that the yacht captains would not employ men who were of the wrong political complexion. The other born in 1879 in Brightlingsea, did not mention pressure as such and saw politics, or elections, chiefly as an excuse for riotous horseplay, but he made an interesting point about actual voting and the action of certain employers:

> "But often we were away in the summer, away yachting. And a lot of the men used to come home to vote. Might get a week off, the governor used to give 'em a week for to come and put their vote in". Int.38.

The qualitative evidence provides a most salutary reminder of just how small a part politics play in the lives of the majority of the respondents, many of whom have only rarely voted and some never at all. Nevertheless, the evidence does reveal the existence of bribery as well as treating in Yarmouth in the period, and gives a valuable indication that this tradition continued longer than many historians would suspect. The political evidence has also been tabulated, industry, status, religion and by age: and in no case is the ensuing distribution inconsistant with what is known from other historical sources. If the sample is to be judged by its political evidence, there is again every reason to have confidence in it. Indeed, in discussing their political memory, many of the respondents make clear that they had subsequently changed their allegiance - many of the then Liberals now being Conservatives and many of the then Conservatives now being Labour: an awareness which implicitly refutes any assumption that oral history respondents must rationalise their past to conform with their present attitudes.

* * *

The school-leaving age provides other known historical data against which the sample can be assessed. If the sample is to be trusted, it should reflect the tendency for the school-leaving age to increase over time as the authorities more effectively enforced attendance. Table 6 A, which shows the leaving age in three age cohorts, clearly shows such a trend. Those born before 1890 most commonly left school at twelve or thirteen years of age, with the next two cohorts the leaving age shifts to thirteen or fourteen and with the last cohort moves closer still to fourteen as the standard leaving age. The steady decrease in those leaving at twelve, together with the steady increase in those leaving at fourteen is remarkably consistant for such a small sample.

It would, however, be unwise to place very much weight on the other tables in this section. The decade of birth is a crucial factor affecting the age at which they left school, and the age distribution within the different cells may well be the major reason for the group distributions. For example, Table E, which distinguishes between trawlermen and driftermen, was constructed to test the idea that, since the trawling industry was less prosperous than the drifter industry, there would have been greater pressure on the children of trawlermen to leave school early and go out to work. The Table appears to support such an assumption. The mean average date of birth of the trawlermen however, is 1890, compared with 1897 for the driftermen; so the difference in the Table could be explained in terms of short experience rather than of occupation. Whatever the distortions caused by the age distribution within cells, it is clear enough that the experience of the fishermen was in this respect generally homogenous. The owners (who have a typical age profile) do show the effect of economic advantages in so far as their children more frequently stayed on up to the end of the normal age for working class school attendance. But their experience was very close to that of other working class children - a finding which adds weight to the evidence of other sections, that regardless of status positions, the fishermen were socially and culturally part of a common community.

School-leaving, because it concerns an outside agency, offers one of the few points at which our evidence of family and domestic matters may be compared with another source of information. Of the questions we shall discuss next, it may be said that in general the patterns of evidence revealed make good historical sense.

Before discussing the evidence presented in the tables which follow, it is necessary to comment on their construction, because the method of tabulation has tended to over-emphasise the role of chastisement in disciplining the young. Each interview was placed on a continuum ranging from the most severe discipline (regular use of corporal punishment by a cane or hard slaps or blows) through various milder forms of restriction such as being sent to bed early or the curtailment of playtime, to exclusively verbal correction. This information was then tabulated. It is presented by respondent, not by parent, so that each respondent has been placed only once in each table. This means that if the parents - or only one parent - used corporal punishment even at infrequent intervals, they were classified as using corporal punishment. In order to be included in the 'Non-Chastised' column neither parent could have made any remembered use of corporal punishment. In a number of cases corporal punishment was in fact administered only once, for a particularly serious lapse; typically this would be for stealing or for behaviour in public which involved parents with the neighbours or the police. Several fathers might have been more realistically tabulated under 'No Active Role', but for a single such incident. The idea of multiple coding was rejected, because it would have introduced another kind of distortion. Presumably all of the respondents' parents used verbal checks, whatever other means they resorted to; and many used restrictions as well as chastisement. Consequently multiple coding would have obscured the distinction between those who used corporal punishment and those who did not: it is this distinction which is taken to be the most significant. It was also decided not to classify interviews according to a 'subjective' assessment of the most typical behaviour as interpreted by the overall feel of the interview. The material has been tabulated in order to provide a check against such an impressionistic use. It is presented in Tables 7 A, B, C and D.

It is clear that such a rigorous categorisation of the material does not adequately reflect the real history of parenthood. Consequently, some modifications have been introduced. Five respondents have been transferred from 'Chastised' to 'Non-Chastised', because it was clear that it was not part of their normal life to expect chastisement. This involved retabulating nine parents, most of whom were specifically stated to have used corporal punishment only once. These modified tables should be taken as the more realistic presentation of the proportion of our sample falling into any one group. See Tables 7 AA, BB, CC, DD, EE, FF, GG and HH.

The most striking distinction in reported behaviour is that between rural and urban areas. Parents from rural areas resorted to corporal punishment much less frequently than those in urban environments. Several explanatory possibilities might be pursued here. There is the greater involvement of the country child in the work pattern of parents - helping a father with the garden, fetching water from the pump, or wood for the mother; there is the greater space for play away from conflict with adults; or constraints of a smaller community, in which children were known and unable to 'get away' with bad behaviour, and therefore less likely to develop 'independent' peer-group attitudes in conflict with those of their parents and other adults. (cf. p.54 evidence of Int. 5).

There is a less marked distinction between the treatment of boys and of girls than might have been expected - particularly in the initial categorisation of Table 7 C. Here the proportion of respondents experiencing corporal punishment is very much the same for male and for female, even if all the female 'Don't Knows' are included in the 'Not-Chastised column. There is quite a shift in the proportions as presented in Table 7 CC. It seems clear that while a significant number of girls were punished physically as a matter of course like boys, more commonly with girls this form of punishment was taken as a last resort.

It would be unsafe to draw conclusions about differences in attitude between the north and south of the region from Tables 7 A or 7 AA, because of the different occupational structure of each country. For the same reason it is also unsafe to place too much reliance on the differences shown in Tables 7 D and 7 DD, because the occupations tend to be concentrated by county and location. The sample is not large enough to allow any greater sub-division of the evidence. However, taking an overall impression the Tables, occupation does not appear to have a marked effect on the role of the male, except for a noticeable lack of any active role amongst a minority of the trawler and driftermen. "Father never said a word to us" is a typical expression of the pattern of behaviour. It is surprising that a similar pattern of behaviour was not common among the inshore and Essex sample, as the majority of these two groups were yacht hands and who were thus also away from home for long periods. But the yacht hands were mostly seasonal workers and would thus regularly revert to home-based inshore

fishing. Trawlermen were different from both the driftermen and the inshore, in that - apart from a few who went to the West Country for a few weeks - they sailed regularly out of their home port, but they had only one day in port each week. They were at home frequently enough to have perhaps been able to play a greater role in the upbringing of the children than they seemed to have done. Yacht hands and driftermen were by contrast absent from the home for months at a time, and it is more understandable that such a work pattern necessitated the woman being in full charge of discipline, and of being capable of enforcing it by herself. One informant was in fact forced to give up his employment as a driftermen simply because his wife could not control their three young sons. Given the crucial importance of the wife's ability to control the family during the husband's absences, it is not surprising that this control remained absolutely hers even when he was at home. Yet there is a difference between the driftermen and the yacht hands. The driftermen were away for about eight months, compared to the yacht hands four or five months. The yacht hand then returned to inshore fishing, becoming once again part of the family unit working from his own home. The driftermen on the other hand either went away to sea again in this off-season of four months, or "mooched around" wholly unemployed or picking up casual work. His time at home was much less structured.

With the exception of "No Role" category there is no significant difference in the involvement of males in maintaining discipline in the home which appears to be linked to the occupational structure. The percentage of men who chastised their children remains much the same regardless of occupation. On the other hand, the male occupational structure does appear to have some effect on the resort to corporal punishment by women: both trawlermen's and driftermen's families show a higher level than inshore and shore workers' families. Here the absence of an authoritative father figure perhaps obliged the mother to resort to chastisement more frequently than where such a figure played an active role. Another surprising feature is the consistancy of behaviour in males living in urban and in rural locations. This consistancy, in contrast to the variations in female behaviour, is the reverse of what might originally have been predicted. It seems that for men, work experience had little positive relationship with attitudes to fatherhood, although it had a negative effect on those who spent little time at home, and therefore tended to withdraw from playing any role at all. But the male work role does seem to have positively influenced the pattern of female behaviour in the home, since it was the women who had to adapt

their behaviour where the father was normally an absentee. Consequently men's occupational roles affect women's domestic attitudes and behaviour more directly than their own.

Perhaps most illuminating is Table EE, which presents the trawling and drifting respondents by their father's status. This shows a steady increase in the amount of punishment down the status scale. It has been suggested that fathers whose jobs are low in autonomy use more severe socialisation techniques more often than those fathers whose jobs had a high level of autonomy (see R.S. Parker et al. The Sociology of Industry, 1967). However, we have argued that the fishermen had a very homogenous value structure: and if that interpretation is valid, then the major cause of this stratification of punishment can most probably be ascribed to the frustrations and tensions of poverty.

In general, our evidence of men's role in the home will need very careful interpretation. A first impression suggests that the majority of men gave a substantial amount of help in the home. For driftermen, whose pattern of work left them unemployed and at home for long periods, this is perhaps understandable. It is surprising, however, to find examples of trawlermen who gave substantial help when they were in port only 24 to 36 hours after a week at sea - and even then had to unload the fish during their period in port. A possible reason which suggests itself is that the fishermen, while away from home, had to become accustomed to performing their own domestic chores in a way which men in other occupations did not. But in some of the Scottish fishing communities, the men refused to help in the home although faced with the same domestic experience when at sea. The present evidence will need to be considered in the context of other interviews in the Essex Archive, to see how far it is possible to identify regional as well as occupational differences. The interviews will also need to be analysed from the standpoint of the occupational history of the women. Work after marriage, or lack of it, may well be an important factor in a mother's method of child control. We plan to complete our occupational tabulation from this perspective as part of our full analysis of the present material.

The final area in which a preliminary structuring ofour evidence has been carried out as a first stage in our analysis is the pattern of religious observance. Once again the evidence is presented in as detailed a form as possible in order that its internal consistency may be seen. Here one bias does emerge. This is in the difference in the

parental behaviour reported by male and female respondents. This could be a chance variation. However, it seems more probable that it reflects a greater concern with religion among our women informants. Because girls were obliged to keep up religious attendance more assiduously than boys, they would have been more aware of the 'occasional' visits of parents to a place of worship than were the boys. It is significant that more difference is noticeable in the lower level of 'non-observance' reported by females, than in positive statements about forms of observance.

It is certainly clear that as a whole the experiences reported again reflect a structured experience. The detailed breakdown of parental attendance confirms this view. The level of non-reporting is consistant. The positive statements reveal the higher level of attendance in the rural areas, a pattern that can be confirmed from other sources. It is worth remarking that the parallel accounts of male and female parents do not emerge simply because informants conflated their memories of them: in 25% of the cases the respondents report different behaviour for each parent. The attendance of respondents in the teenage period after leaving school correlates with this general pattern of urban/rural attendance, although in this case the level of non-responses leave the inferences much weaker. Moreover, our initial impression that religious observance was essentially pragmatic is reinforced by the structure revealed in the evidence. Attendance during school age was almost universal, but for post-school years attendance followed the same trends reported for parents, that is higher for females than males and higher in rural than in urban areas. Yet the behavioural pattern shows no such structure when respondents report on the religious observance which took place in the privacy of the home. The saying of grace or of prayers at bedtime are the two most obvious examples. In the home shows virtually no differences in religious practice emerge between either urban and rural informants, or between male and female. Private religion, in other words, reflects only the tendencies general within the community and the region; while public religious behaviour was much more exactly structured by the social constraints of locality, sex and authority.

The figures for childhood attendance speak for themselves. Some form of attendance was normal for all. There was, however, a wide range of practice, from those who attended morning and afternoon services as well as Sunday School, down to those who put in the minimum possible number of attendances that would enable them to qualify for the annual 'treat'.

There are a few accounts of boys who rebelled against church attendance, but it was generally accepted as inevitable, as immutable as any other custom or rule imposed by an adult world:

> 'I went to Sunday school 'til I was about fourteen I reckon, 'till I went to work. Went to Sunday school morning and afternoon, never missed, and Chapel service. We had to go. It was instilled in us; so much so that we took it as we did the ordinary day school. Sunday you go to Sunday school and Monday we go to the ordinary council school'. INT. 57

That account from Essex speaks for most informants, but especially those from rural areas and those from relatively 'respectable' families. At the other end of the social scale can be found a more self-directed and highly pragmatic attendance by boys from poor or 'rough' families who - although not compelled to attend by their parents - did so in an ingeniously selective manner:

> 'Oh yes, we went to Sunday school - if you were clean enough and if your clothes were alright to go with - but the time came when your clothes weren't even fit to go to Sunday school with, and they wouldn't fetch you into a Sunday school. That all depend how well you behaves, you see, the well behaved boys went to Sunday school and the others didn't. But we nearly always managed to get into a Sunday school before Easter, you see, then you'd qualify the next few weeks to go on the treat.
>
> Which one did you go to?
>
> I went to several, wherever paid the best dividend. I went to St. Peters, and I went to one in Fish Street, the Gospel Hall. Oh, I went to several of them, and you know they used to have Bible classes in the evening, well, some of them used to give you a bun and a cup of cocoa or - no, not a cup, a mug'. Int. 17

This informant spent his boyhood in the old Rows of Yarmouth. As a child his main preoccupation was to find sufficient food. As he points out, boys like him were not entirely welcome: conspicuously ill-dressed and it can be inferred from the interviews, probably not too clean, if not actually verminous. In the towns at least there were alternative centres of interest to boys, and those who found religion too irksome could easily enough find somewhere else to go.

If attendance was the norm during school age, there is very little evidence that much pressure was exercised after the child started work - even though the odd one or two informants remember they were made to continue with Sunday school for a "little while" after leaving school. Generally teenage attendance was voluntary. The effect on attendance is dramatic. That Sunday school attendance - or regular church attendance in any form - was considered by the working classes as a habit only expected of children, can be confirmed from a number of other

sources like Charles Booth's religious survey of London. And even where attendance was continued, it was usually for some pragmatic social reason:

'Were the fishermen mainly church or chapel people?

Oh there was - they were both, there was people went to church too, fishermen. And - there was no service in the church in the afternoon, only Sunday school. Well, a boy of fifteen, sixteen to twenty wouldn't know what to do (with his time) so they'd come to our little chapel half past two, and that chapel used to have lots of young people there'. Int. 25

The father of this woman informant was a lay preacher and she herself was very involved in her local chapel. She recognises that it was used largely as a meeting place for village youth who had nowhere else to go on a Sunday. This was a widespread need and no doubt one important reason for the higher levels of rural attendance by people who lacked any strong religious conviction:

'Where did you used to go when you were courting?

Well, they'd have to go and get where they could, there was no pictures at that time of day you know. The wife and I used to go to church on Sundays to Aldeburgh - or wherever we thought best'. Int. 3

The church or chapel provided the only alternative social gathering to the village pub; and in any case the local pub did not provide for young girls - or for boys who wanted social contact with those girls. For boys there was a gap between leaving school, commonly at the age of thirteen or fourteen, and being accepted in the company of men or in the social world of the pub. Many teenage boys therefore went to a place of worship simply because they had nowhere else to go: and even a parson anxious for the opportunity to preach to the unredeemed, must have viewed their attendance with somewhat mixed feelings:

'What happened after you left school, what did you do for leisure, did you still attend church?

Yes, well - after I left chapel - I used to go, a lot of us young 'uns used to go up to Happisburgh church you see, and go in there and kick up a row. Thats all we went for. The parson, Hitchcock, he had some pear trees and they hung over the wall into the road and we used to go up these trees and get these pears and take 'em into church and eat 'em, chuck the cores all over the place.

He wasn't too pleased to see you then?

Then they roped up the seats so we had to go right up the top, when they done that up we kept away then. Oh Lord yes, we had a good time you know'. Int. 5,

It is worth noting that this rebellion did not take place in the place of worship that he had attended as a schoolboy, that is, the Methodist Chapel, or even in his own village where his father's authority and other adults who knew him might have been able to prevent such a breach of adult rules.

This example, from Norfolk, may be compared with another similar case from Essex:

> 'I used to feel sorry for the poor old soul sometimes - couldn't hear himself speak you know. We were talking during the service, during the sermon, he very often used to have to stop and ask you for quiet. But eventually they put two men up there. We were playing about, wouldn't listen. I don't think that there is anything like that now. He was a nice old devil, as I told you before. But you couldn't get a seat, thats the truth, in them days. All us young fellows courting girls used to run up to the church, or you couldn't get a seat'. Int. 38,

That teenage behaviour was a common enough problem for church authorities at this time is also suggested by an account, in the Lowestoft Journal of 15 April, 1911, of youths fined for 'indecent behaviour' in Kessingland church: behaviour very much in the same pattern as reported by our respondents, including 'throwing apples at each other'.

It is clear that religious affiliation was chosen to some extent as an indication of social standing and attitudes. The well known connections of Liberalism with Nonconformity, and Toryism with the Church of England, is widely reported by our informants. It is sufficient in this respect for us to note that the affiliations of the respondents and their fathers shows the expected correlations.

So far religious behaviour has been looked at from a general perspective: and there is no reason for expecting that it should necessarily be influenced by occupation. But we now consider the religion of the fishermen themselves.

There is little to be gathered here from the breakdown of the evidence in tabular form. There is no control group which might be used to see if the behaviour of the fishermen showed any 'industrial' peculiarity. Of the total group of 100 males (60 fathers and 40 respondents), 15 have been classified as non-fishermen. The behaviour of the fishermen has thus been tabulated according to the type of

fishing they pursued. Considering the small size of the quota, there is a remarkable consistancy in the overall distribution of the patterns of behaviour, and this is perhaps the finding to bear most in mind. Nevertheless, some conclusions may perhaps be drawn from the similarity of pattern reported by trawlermen and driftermen when compared with inshore fishermen. Driftermen were away at sea for seven or more months in the year while trawlermen had on average only one night a week at home, and that most often not a Sunday. This did not preclude them from occasional church attendance which most respondents report in the case of their parents, but it would prevent any regular attendance. The inshore fathers, by contrast, are reported with a far higher level of attendance: easily the most marked variation in the tables. It was also far more common for them to refuse to work on a Sunday - a stand not really practicable for a deep sea fisherman. It is difficult to decide whether Sundays were observed principally for reasons of religious conscience, or more as a day for rest. Once more, one difficulty in interpretation is the fact that almost half of the 'inshore' fishermen were also yacht hands, who spent the summer season away from their home port in much the same way as the driftermen, although for a shorter season and with a return to inshore fishing for the rest of the year. The Table shows some difference in the pattern of behaviour of inshoremen who also went yachting from those who did not: there was a slightly higher attendance among the yachtsmen. But the difference could be due to the character of the local communities and not specifically due to occupation. Nevertheless the general tendency suggests that the severance of links with the local community could be instrumental in breaking attendance at a place of worship.

Our overall impression is that religion had little personal significance for the fishermen, nor were they much concerned with outward show through attendance at a place of worship. This was equally true of church and chapel. Some of the cases reported as positive attendance give the impression of being very occasional indeed. This view conflicts with the widespread image of local fishermen as strict church or chapel goers, derived no doubt largely from the attitudes of fishing communities elsewhere, in the West of England, or in Scotland. But in fact contemporary secondary sources on fishing in other regions quite often refer to the East Anglian fishermen as intensely hardworking, matter-of-fact men, who would work Sundays even when this was contrary to local custom. Indeed, this behaviour provoked rioting in Newlyn in 1896 so serious that troops and a gunboat and destroyer were called to help

restore order. (F.G. Aflalo, The Sea Fishing Industry of England and Wales, 1904).

Their lack of commitment to formal religion can be contrasted with their attachment to superstitious rituals at sea. Superstition had a very significant place in the East Anglian fisherman's consciousness. Accounts of some incident illustrating superstition at work will often cover a page of typescript, while there will be only an odd sentence in response to questions on religion. Sometimes such accounts are given along with a denial of belief on the part of the informant, but this may ring hollow in the light of the details of the incident itself. We have not yet tabulated this material, but it promises to reveal some unexpected features. It is clear that the most superstitious fishermen were the driftermen, followed by the trawlermen, the least superstitious being the inshoremen. This runs directly counter to the popular view of superstition as a survival from more primitive and ignorant times, which persisted in those backward areas where industrial methods and social forms had changed least. Our evidence shows a reverse correlation, with the most modernised section the most superstitious, and the most traditional the least. The character of the superstitions and rituals recounted indicate that the main support for came from the most capital-intensive section of the industry, because drifting was the type of fishing in which crews had least control (through the exercise of skills) over the size of the catch and thus of earnings. Drifting was a lottery in which 'luck' was at a premium for strictly economic reasons, and it was the very uncertainty of earnings which increased the level of superstitious observance in this section of the industry. Most of their rituals were directly concerned with attracting more fish. Trawlermen, by comparison, rarely used ritual practises except to control the weather, they relied on their knowledge of the seabed and the habits of fish to enable them to make a successful catch, but without wind they could not fish at all. Inshore fishermen can recall very few superstitions, and those that they do report are often not specific to their industry, but relate to community superstitions such as a belief in witches. This section of the evidence is still being worked on and is due to be published in 1978.

During the course of the field work it became apparent that the reported level of industrial discontent in East Anglia, even from the highly commercialised and modernised herring drifter section of the industry, was substantially lower than that which existed on the Humber

during the same period. There was no trace of even the nascent trade unionism comparable with the West Coast of Scotland where the hired hands formed a union in 1913. In East Anglia relations with the owners appeared friendly and harmonious, the reported level of class perception was low, and a sense of conflict virtually absent. This picture ran counter not only to that from other centres of commercialised fishing, but also to the classic sociological picture of industrial and class solidarity generated in tough and dangerous male-only occupational communities. We therefore identified it as a critical question for further investigation as the research proceeded.

Fortunately documentary sources are available which can be used to establish the economic structure of ownership. This was felt to be essential, since the decade and a half before the First World War was the period during which the drifter fishing fleet changed from sail to steam. According to evidence given before a Parliamentary Inquiry of 1908 into the fishing industry, this increased the capital cost of the average drifting vessel from £650 to £2,750. Given this period of intense capital replacement and investment, one of two patterns might have been expected to emerge. A sharp decline in the number of individual owners might have taken place as the capital sum became too great for a working fisherman to acquire, with company ownership becoming the norm. This is essentially what happened to the steam trawling industry in other regions. Alternatively, there might have been a growth in the number of 'partnerships' and 'family' owned vessels, as occurred in the North East Scottish ports. Yet both the oral testimony collected and our preliminary documentary research with the Registers of Shipping held by the Customs and Excise Officers at the relevant ports indicate that neither of these trends emerged. The documentary evidence shows that there was still a significant number of individually owned vessels. The oral testimony emphasised the 'value' of not working with kin. The common mode of ownership seemed to be that of one or two vessels by skippers or ex-skippers. Although opportunities for ownership may not be the sole explanation for the distinctive socio-industrial attitudes, the social implications in the possibility of a working fisherman becoming an owner are clear. It seemed therefore essential to establish the basis of ownership as precisely as possible. Lists of all fishing vessels registered at the ports of Lowestoft and Yarmouth were therefore obtained for 1899, 1913 and 1931: the first date at the beginning of the period of rapid technical change, the second near the outbreak of the First World War

which disrupted the pattern of the industry for a number of years, and the last to provide a longer term comparison from the inter-war years. An application was made to the SSRC for an extension of time and funds to allow the coding of this material, for the computer. Although this application was rejected as an unnecessary extension of the project, the Research Officer has regarded it as so fundamental that since the termination of the grant period he has carried out the work unpaid, with the University bearing the cost of the use of the computer.

Table 9 A is intended to place the ports of Lowestoft and Yarmouth in a national context. It shows the size of the fishing effort in the four leading ports and is taken from Parliamentary Papers 1913, XXX. All the other tables are constructed chiefly from information in The Great Yarmouth Almanac (1899 and 1913), Flood's List of Fishing Vessels 1931. These sources were preferred to the more widely known Olsen's lists of fishing vessels, because of their fuller details on ownership, although Olsen's had to be used for Lowestoft in 1912. The complete fleet has been coded and where uncertain or missing information exceeds 5% this has been indicated. We are grateful to Philip Holden of the Department of Sociology, University of Essex, for his advice on coding and for devising the programme and putting it through the computer.

The common view of the effects of this growth of larger units in the fishing industry is concisely put by Wadel: 'In most countries, increased capitalisation of a fishing industry has usually been accompanied by a change in the pattern of ownership and organisation of firms: that is, the fisherman-owner firms are succeeded by large corporations that are often vertically integrated' (Cato Wadel in R. Anderson and C. Wadel eds. North Atlantic Fishermen, Canada, 1972). Our evidence shows that the East Anglian herring industry was an exception, and that small owners continued to maintain their stake in the industry. Any definition of a 'small owner' is to some extent arbitrary. The oral evidence makes clear that even the owner of five or six boats was still looked upon as a fisherman rather than as a businessman, provided that he had worked his way up through the industry. Table 9 B avoids the problem of definition by simply listing the fleets of both ports by the number of owners and units of ownership. This is supplemented by Table 9 C which shows 'small' ownership as a percentage of the total ownership and by Tables 9 D and E, which demonstrate the nature of this ownership. As the two ports have distinctive patterns they are best considered separately. (All percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Dttd designates a class of vessels which acted as both trawlers and drifters).

The most notable exception to the general pattern of ownership is from Yarmouth in 1898, where one owner had 162 vessels. This was the trawler firm of Hewitt, which had moved from Barking (London) to Yarmouth in 1865. Their boats were mainly sailing trawlers whose catch was taken by cutters direct to Billingsgate. They had given up operating this huge fleet in 1900 and continued with a few steam trawlers before moving their operational base north to the Humber prior to 1912. This marked the end of Yarmouth as a trawling centre of any importance. Although a few trawlers still operated from there, by 1912 the landings of white fish at Yarmouth were only 2% of the Lowestoft total. Table F shows that by 1912 Yarmouth was almost wholly concerned with drifting.

In looking at developments between the two dates, one fact emerges which seems to go against normal trends in industrial development. This is the growth of private individual ownership, at a time when the industry was becoming more capital-intensive. Table D shows the figures for Yarmouth. 'Company' is self-explanatory; 'single' indicates that the vessel has only one owner; 'joint' indicates that a vessel has more than one owner - in most cases this means just one partner, but occasionally three or more owners. The most interesting point in the 1898 figures is in the almost total lack of joint ownership. This demonstrates the invalidity of the generally held impression of the 'traditional' fishing vessel as a family owned and worked possession, which was gradually squeezed out of existance by the growth of companies and the increasing cost of new fishing vessels and gear. Another significant point is the growth of size in the privately owned units in comparison with the size of the company owned units (as expressed through a comparison of % of units against % of tons). This trend does, however, conceal some important events. We have already described the transfer of Hewitt to the Humber. The next largest registered owner was the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, with 10 units; the largest private owner had 8 units. The collapse of Hewitt's operations in Yarmouth was thus bound to have a drastic effect on subsequent statistics. It distorts the unit/tonnage ratio because trawlers are on the average larger than drifters, so that the predominance of company owned trawlers in 1898 over-emphasised the 'advantage' of larger units apparently enjoyed by the companies. In fact oral and secondary sources lead one to believe that there was no significant difference between the size of the units (and hence the capital investment) between large companies and individual owners. Boats tended to be built to a uniform

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size best suited to the fishery concerned and did not differ in size by type of ownership. Companies also appear to have a size advantage, because private ownership also includes vessels engaged in activities such as shrimping, which were large enough to be included in the statistics as first class fishing vessels, but could more properly be included in the inshore fishery if they could be more certainly identified.

Table H shows the pace of modernisation between 1898 and 1912. At Yarmouth the change from sail to steam was virtually completed in those years. In spite of this hectic spate of investment, small ownership (Table C) increased slightly. This Table should be considered along with Table D (the 'Don't Knows' in 1912 appear to be a mixture of 'single' and 'joint', but the information was too uncertain to code as such). This shows only a slight fall in the proportion of company ownership, despite the collapse of Hewitts, who had been responsible for no less than 46% of the vessels included as 'company' at the earlier rate. This indicates that companies were being formed with great vigour at this time, and investors as well as fishermen were being very active in the expansion of the drifting fleet. One clear feature is the emergence of joint-ownership as a substantial form of ownership.

In Lowestoft the situation was more complex as the trawling industry remained a major part of the fishing industry. It is not clear in purely economic terms why Lowestoft should have continued to flourish as a trawling port, when trawling collapsed so completely in Yarmouth only eleven miles up the coast. Whatever regional disadvantages East Anglia may have suffered from as a centre for trawl fishing applied to both ports. Explanations in regional terms include national demographic patterns, the long distance from the coalfields, bringing an uneconomically high price of coal, and the distance from the more prolific fishing grounds further North. In the long-term these factors were undoubtedly important; they probably were the reasons why East Anglia did not develop as a steam-trawling centre. This affected the level of technology involved. Sailing trawlers were effectively limited to using a 40 foot beam-trawl; the otter-trawl with its greatly increased fishing power could not be operated by a sailing vessel. In spite of this Lowestoft still had a fleet of 264 sailing trawlers in 1912, and these had an unparalled reputation for being maintained in first class condition. It is possible that the remaining sailing trawlers were

located in Lowestoft, in preference to Yarmouth, because the authorities at Lowestoft had provided more convenient facilities for the white-fish trade than did those at Yarmouth. Ownership in Lowestoft was much more in the hands of small owners than at Yarmouth. (See tables quoted) Small ownership increased by ten per cent between 1898 and 1912, at the same time the size of the trawler fleet was reduced by about five per cent. This indicates that in an industry that was in a slight decline, more 'large' owners than small were pulling-out. Certainly there is no indication that money for new investment coming from outside the fishing industry. Outside finance was attracted to the Humber or to similar steam trawling ports.

As Table G shows, the Lowestoft men also took advantage of the herring boom and, like Yarmouth, both increased the size of their fleet and changed to steam at the same time; very few of the proportion of sail in 1912 (Table H) were drifters. In fact it was the small private owners in Lowestoft who commissioned the first steam drifters and led the way in modernisation.

As the main purpose of these tables is to provide a description of the basis for the industrio-social perceptions of the fishermen, there is little to be gained from pursuing them per se. However, in assessing the significance of these figures for that purpose one must be aware of the reality behind the percentages. Since one of the major concerns of this analysis is with describing the pattern of ownership at a period of intense expansion of capital value, in order to see whether the fishermen's social perceptions were reasonably based in the 'realities' of their world, or whether their consciousness was totally 'false', one area which needs a fuller explanation is the distinction between 'company' and 'private' ownership.

In order to maintain a consistancy of coding, ownership has been coded as 'company' where 'company' appears in the description of ownership. For example, "The Star Drift Fishing Company, Lowestoft" appears in the lists and is coded as 'company' and 'local'; if the address were London it would be 'company and 'remote'. In other words we have made the maximum assumptions about the potential level of loss of ownership by the local fishermen. In fact, the oral evidence makes it clear that a number of these companies were owned by local fishermen or ex-fishermen, and had been formed, one assumes, for tax or trading advantages. The "Star Drift Fishing Company" was owned by George Catchpole

(known as 'Mouse'); and forming a company did not extract him from the fishing community. This memory of him from an interview is typical:

> 'There were no companies then. I knew Mouse Catchpole, he had twenty or thirty boats. He was a little old man with a beard "a proper gentleman" although you wouldn't think so to see him in his fisherman's clothes. He was worth thousands but he "would talk to you as one of your own". I sailed for him on the "Beacon Star".'

The lists of 1912 and 1930 show Catchpole with two vessels in his own name (but jointly owned with others) and six in the 'Star Drift Co.' which owned the "Beacon Star". Whatever outside capital there may have been behind the formation of the company, it obviously remained Catchpole's in the eyes of the local fishermen. For this reason Tables B and C, showing the number of units owned by separate owners, rather than Tables D and E showing the distinction of the type of ownership, may be a better indicator of the nature of ownership. Nevertheless, Tables D and E remain informative, if only for the low level of joint ownership recorded.

Joint ownership is defined for coding purposes as two or more owners where such collective ownership is not a company. Looking at joint ownership more closely does reveal something of the kin and social network of ownership. In Yarmouth in 1898 joint ownership was insignificant. In 1912 there were 28 fishing vessels under joint ownership: five of these names already appear as first owners; two of the second owners also appear as third owners in other partnerships, which means that all forms of joint ownership add 19 new individuals to the 74 individuals or companies who were first owners. That makes up an average of 2.33 vessels for each unit of ownership. The 1930s show that this tendency to partnership had grown: of the 125 boats, 19 had second owners, six of that 19 had a third owner, and three of that six had a fourth owner. This adds only 14 new names to the first owners, as some of the individuals also already appear as first owners, or recur as third and fourth owners. This gives an average of 1.58 vessels from each unit of ownership.

These figures establish without question that for the average boat, more people were becoming involved in ownership. On the other hand the decline in the number of vessels in the post-war period meant that ownership was being reduced in absolute terms. Nevertheless, it is clear that although at the turn of the century ownership was not a matter of kinship groups or family fishing of the sort usually described as

'traditional', this pattern of ownership grew during the period of intense capitalisation.

The pattern of ownership in East Anglia was thus neither like the Scottish pattern, nor the pattern on the Humber or the other steam trawler ports. The names and addresses of owners in the fishing vessel lists and the oral evidence both confirm that individual working fishermen continued to achieve ownership. The modernisation of the industry was also carried through without any labour troubles and without the growth of class opposition. We believe that the reasons for this are to be found in the structure of the herring industry. There was nothing in the structure of the local trawling industry to withstand influences coming from the herring industry; but because sailing trawling was declining, relationships in this section were different, and have to be considered separately. Even in Lowestoft by 1912 there were 50% more drifters than trawlers, and each drifter employed 10 men against the trawlers maximum of five, so the attitudes of the driftermen dominated the fishing industry as a whole.

The herring fishermen generally welcomed this increasing capitalisation, the increased size of the boats, the longer nets and the heavier catches. In some ways this imposed a heavier work burden and a speed-up of the work process, because a powered vessel can work more intensively than a sailing craft. But these changes did not bring any protest from the fishermen. Their welcoming of rapid technical change might partially be explained by the increased opportunities for employment, but the major factor influencing them was more probably related to the changes brought to the work experience of the employed individual, rather than in the general opportunity of employment. If anything, the increased demand for labour would have provided more favourable opportunities for successful protest, had these changes generated discontent. In fact, in manning the new steam drifters, the fishermen gained comparatively more comfortable and roomy living conditions. If the effort of actually handling the fish increased as a result of the increased catching power, this was compensated for by the disappearance of the labour involved in working a sailing craft to and from the fishing grounds. The need to ensure a greater return on the increased capital outlay also had the effect of lengthening the fishing season, and this ensured a more continuous employment.

Behind this ready acceptance of change there also lay one vital, unchanging aspect of their employment - the 'traditional' share system. Strictly speaking the herring fishermen were not employed by the boat owner: contractually the crew were 'co-venturers' with the boat owner. They risked their labour and he his capital for an agreed share of the gross proceeds, net of working expenses. This was not a system of bonus payment, nor of profit sharing, nor any form of the 'poundage' payments common in the trawling industry. Crews signed-on for a 'voyage'; they received no wages, but a share of the money realised by the catch. After running expenses, coal, harbour dues, salesman's commission, food, and so on had been paid, the earnings were divided with nine shares to the owner and seven to the crew. The crew then divided this amount amongst themselves according to their position. Under this arrangement both parties had a vested interest in maximising output. The existence of a 'traditional' share system prevented disputes arising over the need to renegociate wage or bonus payments to take account of the new level of profitability. During this period both parties were increasing their earnings from the industry, and the question of redistributing the proportion of the earnings does not appear to have become an issue. The only suggestion of this possibility in the oral evidence is a statement that, for the owner of a smaller outdated boat with less capacity than the average, it might become necessary to offer to split 8:8, instead of 9:7, in order to attract a crew. But such exceptions from the rule appear to have been rare. The existence and continuation of this traditional method undoubtedly worked to the advantage of the average fisherman by greatly enhancing his earnings. However, the increased remuneration for the majority, including owners, would not necessarily have produced social and industrial harmony, had not able and ambitious men despite the increased capital cost, still have been capable of rising to ownership.

How did an ordinary working fisherman manage to acquire ownership of a capital asset costing one to three thousand pounts (according to the age of the vessel), at a time when skilled tradesmen in the area earned only £75 a year and an agricultural worker would do well to earn £40? Fishermen were paid on the share system, and their earnings are virtually impossible to average, since some would work all year and 'settle-up' with literally nothing, while others might 'settle-up' with a clear £150. Further research into their earnings would be necessary for a more realistic assessment. Our present estimate would be an average about £70 a year in the 1900s, but the returns were always unpredictable for individuals from year to year. But fortunately the successful fishermen

did not have to accumulate capital from earnings in order to become an owner. In a time of rapid expansion and of high profitability, the skills of a successful skipper reached a premium. The variability of earnings applied equally to the earnings of a company from any particular boat. Fishing is an industry in which a high level of the decisions which affect profitability cannot be taken by shore management. They must depend on the skills of the skipper. Consequently a successful skipper was a prime asset to any company. Thus in order to retain skippers in their employ, large companies would allow a skipper to start buying a share of the vessel, usually by 'giving' him a 1/3 share which he then 'worked-out': 'family' companies would allow skippers to buy an entire vessel by this method. Yet even so, the companies had difficulty in retaining the services of an ambitious skipper; fish salesmen were also competing for his skills.

Fish-salesmen played a key role in the economic structure of the herring industry. The most obvious of their activities was to auction the fish in the fish dock. But they did more than this. They also provided the individual skipper/owners with 'white-collar' managerial expertise. Fish salesmen virtually kept the accounts for the fishermen who dealt with them. They paid the bills for the accounts the fishermen ran-up during the season, for food, fuel, harbour dues and ship's chandlery. The salesmen would send their representatives to sell their 'customers' catch when they went up to Scotland in May, or down to Penzance in January. They settled all the fisherman's bills and accounts in these away ports as well. Apart from relieving the skipper/owner from a burden of paper work - and some of the older skippers were illiterate - it meant that a skipper/owner who had had a poor season the year before and had no cash could start fishing the next season on 'credit'. These services were paid for by a 10% commission on sales. This meant that the salesmen made proportionally more money out of providing these services to a boat earning a lot of money: it was also much more profitable if their representative in an outport was auctioning for a number of vessels. In other words they wanted to act exclusively for as many high earning vessels as they possibly could. It was these salesmen who were the main source of capital for the skipper/owner. By common report in the oral evidence, any successful skipper would be able to obtain a loan from the salesmen, indeed, might well be solicited to do so.

Naturally, having provided the opportunity for a skipper to become an owner, the salesman would 'manage' the boat and have the loan repaid out of income. A relationship thus established would commonly last for as long as the fisherman was working - although one owner pointed out to me that there was no legal commitment to do so.

Such a system poses many questions: why was there so little vertical integration of the herring fishing in the way which developed in the trawling industry? Why was there a growth in joint ownership if the individual had such easy access to capital? Did access to capital result in a form of economic bondage in which the nominal owner rarely discharged the original? These questions need further research and consideration before any attempt can be made to answer them. Wadel notes the similar persistance of fisherman-ownership in the contemporary Norwegian herring fishery. One of the major factors in Norway appears to be the level of expertise of individual skippers and net bosses in the success of the operation, and the fact that this expertise gives them access to capital. The situation appears to have been much the same in the earlier period of East Coast drift-netting. One area that still needs considerable research is the extent to which ownership by fishermen was 'nominal', with debt repayments continuing year by year and the capital sum never being repaid. Reports of bankrupcy cases in the local papers give some indication of the frequency with which fishermen were unsuccessful in their attempts to achieve ownership. These give useful accounts of their 'personal' history as fishermen and owners; the number of vessels purchased and sold, the source of finance, its proportion of the purchase price and the amounts repaid. The Lowestoft papers show that the majority of the unsuccessful were engaged in the trawling industry and the details of the cases - the size of the loans and the length of time the capital was outstanding or interest unpaid - especially the level of control of the salesman over the financial arrangements even to the extent of paying an 'owner' a salary of 30/- a week - suggests that ownership may often have been more nominal than real. As mortgagers, the salesmen repossessed the boat and the real losers seem to have been the local tradesmen and suppliers. No cases of this type have so far come to light in the drifting industry. The local Registers of Shipping carry details of mortgages on fishing vessels and indicate that mortgages on drifters were generally paid off in a short time. The experience of one informant, who bought a boat in 1922 for £100 down with £1,000 to pay, and cleared that debt within five years as well as renewing his stock of nets in the same period was, in

his own view, not untypical. But the reports in the local papers make this conclusion somewhat less certain. And figures produced by the Secretary of State for Scotland (quoted in the Lowestoft Journal, 2 December 1911) state that in 1910 there was a total of 764 steam drifters in Scotland (cf 570 for the two East Anglian ports alone) and of those 109 were owned by 'capitalists', 102 by 'fishermen unencumbered', and the residue of 553 was owned by fishermen jointly with merchants or subject to loan or mortgage - again indicating that the actuality of private and family ownership needs careful consideration, it might have been becoming to a certain extent a myth, albeit a powerful one for the fisherman's social and industrial perceptions.

In view of the level of uncertainty on this basic and factual matter, further research into the Registers of Shipping involving a proper random sample for two or three sample years may prove a necessity. This would require a considerable amount of additional research time and would turn the investigation towards more strictly economic issues, rather than social history. Nevertheless, while the basic facts of the industrial structure remain problematical it is difficult, indeed unwise, to proceed too far with the analysis of the oral material. The 'realities' of ownership as well as its distribution must be known in order to place 'perceptions' into a context.

The research has confirmed our original doubts in the general connection made between fishing as an occupation and the industrial and social attitudes characterised by Tunstall and other studies referred to earlier. East Anglian fishermen, although working away from home for months in the year in the highly commercialised steam drifting industry, were not militant, nor organised into trade unions. Our initial analysis suggests that the major factor in this sharp difference between the militancy of the Humber during the decade and a half before the First World War and East Anglia is the difference in the structure of ownership. In East Anglia, ownership was not only more widely spread, but the majority of the owners were drawn from the local community and continued to live in that community.

Social contact seems to have remained familiar and easy, and does not appear to have generated a sense of class division between the owners and the men. The East Anglian fisherman's class perceptions are complex (and have been more fully explored in the article which is attached) for even large owners who 'came into' the community from outside are seen

as part of 'their own community', whereas smaller businessmen and even shop assistants are regarded as belonging to a social class or status group above the 'fishermen' as a whole. The whole issue of the extent of actual ownership, as opposed to a mere title to ownership never cleared of debt to the provider of capital, needs more exploration, but it seems here that the widespread existence of small fishermen owners who worked their way up to ownership served to 'legitimise' ownership also for those few entrepreneurs who were actively and explicitly engaged in ownership. Clearly there was also a substantial amount of covert ownership, through the provision of capital and the holding of mortgages by a group of middle-men, usually fish salesmen. These men also combined to establish local coaling and ice and provisions companies. On the other hand, these operations were not unknown to the fishermen, who all named the salesman as the most common source of capital for the working fisherman ambitious enough to want to own his own vessel. Their willingness to provide capital is seen in favourable terms, and not the system of exploitation which it may well have been in practice. Certainly in the static or declining and technically dormant sailing trawler fleet, there are strong indications from newspaper accounts of bankrupcy proceedings, that ownership in this section of the industry was more nominal than in the herring drifting.

One aspect which emerges as an explanatory factor is the lack of cultural distinctions between the various status groups within the fishing industry. The oral evidence shows that attitudes towards education, leisure and domestic life were held in common throughout the fishing community. The length of schooling, out of school behaviour and time of starting work, and the nature of occupations entered show very little difference between owners and crew. As could be expected the extremes of poverty are found amongst the lower status (and paid) members, and the higher level of domestic comfort - as measured by diet, clothing and housing - are found in the higher status groups; but there is considerable overlap. One factor seems to be that the boom period of the fishing industry was short, and the increased capital assets of the fishermen owners did not have time to work through to the 'superstructure' and provide the basis for the emergence of 'class' differences. Nor was this entirely due to the short period of rapid commercialisation. Many of the oral accounts of the occupations of their parents and grandparents, or even great-grandparents were known, uncover a striking variety of family occupational experience. Many informants who were themselves labourers or deckhands had fathers or grand-

fathers who were owners or even builders of fishing vessels, or who were engaged in some form of independent trade. Occupation patterns convey a sense of social flux, rather than of a fixed class position. This variety in family experience helped to maintain the Victorian level of belief that success was due to individual effort, initiative and work. This view was reinforced by the fact that, so far as becoming a skipper was concerned, the contemporary fishing industry was a genuine 'meritocracy'. Unlike skilled artisans, the 'skippers' were not able to control entry to their occupation by controlling the number of apprentices or through union membership. A skipper had to pass a Board of Trade examination, so that fishermen with the requisite number of years' service could take the certificate. Formal entry to the group was therefore regulated by an outside body and open to all.

Where there was individual success on a substantial scale (the father of one of our respondents owned four vessels at one time) this does not seem to have started a business 'dynasty'. In this case (and others reported in the local press) the vessels were auctioned on the retirement of the principal rather than passed on to the son or sons as a going business, which means that owners children also had to acquire their own capital assets. To achieve this they normally established themselves as skilled and successful skippers. This required them to go to sea as boys and work their way through the hierarchy of jobs, while accumulating enough sea-time to take their skipper's certificate. By the time that they became owners, even with the aid of family connections, they were, culturally at least, indelibly working class. Subsequently there would always be a considerable number of men working in the industry, who had worked alongside them as boys and young men, and remained on familiar terms even if they became financially far removed from them. Because of the state of flux between different cohorts and generations in terms of ownership, there was a continual injection of working class social and cultural attitudes into the stratum of small owners: and because of the kinship network a high proportion of the non-owners had near kin who were owners. Moreover, ownership of fishing vessels and gear is a form of capital with a high rate of depreciation. This may be the reason why middlemen were content to allow this section of the fishing industry to remain in other hands: it also distinguishes it from most small businesses which require some more permanent 'real' real property, so although the earnings from a fishing vessel were comparatively high, so were the outgoings, and when the estate was sold on the death or retirement of

the owner, it did not usually realise a very large sum. The money seems often to have been used to buy property in terms of houses for personal use and also to provide security in retirement for the owner rather than a family business for the children. (A useful comparison may be made here with Thernstrom's studies of intergenerational property mobility in the United States.) All these areas need greater consideration. But in short, neither the length of time for which the industry was booming, so that it was comparatively easy for working fishermen to become owners, nor the maintenance of this position by the same families, was sufficiently continuous to give rise to a sense of class separation between owners and crew.

In conclusion, we are confident that the treatment of evidence in this report goes some way towards demonstrating the authenticity of oral evidence. However, it is clear that our evidence as set out here is less than complete. Our findings to date are reported in a self-contained structure, and have not yet been placed in the wider conceptual or theoretical framework which we intend. Nor have all the original aims of the project been fully reported within the present format. The domestic role of the male, and the role and place of women and the importance of their industrial position, the strength of the community and kinship networks all require further analysis. It is intended that this will be carried out, and only then will we consider the research to have been fully completed. We wish, in relation to this to offer some final remarks, in the hope that they may assist consideration of what might be regarded as a complete and fully satisfactory report for an oral history project.

The problem of oral history and its advantage is the richness and complexity and sublety of the information collected. The richness can only be fully realised through an open-ended interview technique. As a result, interpretation of the evidence has to await fieldwork and transcription. This might be contrasted with more rigidly structured mass surveys, where the research is focussed on specific areas of interest - political behaviour, class perceptions or leisure habits - with the intention of corrolating patterns revealed with income levels or some similar variables. Precise questions are formulated and pre-tested for reliability. Once the main fieldwork has begun, the major undertaking remaining is to computerise and tabulate the answers collected. The specialist interpretive skills of the researcher are then focussed on a comparatively small range of related data. The 'life history' approach collects a mass of data 'in the round', which generates new interpretations and new questions as it is being collected. As a result, the main task of analysis can only be undertaken at a later stage, when the collection is complete.

It is difficult to imagine how all of this complex work could be fully completed within the normal timespan of a research grant. Through the project, an absolutely unique and irreplaceable source has been collected, providing data which social historians will be able to continue to analyse in the future. It is perhaps a truism that each generation needs to write its own history. Oral history can ensure that this rewriting can go back to original sources for each sector of society rather than in many instances just secondary reports. Because Trevor Lummis is proceeding to write his Ph.D. thesis on the subject of the research investigation, the material in this case will receive a much fuller analysis than would have otherwise proved practicable in the time allotted. A second difficulty became apparent during the project. Because oral history research can be undertaken in very sparsely documented and unexplored fields, and may often result in the discovery of new documentary sources, it is impossible to be certain at the start, what kinds of supplementary investigation may be needed. In this case it became clear that a thorough analysis of the structure of ownership was needed in order to make sense of the fishermen's class perceptions and industrial attitudes recorded in the interviews. Such a supplementary investigation would have required a comparatively slight additional expenditure and we remain perplexed by the SSRC's decision to reject our application for it on the principle that it represented an extension of the original proposals. It would, in our view, be wiser to expect a successful oral history project to generate such small needs for supplementary investigation because of its exploratory character.

The time factor combined with the need for supplementary investigation make it inevitable that a report written at this stage is to some extent incomplete. We suspect, however, that it would in any case be more helpful to other scholars if the final report of an SSRC oral history research project, rather than attempting to anticipate a future book, concentrated on setting out the preliminary structuring of the material which had been collected and archived. This would allow other scholars to be made aware of its basic character - the sample size; occupational, social and geographical location; the subject areas covered, such as the family, religion, leisure and so on; combined with a preliminary statement, including tabulation wherever appropriate, to demonstrate the basic structure for others wishing to work on particular sections of the data. It might be more realistic, and more constructive, to aim research reports in the direction of making public the basic content of an investigation rather than the ideal of exhaustive and final analysis.

Final Report contd.

At the same time, we are proceeding with plans for the publication of our final research findings. Interim papers drawn from the project have been given by Trevor Lummis at the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, University of Southampton (May 1975), the London School of Economics, Conference on Fishing Communities (July 1975), the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, University of Cambridge (August 1975 and 1976), Great Yarmouth Archaeological Society (March 1976) and the University of Essex, East Anglian History Conference (June 1976); and by Paul Thompson at the London School of Economics, Conference on Fishing Communities (July 1975), and the University of Edinburgh, School of Scottish Studies (February 1976). Trevor Lummis has published an article on 'The Occupational Community of East Anglian Fishermen', in the British Journal of Sociology, Vol. XXVIII, No. 1, March 1977. Two separate contributions by Trevor Lummis and Paul Thompson are to be included in a social history of British fishing, 1890 - 1939, which Quartet Books will be publishing in 1978. Other publishers have expressed strong interest in a book on the East Anglian fishing communities when the research is fully completed. There is little doubt in our minds that the results of this research will be available to a wide audience.

Trevor Lummis

Paul Thompson

General Notes on Tables One to Nine

DRIFT = Driftermen

TRAWL = Trawlermen

INSH = Inshore fishermen

NON-F = Occupations other than fishermen

OCC = Occupation

A - C = Social Class A to C

D - F = Social Class D to F

DOM.S. = Domestic servant

BST = Beatster. A net-repairer. This was a skilled female occupation

N/W = Never worked

D/K = Do not know

Nor. = Norfolk

Suf. = Suffolk

Ess. = Essex

T/s = Sub-totals

LIBS = Liberal supporters

LABS = Labour supporters

CONS = Conservative supporters

APOL = No political interest or preferences

CHAST = Chastised

TABLE ONE

REPORTED FAMILY SIZE AND MORTALITY

			Average No. of Siblings Per Respond	Reported Number of Sibling Deaths	Percentage of Sibling Mortality	Number of Cases
A	All Respondents		8.0 (482)	1.0 (58)	12	60
B	Male		7.7	0.9	12	40
	Female		8.8	1.0	12	20
C	Urban		8.0	1.2	15	32
	Rural		8.0	0.7	9	28
D	Drifting		8.0	1.3	16	16
	Trawling		9.4	1.6	17	12
	Inshore		6.7	0.5	7	20
	Non-F'men		8.9	0.8	8	12
E	Essex		6.5	0.4	5	14
	Suffolk		8.5	0.6	8	22
	Norfolk		8.5	1.6	19	24
F	Trawl and Drtf. only	Owners	8.2	0.8	11	9
		Skippers	8.3	1.3	16	13
		Crew	9.5	2.3	25	6
G	Inshre. only	Owners	5.9	0.3	5	11
		Crew	7.6	0.8	10	9
H	→ 1889		9.6	1.3	14	18
	1890-1899		7.0	1.0	14	27
	1900-1909		8.0	0.5	7	15
I	Yachts		5.9	0.1	2	9
	Beach		7.4	0.8	11	11

TABLE TWO

"CLASS PERCEPTIONS"

RESPONDENTS BY OCCUPATION OF FATHER

		Number of Classes					
		1	2	3	4	D/K	Total
A	Essex	-	86% (12)	14% (2)	-	-	14
	Suffolk	14% (3)	41% (9)	41% (9)	-	6% (1)	22
	Norfolk	13% (3)	25% (6)	38% (9)	8% (2)	17% (4)	24
B	Male	10% (4)	53% (21)	25% (10)	3% (1)	10% (4)	40
	Female	10% (2)	30% (6)	50% (10)	5% (1)	5% (1)	20
C	Urban	19% (6)	38% (12)	34% (11)	-	9% (3)	32
	Rural	-	54% (15)	32% (9)	7% (2)	7% (2)	28
D	Drift.	13% (2)	32% (5)	38% (6)	-	19% (3)	16
	Trawl.	25% (3)	33% (4)	33% (4)	-	8% (1)	12
	Insh.	-	75% (15)	15% (3)	5% (1)	5% (1)	20
	Non-F.	8% (1)	25% (3)	58% (7)	8% (1)	-	12
	Totals	10% (6)	45: (27)	33% (20)	3% (2)	8% (5)	60
E	Trawling and Drifting Only						
	Owners	22% (2)	-	55% (5)	-	22% (2)	9
	Skippers	15% (2)	54% (7)	15% (2)	-	15% (2)	13
	Crew	17% (1)	33% (2)	50% (3)	-	-	6
	Totals	18% (5)	32% (9)	36% (10)	-	14% (4)	28

MALE RESPONDENTS BY OWN OCCUPATION

		NUMBER OF CLASSES					
		1	2	3	4	D/K	Totals
DD	Drift.	13% (2)	31% (5)	25% (4)	6% (1)	25% (4)	100% (16)
	Trawl.	29% (2)	43% (3)	29% (2)	-	-	101% (7)
	Insh.	-	86% (12)	14% (2)	-	-	100% (14)
	Non-F.	-	33% (1)	66% (2)	-	-	99% (3)
	Totals	10% (4)	53% (21)	25% (10)	3% (1)	10% (4)	101% (40)
EE	Trawl and drift only						
	Owners	-	-	-	-	100% (2)	100% (2)
	Skippers	13% (1)	38% (3)	38% (3)	-	13% (1)	102% (8)
	Crew	23% (3)	38% (5)	23% (3)	8% (1)	8% (1)	100% (13)
	Totals	17% (4)	35% (8)	26% (6)	4% (1)	17% (4)	99% (23)

TABLE TWO

PERCEIVED CLASSES

F(1) All Respondents	1	2	3	4	D/K	Totals
⟶ 1890	5% (1)	38% (8)	43% (9)	-	14% (3)	21
1891-1900	12% (3)	38% (10)	35% (9)	8% (2)	8% (2)	26
1901-1910	15% (2)	69% (9)	15% (2)	-	-	13
F(2) Males only						
⟶ 1890	8% (1)	54% (7)	23% (3)	-	15% (2)	13
1891-1900	10 (2)	45% (9)	30% (6)	5% (1)	10% (2)	20
1901-1910	14% (1)	71% (5)	14% (1)	-	-	7
F(3) Females only						
⟶ 1890	-	13% (1)	75% (6)	-	13% (1)	8
1891-1900	17% (1)	17% (1)	50% (3)	17% (1)	-	6
1901-1910	17% (1)	67% (4)	17% (1)	-	-	6
H(1) Essex						
⟶ 1890	-	100% (1)	-	-	-	1
1891-1900	-	88% (7)	13% (1)	-	-	8
1901-1910	-	80% (1)	20% (1)	-	-	5
H(2) Suffolk						
⟶ 1890	9% (1)	45% (5)	36% (4)	-	9% (1)	11
1891-1900	13% (1)	25% (2)	63% (5)	-	-	8
1901-1910	33% (1)	67% (2)	-	-	-	3
H(3) Norfolk						
⟶ 1890	-	22% (2)	55% (5)	-	22% (2)	9
1891-1900	20% (2)	10% (1)	30% (3)	20% (2)	20% (2)	10
1901-1910	20% (1)	60% (3)	20% (1)	-	-	5

TABLE THREE

ECONOMIC STRATA WITHIN THE WORKING CLASS AS DEFINED BY THE RESPONDENTS

A By occ. of Father	No Class or Strata	Self Mid. Class	Top of W/C	Mid W/C	Bottom W/C	D/K	Totals
Drifters	19% (3)	25% (4)	19% (3)	25% (4)	-	13% (2)	16
Trawlers	42% (5)	-	8% (1)	33% (4)	8% (1)	8% (1)	12
Inshore	20% (4)	-	60% (12)	10% (2)	5% (1)	5% (1)	20
Non-F.	42% (5)	17% (2)	33% (4)	8% (1)	-	-	12
Totals	28% (17)	10% (6)	33% (20	18% (11)	3% (2)	7% (4)	60
B By occ. of Respondent (female by spouse)							
Drifters	32% (7)	14% (3)	32% (7)	9% (2)	-	14% (3)	22
Trawlers	42% (5)	-	8% (1)	42% (5)	8% (1)	-	12
Inshore	13% (2)	-	69% (11)	13% (2)	6% (1)	-	16
Non-F.	30% (3)	30% (3)	10% (1)	20% (2)	-	10% (1)	10
Totals	28% (17)	10% (6)	33% (20)	18% (11)	3% (2)	7% (4)	60
C Males only (respondents occupation)							
Drifter	25% (4)	13% (2)	31% (5)	13% (2)	-	19% (3)	16
Trawler	43% (3)	-	-	57% (4)	-	-	7
Inshore	7% (1)	-	71% (10)	14% (2)	7% (1)	-	14
Non-F.	-	33% (1)	-	67% (2)	-	-	3
Totals	20% (8)	8% (3)	38% (15)	25% (10)	3% (1)	8% (3)	40
D Females only (By occupation of spouse)							
Drifter	50% (3)	17% (1)	33% (2)	-	-	-	6
Trawler	40: (2)	-	20% (1)	20% (1)	20% (1)	-	5
Inshore	50% (1)	-	50% (1)	-	-	-	2
Non-F.	43% (3)	29% (2)	14% (1)	-	-	14% (1)	7
Totals	45% (9)	15% (3)	25% (5)	5% (1)	5% (1)	5% (1)	20

TABLE FOUR

ALL RESPONDENTS

A(1)	Occupations of Males Siblings						
Fathers Occ.	Social Class A-C	Social Class D-F	Crew	Skipper	Owner	D/K	Totals
Owner	3%	26%	26%	18%	18%	9%	34
Skipper	-	19%	52%	21%	2%	6%	48
Crew	4%	46%	29%	17%	-	4%	24
Inshore	1%	13%	74%	N.A.	N.A.	12%	78
Non-F	4%	33%	37%	4%	-	22%	49
Totals	2% (5)	24% (56)	49% (115)	9% (22)	3% (7)	12% (28)	233

A(2)	Occupations of Female Siblings						
Fathers Occ.	A-C	D-F	Dom.S	BST	N/W	D/K	Totals
Owner	9%	9%	52%	18%	9%	3%	33
Skipper	2%	18%	16%	51%	-	13%	45
Crew	-	16%	37%	-	-	47%	19
Inshore	13%	11%	26%	4%	4%	41%	46
Non-F.	4%	12%	45%	-	-	39%	49
Totals	6% (12)	13% (25)	34% (65)	16% (31)	3% (5)	28% (54)	192

B(1)	Occupation of Mothers before and after Marriage: Classified by Spouses' Occupation					
Mother Before Marriage	Owners	Skippers	Crew	Non-F.	Inshore	Totals
A-C	-	-	-	-	-	-
D-F	22% (2)	15% (2)	33% (2)	33% (4)	10% (2)	12
D/S	22% (2)	-	50% (3)	50% (6)	40% (8)	19
BST	22% (2)	15% (2)	-	-	-	4
N/W	-	46% (6)	-	-	20% (4)	10
D/K	33% (3)	23% (3)	17% (1)	17% (2)	30% (6)	15
Totals	9	13	6	12	20	60

B(2)	Mothers Occupations After Marriage					
A-C	-	-	-	-	-	-
D-F	-	8% (1)	17% (1)	25% (3)	15% (3)	8
D/S	22% (2)	31% (4)	50% (3)	50% (6)	15% (3)	18
BST	22% (2)	15% (2)	-	-	-	4
N/W	33% (3)	31% (4)	-	8% (1)	60% (12)	20
D/K	22% (2)	15% (2)	33% (2)	17% (2)	10% (2)	10
Totals	9	13	6	12	20	60

C(1)	Male Siblings						
	A-C	D-F	Crew	Skippers	Owners	D/K	Totals
Urban	2%	19%	45%	17%	6%	10%	109
Rural	1%	28%	53%	3%	1%	14%	124
Total	5	56	115	22	7	28	233

C(2)	Females Siblings						
	A-C	D-F	Dom. S	BST	N/W	D/K	Totals
Urban	9%	16%	29%	13%	4%	30%	112
Rural	3%	9%	41%	21%	1%	25%	80
Total	12	25	65	31	5	54	192

TABLE FOUR

OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF SIBLINGS

D(1) MALE RESPONDENTS

Fathers Occ.	Occupations of Male Siblings						
	A-C	D-F	Crew	Skipper	Owner	D/K	Totals
Owner	-	15%	27%	23%	19%	15%	26
Skipper	-	21%	51%	26%	3%	-	39
Crew	5%	55%	15%	20%	-	5%	20
Inshore	2%	13%	78%	N.A.	N.A.	7%	60
Non-F.	-	42%	47%	5%	-	5%	19
Totals	1% (2)	24% (39)	52% (86)	13% (21)	4% (6)	6% (10)	164

D(2) MALE RESPONDENTS

Fathers Occ.	Occupations of Female Siblings						
	A-C	D-F	Dom.S	BST	N/W	D/K	Totals
Owner	-	5%	65%	20%	5%	5%	20
Skipper	-	20%	20%	60%	-	-	35
Crew	-	-	40%	-	-	60%	15
Inshore	25%	5%	40%	-	5%	25%	20
Non-F.	-	-	94%	-	-	6%	17
Totals	5% (5)	8% (9)	48% (50)	23% (25)	2% (2)	15% (16)	107

E(1) FEMALE RESPONDENTS

Fathers Occ.	Occupations of Male Siblings						
	A-C	D-F	Crew	Skipper	Owner	D/K	Totals
Owner	13%	75%	-	-	13%	-	8
Skipper	-	11%	56%	-	-	33%	9
Crew	-	-	100%	-	-	-	4
Inshore	-	11%	61%	-	-	28%	18
Non-F.	7%	27%	30%	3%	-	33%	30
Totals	4% (3)	25% (17)	43% (29)	1% (1)	1% (1)	26% (18)	69

E(2) FEMALE RESPONDENTS

Fathers Occ.	Occupations of Female Siblings						
	A-C	D-F	Dom.S.	BST	N/W	D/K	Totals
Owner	23%	15%	31%	15%	15%	-	13
Skipper	10%	10%	-	20%	-	60%	10
Crew	-	75%	25%	-	-	-	4
Inshore	4%	15%	15%	8%	4%	54%	26
Non-F.	6%	19%	19%	-	-	56%	32
Totals	8% (7)	19% (16)	18% (15)	7% (3)	4% (3)	45% (38)	85

TABLE 5A

DISTRIBUTION OF POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR

RESPONDENTS AND FATHERS

		Conservative				Liberal				Labour				Apolitical					D/K			
		Nor.	Suf.	Ess.	Tls.	Nor.	Suf.	Ess.	Tls.	Nor.	Suf.	Ess.	Tls.	Nor.	Suf.	Ess.	Tls.	Nor.	Suf.	Ess.	Tls.	Totals
Trawlers	f	3	4	-	11	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	2	-	9	24
	r	2	2	-	46%	-	1	-	4%	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	13%	3	1	-	38%	101%
Drifters	f	4	2	-	9	2	1	+	4	-	-	-	2	1	2	-	6	4	-	-	11	32
	r	2	1	-	28%	-	1	+	13%	2	-	-	6%	1	2	-	19%	6	1	-	34%	100%
Inshore	f	2	2	7	22	1	1	6	11	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	4	40
	r	1	1	9	55%	1	-	2	28%	-	-	1	3%	-	-	2	5%	1	2	-	10%	101%
Non-Fishermen	f	1	2	-	5	2	3	-	8	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	3	1	2	-	7	24
	r	2	-	-	21%	1	2	-	33%	-	1	-	4%	-	2	-	13%	1	3	-	29%	100%
Totals	f	10	10	7	27	5	5	6	16	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	4	8	4	1	13	60
		42%	45%	50%	45%	21%	23%	43%	27%	-	-	-	-	4%	14%	-	7%	33%	18%	2%	22%	101%
	r	7	4	9	20	2	4	2	8	2	1	1	4	2	6	2	10	11	7	-	18	60
		29%	18%	64%	33%	8%	17%	14%	13%	8%	5%	7%	7%	8%	27%	14%	17%	46%	32%	-	30%	100%
All					47				24				4				14				31	120
					39%				20%				3%				12%				26%	100%

TABLE 5B

POLITICAL PATTERN BY DECADE OF BIRTH: RESPONDENTS AND THEIR FATHERS*

*The Date of Birth of the Father has been arbitrarily placed 25 Years Earlier than the Respondent

	Con	Lib	Lab	Apol	D/K	Total
1870	38% (11)	21% (6)	-	14% (4)	24% (7)	29
1871 - 1880	53% (16)	30% (9)	-	3% (1)	17% (5)	30
1881 - 1890	23% (5)	23% (5)	5% (1)	23% (5)	27% (6)	22
1891 - 1900	35% (9)	15% (4)	8% (2)	15% (4)	27% (7)	26
1901 - 1910	46% (6)	-	8% (1)	-	46% (6)	13
Totals	39% (47)	20% (24)	3% (4)	12% (14)	26% (31)	(120)

TABLE 5C

Political Allegiance by Religious Affiliation

	Cons	Libs	Labs	Apol	D/K	Totals
Church of England	24% (29)	6% (7)	2% (2)	3% (3)	11% (13)	45% (54)
Noncon-formist	15% (18)	12% (14)	2% (2)	8% (10)	9% (11)	46% (55)
Religion not Known	-	-	-	-	-	9% (11)
Totals	39% (47)	18% (21)	3% (4)	11% (13)	20% (24)	100% (120)

TABLE 5D

Political Allegiance by Status Ranking: Drifters and Trawlers Only

Fathers and Male Respondents

	Cons	Libs	Labs	Apol	D/K	Totals
Owners	36% (4)	-	-	9% (1)	55% (6)	11
Skippers	33% (7)	14% (3)	-	33% (7)	19% (4)	21
Crew	32% (6)	16% (3)	16% (3)	5% (1)	32% (6)	19
Totals	33% (17)	12% (6)	6% (3)	18% (9)	31% (16)	51

TABLE 6

RESPONDENTS AGE AT LEAVING SCHOOL

		RESPONDENTS AGE						
		11	12	13	14	15	D/K	Totals
A	⟶ 1889	6% (1)	28% (5)	50% (2)	11% (2)	-	6% (1)	18
	1890 - 1899	4% (1)	11% (3)	33% (9)	44% (12)	7% (2)	-	27
	1900 - 1909	-	7% (1)	33% (5)	53% (8)	-	7% (1)	15
B	Owners	-	-	22% (2)	66% (6)	11% (1)	-	9
	Skippers	8% (1)	8% (1)	69% (9)	15% (2)	-	-	13
	Crew	-	33% (2)	33% (2)	33% (2)	-	-	6
	Inshore	-	15% (3)	30% (6)	45% (9)	5% (1)	5% (1)	20
	Non Fishermen	8% (1)	25% (3)	33% (4)	25% (3)	-	8% (1)	12
C	Urban	3% (1)	13% (4)	38% (12)	41% (13)	3% (1)	3% (1)	32
	Rural	4% (1)	18% (5)	39% (11)	32% (9)	4% (1)	4% (1)	28
D	Male		15% (6)	45% (18)	35% (14)	3% (1)	3% (1)	40
	Female	10% (2)	15% (3)	25% (5)	40% (8)	5% (1)	5% (1)	20
	Totals	3% (2)	15% (9)	38% (23)	37% (22)	3% (2)	3% (2)	60
E	Trawler-men	8% (1)	17% (2)	42% (5)	33% (4)	-	-	12
	Drifter-men	-	6% (1)	50% (8)	38% (6)	6% (1)	-	16
	Totals	4% (1)	12% (3)	46% (13)	35% (10)	3% (1)	-	28

TABLE 7

PUNISHMENT IN THE HOME

A

	RESPONDENTS			
	Chastised	Not Chast.	D/K	Totals
Essex	64%	29%	7%	14
Suffolk	68%	18%	14%	22
Norfolk	46%	38%	17%	24

AA

RESPONDENTS			
Chast.	Not Chast.	D/K	Totals
50%	43%	7%	14
68%	18%	14%	22
33%	50%	17%	24

B

Urban	66%	22%	13%	32
Rural	50%	36%	14%	28

BB

59%	28%	13%	32
39%	46%	14%	28

C

Male	60%	35%	5%	40
Female	55%	15%	30%	20

CC

58%	38%	5%	40
35%	35%	30%	20

D

Inshore	55%	35%	10%	20
Trawler	58%	42%	-	12
Drifter	63%	19%	19%	16
Shore	58%	17%	25%	12
Totals	58% (35)	28% (17)	13% (8)	60

DD

45%	45%	10%	20
58%	42%	-	12
56%	25%	19%	16
42%	33%	25%	12
50% (30)	37% (22)	13% (8)	60

EE

	RESPONDENTS			
	Chastised	Not Chast.	D/K	Totals
Owners	33%	44%	22%	9
Skippers	62%	31%	8%	13
Crew	83%	17%	-	6
Totals	57% (16)	32% (9)	11% (3)	28

TABLE 7

FF

PARENTS						
	Sex	Chast	Not Chast	No Role	D/K	Totals
Inshore	Female	40%	50%		10%	20
	Male	20%	60%		20%	20
Trawlers	Female	50%	42%		8%	12
	Male	25%	42%	33%		12
Drifters	Female	44%	31%		25%	16
	Male	25%	25%	31%	19%	16
Non-Fishermen	Female	33%	42%		25%	12
	Male	17%	42%	8%	33%	12

GG

Urban	Female	53%	28%		19%	32
	Male	22%	34%	22%	22%	32
Rural	Female	29%	57%		14%	28
	Male	21%	54%	11%	14%	28

HH

Essex	Female	50%	43%		7%	14
	Male	14%	57%	7%	21%	14
Suffolk	Female	45%	36%		18%	22
	Male	32%	32%	18%	18%	22
Norfolk	Female	33%	46%		21%	24
	Male	17%	46%	21%	17%	24
Totals	Female	42% (25)	42% (25)			60
	Male	22% (13)	43% (26)	16% (10)	18% (11)	60

TABLE 8

RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOUR

A. Fathers : Fishermen only

	Religious Attendance			
	Yes	No	D/K	Totals
Drifters	13%	44%	44%	16
Trawlers	17%	58%	25%	12
Inshore	55%	30%	15%	20
Totals	31% (15)	42% (20)	27% (13)	48

B. Respondents: Male Fishermen Only

Drifters	13%	25%	63%	16
Trawlers	14%	29%	57%	7
Inshore	21%	36%	43%	14
Totals	16% (6)	30% (11)	54% (20)	37

C. Male Respondents and All Fathers: Non Fishermen Only

Non-Fishermen	27%	47%	27%	15

D. All Males

Totals	25% (25)	38% (38)	37% (37)	100

E. Inshore Divided Into Yachtsmen and Non-Yachtsmen

Yachtsmen	47%	33%	20%	15
Non-Yachtsmen	37%	32%	32%	19
Totals	14	11	9	34

TABLE 8

RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOUR

F. Parents by Location

	RURAL				URBAN			
	Yes	No	D/K	Totals	Yes	No	D/K	Totals
Father	46%	29%	25%	28	16%	63%	22%	32
Mother	39%	39%	21%	28	22%	50%	28%	32
Totals	43% (24)	34% (19)	23% (13)	56	19% (12)	56% (36)	25% (16)	64

G. Respondents: Attendance Post School Age

Male	25%	20%	55%	20	15%	35%	50%	20
Female	50%	-	50%	8	58%	8%	33%	12
Totals	32% (9)	14% (4)	54% (15)	28	31% (10)	25% (8)	44% (14)	32

H. Respondents: Religious Observance in the Home During School Age

All	25%	21%	54%	56	28%	17%	55%	64
Totals	14	12	30	56	18	11	35	64

TABLE 9

A. Number of Vessels and Men At the 4 Leading Ports of England/Wales

		Grimsby	Hull	Lowestoft	Yarmouth
Steam	1903	484	423	101	101
	1912	582	403	329	198
Sail	1903	39	13	387	88
	1912	27	20	264	10
Regular Fishermen	1903	4,939	4,272	4,100	2,780
	1912	5,969	4,720	5,400	2,710
Occasionally Fishermen	1903	-	150	50	650
	1912	-	168	950	440

B. DISTRIBUTION OF OWNERSHIP

1913 List has 6.3% D/K
*Both Hewitt, 25 registered in London

	Lowestoft			Yarmouth		
Units of Ownership	1898	1912	1931	1898	1912	1931
1	148	151	90	73	36	44
2	55	60	37	17	17	12
3	19	31	16	5	7	4
4	11	12	6	9	2	1
5	8	9	8	2	3	2
6	1	8	1	1	22	-
7	5	5	3	3	2	-
8	1	1	-	1	1	-
9	1	1	1	-	-	-
10	1	-	1	1	1	-
11	-	-	1	-	-	1
122	-	-	-	-	-	-
131	1	-	-	-	-	-
14	-	1	1	-	1	-
15	-		1	-	1	-
16	-		1	-	-	-
19	-		9	-	-	-
20	-		-	-	1	1
25	-		-	1*	-	
30	1		-	-	1	
34	1		1	-		
137				1*		

TABLE 9

C. Small Ownership as a % of Total Ownership

	Lowestoft			Yarmouth		
	1898	1912	1931	1898	1912	1931
Owning up to 2 FV's	42	52	38	28	32	55
Owning up to 5 FV's	72	84	61	35	52	75

TABLE 9

D. (Joint Equals Two or More Owners)
Type of Ownership by % of Units and of Total Tonnage

Yarmouth		1898	1912	1931
Company	Units	51	46	35
	Tons	64	48	37
Single	Units	49	35	48
	Tons	36	40	46
Joint	Units	1	9	17
	Tons	1	10	17
D/K	Units	-	10	-
	Tons	-	3	-

TABLE 9

E.

Lowestoft		1898	1912	1931
Company	Units	2	17	37
	Tons	1	18	41
Single	Units	85	41	33
	Tons	85	52	30
Joint	Units	9	16	30
	Tons	9	19	29
D/K	Units	4	26	-
	Tons	4	12	-

TABLE 9

F. Number of Boats by Type of Gear

Yarmouth	1898	1912	1931
Trwl.	235	-	-
Dttd.	82	-	21
Drft.	58	217	104

TABLE 9

G. Number of Boats by Type of Gear

Lowestoft	1898	1912	1931
D/K*	-	140	-
Twrl.	248	98	170
Dttd.	4	-	80
Drft.	227	353	181

*These are almost certainly sailing trawlers

TABLE 9

H. Method of Propulsion as a %

	Yarmouth		Lowestoft	
	Sail	Steam	Sail	Steam
1898	95	5	99	1
1912	8	92	45	55
1931	1	99	22	*78

*Includes a 3% 'motor', a negligable proportion in other cases

TABLE 5E
DISTRIBUTION OF POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR
FATHERS AND MALE RESPONDENTS ONLY

		Conservative				Liberal				Labour				Apolitical				D/K				
		Nor.	Suf.	Ess.	Tls.	Nor.	Suf.	Ess.	Tls.	Nor.	Suf.	Ess.	Tls.	Nor.	Suf.	Ess.	Tls.	Nor.	Suf.	Ess.	Tls.	Totals
Trawlers	*f	3	4	-	11	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	±	-	-	3	3	2	-	7	22
	r	2	2	-	50%	-	1	-	5%	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	14%	2	-	-	32%	
Drifters	f	4	2	-	7	2	1	-	3	-	-	-	2	1	2	-	6	4	-	-	9	27
	r	1	-	-	26%	-	-	-	11%	2	-	-	7%	1	2	-	22%	5	-	-	33%	
Inshore	f	2	2	7	19	1	1	6	10	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	3	34
	r	-	1	7	56%	-	-	2	29%	-	-	1	3%	-	-	1	3%	-	2	-	9%	
Non-Fishermen	f	1	2	-	4	2	3	-	7	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	1	2	-	4	17
	r	1	-	-	24%	1	1	-	41%	-	1	-	6%	-	-	-	6%	1	-	-	24%	
Totals	f	10	10	7	27	5	5	6	16	-	±	-	-	1	3	-	4	8	4	1	13	60
		42%	45%	50%	45%	21%	23%	43%	27%	-	-	-	-	4%	14%	-	7%	33%	18%	2%	22%	
	r	4	3	7	14	1	2	2	5	2	1	1	4	2	4	1	7	8	2	-	10	40
		24%	25%	64%	35%	6%	17%	18%	13%	12%	8%	9%	10%	12%	33%	9%	18%	47%	17%	-	25%	
All					41				21				4				11				23	100
Female Respondents					(6)				(3)				(-)				(3)				(8)	(20)

*f = father
r = respondent

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The occupational community of East Anglian fishermen: an historical dimension through oral evidence*

This article presents some qualitative evidence for the social perceptions of the East Anglian fishermen. It is an attempt to assess their attitudes to the social structure and to look at one empirical historical community to see to what extent it conforms to the sociological concept of occupational community. It concentrates on the decade and a half from the turn of the century to the outbreak of the First World War. This period is chosen for two reasons: it is as far back into the 'historical dimension' as one can go and still find a substantial number of respondents from one occupational group or community; the period also has an economic unity in that it was a period of continuous prosperity and expansion in the herring fishing industry. In their accounts of their early life and experiences, the respondents show an unexpectedly low perception of class divisions, a sense of class conflict is virtually absent and expressions of industrial or occupational discontent are rare. This evidence conflicts with the popular view of the fishermen as a 'traditional proletarian occupational community', membership of which fosters a dichotomous conflict image of society, wider class affiliations and industrio-political radicalism. The impressions of the respondents stand in such sharp distinction to the record of industrial conflict amongst fishermen on the Humber prior to the First World War[1] that the structure of the East Anglian industry and the evidence on social perceptions both deserve some comment, for I will argue that the reported social perceptions are not the result of the respondents seeing their early life as part of 'the good old days' in which social conflict is forgotten or suppressed, but that these perceptions can be seen as arising realistically out of the industrial and community situation of that generation. To this end the article will start with a brief comment on the nature of the evidence used, and also on the structure of the fishing industry in East Anglia.

In an article in *Oral History*,[2] Paul Thompson, through reference to various studies on memory, shows that memories of an event fade very quickly—within days—but after that the 'memory' stabilizes and there is very little to be gained by interviewing people about the recent past as opposed to the distant past. It can be argued that the oral history

interview suffers from less conscious bias and social pressures. Much contemporary sociological research is concerned with collecting information about situations in which the respondent is still actively involved, or which can be used to formulate or urge particular social policies. Neither the interviewer nor the respondent can be as detached about the present situation as they could about events of sixty or seventy years ago. And even contemporary interviews contain a time-depth, and it might be worth hypothesizing as to just at which point interview material becomes subject to special doubts as to its accuracy. If, for example, a respondent is being interviewed about his lack of employment, do his responses become 'historical' and subject to particular methodological problems if the discussion covers periods of unemployment from the previous year? Or from the year before? Or when discussing the respondent's schooling as a possible connected factor? At present these questions may simply be unanswerable, but given the stabilization of memory discussed by Paul Thompson there is probably little difference in the answers received from interviewing a man of 25 about his school experiences or a man of 75, although sheer distance from events may lead to a greater honesty on the part of the respondent. In my present study, for example, numerous respondents have volunteered the fact that they or their children were illegitimate or that pregnancy enforced a marriage. Questions on this topic were not included in the interview schedule; the information was freely volunteered in other contexts. One might doubt that a contemporary social investigator before the First World War would have elicited this information so readily if at all. This is partly due to the changed social climate, but many respondents do seem to have a sense of candour about, and detachment from, their early life.

A major methodological objection to oral history is that it is impossible to use a random sample, and there is therefore no method of ensuring that the sample of respondents is representative. The interviews remain case studies and one cannot generalize with statistical confidence. Statistical validity however, is only an aid to understanding and is no guarantee of the 'truth' of the surveys that meet its criteria. The advantage of in-depth interviews with a number of respondents from one occupation in one region is that all the respondents have taken part in a particular industrial situation in a particular social setting. In this way one is dealing with an unusually homogenous target population. If one wants to understand the 'quality of life' and the concomitant socio-industrial attitudes, there is no alternative to taking information from those who experienced that situation. In studying a relatively small and distinctive culture, richness of data can be a greater advantage than data that is more easily quantifiable.

My own view is that there are some difficulties inherent in the type of occupational study that I have undertaken. It is inevitable that one is placed in contact with elderly respondents because of their known

contact with the occupation concerned, and this usually means that they were connected with it for most of their life. To some extent one is dealing mainly with people who found the conditions of employment in that occupation congenial—or at least tolerable—and as such they are a self-selected group. One would expect to find a more critical comment if it were possible to trace those from the appropriate period who left the industry after only one year or two. This is not a problem for oral history in general. If a quota sample is used one gets the work experience of respondents from all different occupations and this includes the individual changes of occupation. In this way one collects accounts of working conditions from those who left an occupation because they did not like it as well as from those who did like it. This 'bias' in the evidence is perhaps less serious in a study such as this where the occupation had a strong sense of occupational community and was located in an area where there was little alternative employment. In such a situation, many stay in an industry simply through lack of alternative employment. Thus the reported attitudes collected from surviving members of that occupation are more indicative of the generality of workers than would be the case when interviewing long-service workers from an industry which was typified by transitory short-service workers. But an overall oral history study of, for example, the town of Yarmouth might be expected to discover respondents who had rejected, or been rejected by, the fishing industry and would provide a more critical point of view than those who accepted it.

The evidence I am using is drawn from sixty interviews conducted in Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex; they were conducted over the last two years (1974 to 1976) and vary in length from one hour to four or five hours. These tapes and a typescript are to be preserved at Essex University.[3] The respondents are an 'accidental sample', that is, the target number of interviews is fulfilled simply through discovering the whereabouts of elderly people from that particular target population and interviewing those who were willing. Finding contacts through a variety of ways, Old Peoples' Homes, newspaper appeals and personal contacts, all help to avoid an obviously biased sample as one would have by using only respondents from a home for retired trade unionists or from long-service pensioners from a private firm. In my case there was an attempt to impose a quota sample by controlling the number of respondents from each county, between the sexes, between the different types of fishing experience and between skippers, crews and owners. But even these modest controls proved impossible to strictly maintain because of the difficulties in finding respondents. This is not too surprising as the majority of my respondents are over eighty.

I have restricted my present analysis of the occupational community to the herring driftermen. Although this has the disadvantage of limiting the number of interviews I could draw upon to 25, it had the

great advantage of restricting the discussion to an industrially homogenous group. A number of the interviews are with inshore fishermen and with trawler men, their level of economic reward and expectation being sufficiently distinctive for them to require separate treatment. The driftermen were chosen because it was there that economic dynamism was creating the greatest distinctions in wealth, and it is the section of the fishermen of East Anglia that one would expect to produce the greatest sense of social distance between the employers and employees.

According to the 1911 census the three counties of East Anglia contained about a quarter of all the fishermen resident in England and Wales. Lowestoft and Yarmouth were the main centres in East Anglia and all the driftermen came from these two centres or from the nearby villages. In 1912 Lowestoft with 5,400 regular fishermen was second in size only to Grimsby (5,969 fishermen); indeed, if one includes the 950 'occasional' fishermen belonging to Lowestoft, it was the largest of the ports. Hull was the third largest fishing port, followed by Yarmouth. In East Anglia drifting for herring was the major fishing activity. In 1912 the two ports combined had 570 drifters each with a ten-man crew. Lowestoft has also a substantial trawling centre with some 238 trawlers, but most of these were sailing trawlers with three to five crews. Inshore fishing was carried out from both these centres and, more importantly, from ports and villages throughout the region. A brief description of the economic basis of the three types of fishing will indicate why it is drifting which should provide the highest level of social stratification.

The inshore fishermen owned small boats whose value and earnings were low. Along the sea-coasts of Norfolk and Suffolk they were restricted in size to open boats less than twenty feet long by the need to haul their boats up on the beach. At the maximum, they represented an investment of sixty or seventy pounds, according to the newness of the boat and gear. Typically, they were worked by the owner and one other man. The differential in the earnings between the two was insufficient for status distinctions to emerge as one share was for the boat and there was one share for each man involved. If the nature of the fishing required a third man the earnings were split into four shares, 'capital' still taking only one.

The steam-trawler was still a rarity in Lowestoft before the First World War. Lowestoft trawlermen continued to use sailing smacks equipped with a 40-foot beam-trawl. During the period under review the number of trawlers showed a slight decline. Both the outmoded equipment and the decline in the number of units suggest that this industry was showing little profit. Because they were out-moded it is difficult to estimate the value of the craft as there was virtually nowhere to sell them, but £600 would appear to be the maximum. Trawlermens' attitudes have not been included for the following reasons. The trawlers employed only about 12 per cent of the fishermen of Lowestoft

and Yarmouth combined and many of them also worked on the drifters at times. The dominant ethos of the two communities was that of the herring industry. The fact that the trawlermen do share the 'classless' image of the driftermen might have been due to their being influenced by the dominant values. The most important reason for not treating the trawlermen as one group with the driftermen, however, was the difference in economic prosperity. The trawlermen's image of classlessness seems to have come from a sense of shared difficulty in maintaining a living in an industry which was not producing much wealth. This extract is from a Lowerstoft trawlerman born in 1886. (Interview 3036.) It begins with my asking a leading question, in an effort to uncover 'objective' class distinctions such as geographical separation.

Today the manager of a factory will live in a posh house away from where the workers live.

Ah—Ah. Factories, I expect they do. Yes, I reckon they live in a posh place, the factories, but owners of fishing craft they were—they were as poor as—nearly as poor as what we were.

They'd live in the same streets would they?

Yes, live in the same street, yes. Well you know, they'd come down and lend a hand rather than put anybody on, they would come and lend a hand to get the work done.

The work he refers to is unloading the fish at the end of the voyage.

Other respondents mention the owners in the same terms and refer to them coming down at all hours 'by bicycle' rather than employ another labourer. Given that the workers can see the economic difficulties of these owners who (as evidence taken from documentary sources[4] on ownership confirms) lived in the same rows of terraced housing as themselves, this might be expected to produce little sense of conflict. There was very little profit to fight over. The fishermen state that owners often went bankrupt and seem to accept that ownership was not a very enviable position.

None of these factors apply to the drifter industry. From about 1897 when the first steam drifter was built for a local owner, the herring fishery enjoyed a boom that was unbroken until the outbreak of the First World War. By 1912 90 per cent of the drifters owned in the two ports were steam vessels. This indicates the intense rate of capital investment and accumulation. In evidence before a Parliamentary Commission in 1908 the manager of one of the fishing companies estimated the value of a sailing drifter at £200, nets and gear costing another £450. Steam drifters he averaged at £2,000 plus £750 for nets and gear. As the industry became more capital-intensive the distinction in material wealth between owners of fishing vessels and crews became much wider. By 1914 the drifter alone was costing £3,000.

This was an enormous sum for a working fisherman to acquire, particularly in the context of East Anglia, where agricultural wages were 13/– to 16/– weekly, the third hand of a sailing trawler had a flat wage of 20/– weekly (no poundage), and a skilled shipwright 32/– to 36/– a week. By any economic criteria, the owners of these vessels were undeniably middle class. As small businessmen, they were also considerable employers of labour. Each drifter had a ten-man crew, and it also needed two to four women working full-time to keep its nets repaired. In a small community, ownership of one or two drifters represents a considerable amount of patronage and a level of wealth far above that of his employees.

THE CONCEPT OF OCCUPATIONAL COMMUNITY

As might be expected neither the physical reality nor the perceptions of the driftermen is neatly encompassed by the sociological concept of occupational community. Indeed this concept itself has changed its form so much that it might be useful to briefly mention, what are for me, its salient points.

The concept of occupational community has developed from its use by S. M. Lipset in his study *Union Democracy* (1956). This study is specifically concerned with 'the one permanently deviant case among American Unions'. It is 'deviant' because of the high level of democratic procedures maintained in the union organization: 'the large and important role played by the printers' "occupational community"' is suggested as the main determinant which has maintained this high level of democracy. He claims that the existence of 'occupational community' leads to the individual being more involved in his work than the worker who lacks 'occupational community', and, as a result of this higher level of involvement, he participates more actively in the affairs of his trade union. As this involvement is held to check oligarchic and communistic control, Lipset is in favour of 'occupational community' and the concept is normative as well as explanatory. The factors which actually compose an occupational community are—by comparison—only briefly described. The two major factors are the high status of the printers' occupation compared with other manual work, and the irregular hours of their employment. Because of their status the printers prefer to associate with other printers or higher status occupations, and their irregular hours mean that they are at work and at leisure at different times from the wider society and are therefore more likely to share their social life with their workmates who share the same structure of employment.

It is, perhaps, the lack of a more detailed specification of occupational community that makes Lipset's use of the concept so unsatisfactory. Indeed, he undermines the explanatory value of the concept *per se* for maintaining democratic procedures in a union. In a brief

footnote (p. 132) on other industries which are occupational communities Lipset cites the longshoremen, 'The East Coast union is one of the worst dictatorships in American unionism, whereas the West Coast union, though Communist-controlled on the international level, is very democratic'. Now the crucial difference in creating this extremely sharp distinction between the two unions is not 'occupational community', but the structure of the industry. On the West Coast all the men are employed on a rota system and no favouritism by either the employer or the union officials is possible, whereas on the East Coast, 'the hiring boss, who is often the union official', selects the men according to his own inclination. Under such conditions the East Coast men are obliged to support the existing 'oligarchy' in order to secure employment. Lipset states that 'it seems clear that irregular work, while contributing to the existence of an occupational community is most often a source of strength for the incumbent union administration'. Given that these extremes of union democracy can flourish in an occupational community, it is difficult to accept that 'occupational community' can be used to explain the existence of only one of those cases. In any case, however appropriate it may be for structuring the experience of the printers, the concept as he describes it cannot be usefully employed without modification to examine the experience of the driftermen. They did have irregular hours, but status striving through association with superior social strata is not an appropriate dimension through which to consider their social reality.

Robert Blauner[5] developed the concept of occupational community with a greater emphasis on 'work satisfaction' than on the actual status of any occupation as defined by the wider society. 'Satisfaction' and 'isolation' being the main factors in his use of the term. According to Blauner occupational community develops where those employed in an occupation are isolated from the wider community, either by their time of working or by the physical location of their place of employment. These factors isolate them from people in other occupations, and result in them associating in their leisure time with their workmates—fishermen and miners being typical examples. Another factor is their high level of involvement with their job; they 'talk shop' a lot. This is very much as Lipset put it. The most significant change that Blauner introduces is that these occupational groups become 'little worlds in themselves'. Their status is not measured in terms of the social structure of society as a whole: 'For its members the occupation itself is the reference group; its standards of behaviour, its system of status and rank, guide conduct' (p. 351). His observation, that 'in such worlds one's skill and expertise in doing the actual work becomes an important basis of individual status and prestige', seems to isolate one of the major factors in the lack of conflict imagery in the social perceptions of the East Anglian fishermen. The fishermen, more than most, formed a 'world of their own' at this time, because the majority of the owners and

employers had started their working lives as fishermen. That they were materially successful was due to their industrial expertise, so there was very little difference in the background of 'employers' and 'employees'. This has definite implications for ideas of social distance which will be considered below.

Attention has been drawn to further properties associated with the concept of occupational community by David Lockwood. Occupational communities, Lockwood argues, have been characteristic of 'the most highly developed forms of proletarian traditionalism'.[6] Though Lockwood has subsequently emphasized that the typology which includes proletarian traditionalism should be thought of as constituting 'extreme or limiting cases of working-class milieux',[7] the driftermen fulfil many of the criteria which identify the 'traditional proletarian' worker. To an even greater degree than the more frequently cited miners, their work situation dominated their lives. For up to five months at a time, they were away from their home port, working from Newlyn in Cornwall to Stornaway in the Hebrides, as well as from Irish ports. During these spells, the boat was their only home and the crew their basic social unit; their lives were job-orientated and male-dominated to an exceptional degree. They took pride in 'doing "men's work"' and they had 'a high degree of job involvement and strong attachments to primary work groups that possess a considerable autonomy from technical and supervisory constraints'; equally, their 'shared occupational experiences' go to create a 'distinctive occupational culture'.[8] Crew members were frequently neighbours and sometimes kin. While they were away from home most leisure activity seems to have been shared with other crew members and these associations were continued at home. The majority of the driftermen would be unemployed from the end of December until sometime in May. These alternate periods of complete absence from their home area and long periods of 'leisure' when other members of society were working, impeded any sustained leisure involvement with non-fishermen. Whether or not this leisure can be described as 'gregarious' and 'present-orientated',[9] without qualification, is less certain. Much of it was, but this long period of enforced idleness may have been responsible for generating a sense of prudence in money matters. Heavy social drinking seems to have been confined to the first day or two after settling-up for the season. After this the men seem to have been quite home-orientated.[10] They might 'mooch about' with their mates during the day looking for casual work or simply yarning over a quiet midday drink, but most of them spent their evenings at home. Only in some of the coastal villages was there a focal point for the men where the lifeboat sheds were used as club-houses.

There were ways in which the occupational milieux of the driftermen differ from the proletarian ideal. Lockwood does not actually specify the nature of the workplace of the proletarian, but as this type stands

in contra-distinction to the 'deferential traditionalist' who is typically found in 'small-scale "family enterprises"', one might assume that they were typically to be found in the employ of large-scale companies. At this period drifters were mainly owned by individuals, or by small private companies whose owner was known to the fishermen, and who was frequently a fisherman himself. The implications of this will be explored below. Although the driftermen can mainly be typified by the criteria used to describe the two types of traditionalist worker, they also contained a range of responses which suggest that there is a large measure of motivation at the workplace which is held to be typical of the 'privatised worker'.

The pecuniary motivation appears to have been an important element in the recruitment of boys into the industry. Here is a respondent (3011) who lived at Catford, an inland village near Yarmouth, and was attracted into fishing at the age of fifteen:

Did you like farm work?

> Well—I didn't mind. But 1912 and 1913 was extraordinary good herring fishing. Germany and Russia was buying all the herring that we caught forced the price up. There was plenty in the sea, and the fishing chaps—we had about twenty-nine in our little village, of a population only about two hundred and ninety—and they came home at Christmas with a little bag of golden sovereigns. And the average farming labourer's wage at that time of the day was only about eighteen shillings a week. So of course that made them quite rich. And a young fellow like me, I could see that there was more money to be earned at sea than there was on the land.

In spite of the fact that their work situation was predominantly one of small 'family' concerns, this pecuniary motivation seems to have limited the growth of any longstanding particularistic relationships between masters and men. The driftermen were there for the money, and they would change employers at the end of the season if they felt that they could secure employment on a more successful boat. In actual practise this entailed staying with, or leaving, a particular skipper, as the crucial factor was not who *owned* the boat but who actually *worked* it. It might be a mistake, however, to overstress the pecuniary motive. The close social world of the fishermen rapidly inculcated the new recruit into the common values and intrinsically felt satisfactions and rewards of the occupation. The link between job satisfaction and financial reward is a complex one, for the driftermen were all on a share system, and there is a rudimentary link between successful (i.e. 'good', 'expert') fishermen and high earnings. Hence money could be used as a ready yardstick with which to measure the level of work and expertise of another crew. This extract from a Yarmouth fisherman (3013), who was born in 1893 and went to sea in 1907, is an apt illustration of this

motivation, referring, as he does, sometimes to 'money' and sometimes to 'herring':

> Well among the crew, see they all seemed to be competitive, if you understand what I mean, they wanted to be up the top, in regards to catching and earning the money. Everybody was all out for that before the First World War. We have been running ten nights on the run, right straight off without a rest, ten nights—and landing a hundred cran, eighty cran, all the weights every day. Away again. Shooting.
>
> *So it was real hard work?*
>
> Yes. It was. But—it seemed if—you know, we were all working together aboard the boat, we all wanted the same thing. And that was the money.

This emphasis on pecuniary motivation at the workplace does not predominate in his assessment of class. His main criterion seems to be 'rough/respectable', as he frequently comments that the difference was not income but expenditure, alluding particularly to the amount spent on beer. This mixture of pecuniary industrial motivation with a hierarchical or interactional model of social class is common to the drifter-men and their case supports Lockwood's assertion that: 'The pecuniary model is an outcome of the social rather than economic situation of the privatised worker; and he is only able to hold such a theory of society in so far as this social environment supports such an interpretation'.[11]

For the pecuniary motivation which drew them into the industry did not necessarily uproot them from their community even where that original community was one of the smaller villages. The seasonal nature of the work, and the fact that the workplace was also the place of residence while at work, meant that men returned to their original social setting while still pursuing the largest financial gain. Nevertheless, the industrial experience of the fishermen could lead them into conflict with the local social structure, particularly where they were resident in small villages. This respondent (3005) was born at Happisburgh, Norfolk, in 1889. Son of an agricultural worker, he was an apprentice to a bricklayer until the attraction of high earnings made him a fisherman. He is talking about the level of deference that he had to show in the village:

> You had to call everybody sir, you know. Expected you to call 'em that.
>
> *Was it any different when you went to the fishing?*
>
> Yes. That stopped all that. There were no 'sirs' then. No.

So, although the driftermen are much closer to the deferential than to the proletarian traditionalist in their view of the social structure, their work experience is not 'homological' with the local social structure ashore. The fishermen's hierarchy at work was based on individual achievement, the hierarchy ashore on inheritance and custom. Being a fisherman made him independent of the economic power that underlies the social hierarchy ashore, and he simply ceased to acknowledge it. But as his work experience leads him to see the influential individuals in that sphere as having deserved their success, he does not develop the 'more extensive class loyalties' or the 'dichotomous class image' of the proletarian traditionalist.

PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL CLASS

A few extracts from the interviews will provide some impression of the driftermen's view of social class. This is by a Winterton woman (3025) who started work in a net-chamber in 1907. She was one of eleven siblings, her father was an ex-drifterman who was an inshore fisherman who also hawked fish around the villages. The extract is taken where I am trying to establish the social style of the employers:

> *Did the boat owners in Winterton employ servants?*
>
> No, their income wasn't enough.
>
> *Oh, I thought that they would be quite something as boat owners.*
>
> No, no, see—now, hear me out—the little boats on the beach they didn't have enough coming in to keep themselves, but the drifters what went out at Yarmouth—I don't believe there was one but that got on. My meaning is, he began with nothing and he kept going by going up the ladder as I might say.
>
> *Did the man you worked for have a big house?*
>
> No, their wife kept a little shop next door to us, and he had a daughter lived at home, and mother and daughter done what there was to do, she would have somebody come in to do the washing weekly because there was the shop, and to keep washing and wiping your hands wasn't too nice a job . . .
>
> *So apart from having this weekly washerwoman in they would live much the same as the fishermen?*
>
> Yes, yes. Very little difference. You see well, they had got to get out of debt. And that took a time, if they didn't earn a lot of money . . .

According to the documentary evidence of published lists of fishing vessels, this owner had one vessel in 1904 and by 1912 owned two and was part-owner of another two.[12] Clearly he was prospering very rapidly. But it is obvious that it made very little difference to his

outward circumstances. There was little or nothing to distinguish him and his family from their neighbours. The respondent's family also kept one daughter at home to help with the housework. It is significant that this is not an 'opinion' remembered from the past, but a simple account of who lived next door and an observation as to their way of life. Notice, too, how the respondent carefully separates my loose question on 'ownership' into ownership of inshore 'boats on the beach' and of drifters.

The next extract is from a Lowestoft man (3021), born 1886, son of a fisherman, who was a fisherman himself—but at the time he was still working ashore as a labourer for a fish-curer. In this part of the interview we were talking about how he spent his leisure time, and he has just told me that he and some friends bought an old boat.

How old were you when you bought this boat with your friends?

Er, let me see, I suppose I'd be about sixteen, and one of my pals, his father was a boat-owner. So he was in the know with the boat-owners at Oulton Broad, for that's a big yachting centre you know, and there was this old boat for sale and he bought it for us, he only paid five pounds for it. Of course we had to pay out because we were all three working, the other—the boat-owner's son was working for his father, used to see after the nets in the chamber when they were ashore. And the other boy was an apprentice cooper, he was a Scotsman. And he bought this boat for us, and he paid to have a new mast and, being in with the boat owners and that, he got the sails all patched up for us so we had a nice boat.

What other sports were you interested in, or activities did you get up to?

I don't think that there was any, the white collar lads, you know what served in shops and clerks in offices and banks, perhaps they'd have a tennis club, you see, or a cricket club, see some had a sailing club if they were a little up higher and they could afford it, you know what I mean . . .

But they were a bit too posh for the likes of you?

Oh yes, yes. That's just the same now arn't it, I mean I couldn't go along and mix, or we'll say, boys with their fathers working, ordinary workers go and mix with the business men, shopkeepers' sons and daughters and bank clerks and that sort of thing, there was that difference even then.

It is worth making several points about this extract. First, he is recounting a concrete event to do with leisure; he is not expressing mere opinion about the class divisions, and he obviously finds nothing worthy of comment in his friendship with a boat-owner's son. At the same time he states that his class couldn't mix with business people, so he is

unconsciously disassociating boat-owners from business people. It is clear that he also sees the 'white-collar' as a distinct and superior group. His lack of class perception in the fishing industry is clearly not due to his failure to perceive class divisions. However, later in the interview, it becomes apparent that he felt that the divisions he mentioned were not of great social importance. His opinion in response to a direct question on class is congruent with his earlier experience of social mixing:

What about boat-owners, what sort of class were they?

Well, they would at least talk to the cook as the skipper. Except when that began to get companies. And then they were these here white collar blokes, they got a little more up there, they sort of wheedled themselves into companies and big offices ashore. . . .

On another meeting, a fortnight later, I put the same question to him after I had been pressing him on the fact that economic difference must have made some differences:

Well I suppose that they were really middle-class. The original boat-owners . . .

But you feel that they were very working class . . .?

In their habits, yes. There was one, two or three of them that had their own horse and carts and they used to have a man—in fact Old Charlie Day—he used to come down in his own horse and cart and take the nets up that you'd rent and bring you new ones down. And just the same at Kessingland, there was a lot of Kessingland owners you know. They used to have their own horse and carts and bring their nets down and take them back to be mended and tanned. Oh yes, they would come and talk just the way me and you are talking. There was no 'uppity' about them.

His attitude remained consistent. He did rather reluctantly place the owners into the middle-class, but this did not alter his view that they were just the same as himself. His impression of the Kessingland owners is confirmed by the account of a Kessingland fisherman (3014) born in the village and a lifelong resident. He is quite clear as to their wealth but does not see this in class terms in spite of my prompting.

I was trying to get a picture of the community, were there any rich?

Well the boat-owners were the ones. They were the rich people.

What sort of class would you call them. Upper-class or middle-class?

Oh no. They were all right, they weren't uppish or ought like that, they were just—they were just people. If you were going to Lowestoft and they used to go to Lowestoft in a horse and cart, or horse and trap, and if you were a-going they would pick you up and give you a lift home . . . They mixed with you. And if any on them what were in really serious trouble they would help them.

He goes on to talk about the village and claims that the owners were not a separate social group. One cannot help but notice both how 'open' these fishing villages seem to have been in their social relationships and the degree of 'individualistic egalitarianism' when compared with the amount of deference shown to traditional authority amongst non-fishermen.

The interviews are consistent in their general impression of the class structure. The fishermen, owners and crew, shared a sense of identity that was largely 'classless' and yet they were aware of a hierarchy in the wider society. There is also a contradiction inherent in the evidence they present on the 'classlessness' of the fishermen and their perception of some of the owners as rich even if they are reluctant to see this in class terms.

These views cannot be dismissed as mere obtuseness, for in spite of the apparent contradictions, they appear to be a consistent account of the fishermen's social reality. This being so one is obliged to conclude that a single stratified model is not necessarily the appropriate one of modelling the perceived reality of the fishermen's class structure. Certainly one gets nearer to their view of society by using parallel but self-contained scales.

Figure One is an attempt to schematize the fishermen's view of society. When questioned about class in the wider society, they tend to produce a conventional social hierarchy. This is the right-hand column of Figure One. It is difficult to reduce their individual terminology to a unified description but most of them saw three classes, with a definite division between 'white-collar' and 'manual' marking the limits of the working class, and then another more variable division between the middle class and variously expressed 'high-ups' marking the beginning of the upper class. But this social system is not seen as very important to them. Fishermen saw themselves as a group with a separate identity from the rest of society, and *class* was not a salient factor in their group-consciousness. Fishermen are indicated by the circle on the left. The lines of occupational function are not horizontal because most fishermen—owners, skippers, and crew—did not see themselves in stratified terms. Most of them place this unified group of fishermen into the top of the manual working class when asked to compare their situation with work ashore. A minority do nevertheless admit when pressed that 'a chance skipper or two might think he was a bit better' and most will put owners into the middle-class on the basis of their wealth, while insisting that they 'were no different'. This phrase indicates a lack of social distance. A few of the crew are prepared to see fishermen as being 'poor' and at the bottom of the working class. This placement seems to be made on the basis of personal experience; skippers and owners are more prepared to see fishermen as middle class, while the few fishermen who seem to have been very poor place the fishermen at the bottom of the working class. The broken horizontal line

indicates that these perceptions are in fact stratified according to occupational role—although the respondents do not necessarily perceive a 'social' distinction between themselves and other fishermen. And wherever a fishermen places himself, or the bulk of fishermen in terms of society ashore, there is still the unresolved conflict between their concept of the fishermen as being virtually classless and placing them at any point in a hierarchical system which must do violence to the class position of either the owner or the fishermen. This conflict could be partly resolved by separating the concepts of 'class' and 'status'. Thus fishermen recognize, when pressed, that on class (i.e. economic) criteria, the owners were in a stratum above them; this criterion also is a factor in their assessment of the wider society. It is not, however, a salient factor in their assessment. Within the occupational community, which in this case includes owners, interactional status is the most important factor. An owner, however rich, who still drove a cart to the quay, or who still worked manually in his net chamber, was still seen as a manual worker. He still wore his jersey and fishermen's shirt, so 'status' lines were blurred. He would still be mixing and working with men who knew him as a skipper, or even as a fisherman; his status would depend as much on his personality as his class position.

Normally, the most visible distinction between classes are the result of differences in social behaviour and cultural norms. But in this prosperous and expanding community, the 'middle-class influentials' had shared the same work and social experience as the rest of the community. There had not been time for differences in material wealth to emerge as cultural distinctions. This can be illustrated from the childhood of one of my respondents (3030) who was born in Lowestoft in 1898 and was the youngest of 11 siblings. Her mother had been a domestic servant before marriage. Her father had been a fisherman, skipper, part-owner and then independent owner. According to the documentary evidence he owned two steam and two sailing drifters in 1904. By 1912 he owned four steam drifters. Her parents had been 'poor' when they first married, but, from the time my respondent could recall, they were quite wealthy. Her father was a patron of the local church, a Tory councillor; her mother opened bazaars and 'entertained ladies most afternoons'. In spite of this, and of living in a substantial five-bedroomed house, they had not even one domestic servant. This must be virtually unprecedented in any other business home of this standing before 1914. The house had the net-chamber built in the yard round the house and such domestic help as was used was taken from the business employees.

Did your mother have servants in the home?

We had Totty, but she used to work in the beating store and then she used to come in and help. And then we had Annie sometimes come

and help when my mother's spring cleaning. And my eldest sister was at home.

Was the washing done at home?

Oh yes. Well, my mother used to send some to the Lowestoft Steam Laundry, send the sheets and—you know, big white table cloths and serviettes, we had our own serviettes and they went to the laundry, but the towels and things like that, there was the old-fashioned wooden mangle and she used to have the man from the net-store come and turn the mangle.

Throughout this interview one is aware of a strange mixture of affluence and local importance with a working class cultural pattern. Her father continued to work daily in his own net-chamber dressed like his workers. Given the large element of working class culture in an employer's home, it is not surprising that their material advantages did not create the social gulf that it could have done. This owner sold up his business in 1920. Having severed his links with the fishing industry, he then retired to a 'posh' part of the town, and employed a living-in housemaid. Evidence on this aspect can also be taken from another respondent (3032), a fisherman's wife, who used to do daily domestic work. She had three boat-owners amongst her employers. I have traced one of the owners she mentioned, and he is listed as joint-owner of three boats in 1904 some four years before my respondent worked for him. She says that he employed no other servant apart from her and she went to his home only two mornings a week, which suggests that the lack of domestic style reported in the previous extract was not unique to that family.

It is clear from the interviews that there is another stratum of businessmen above even the most successful of the self-made fishermen owners. Among these are the fish salesmen who were mainly responsible for providing the financial backing to those skippers who wanted to buy their own boat. Apart from the normal interest gained from such a loan the salesman would then handle that skipper's sales and business ashore. They would send representatives to sell the catch in all the various ports around the British Isles where the herring drifters worked, and were keen to attract as many accounts as they possibly could. Unfortunately, none of my respondents comes from this group, but business profiles from 1912 and 1913 are indicative of the more successful of these men.[13]

Jack Salmon was the son of a local fishing-vessel owner, who after working for his father started on his own as a fish-salesman. He took over his father's business when his father retired, and he was also a director of the Crown Steam Drifters Associated Ltd which had five vessels in 1912, a director of the Great Yarmouth Steam Drifters Ltd which had seven vessels, a director of Great Yarmouth Smithies Ltd

(ship smiths) and a director of the New Brittania Pier Company. Apart from these direct business interests, he was involved in an executive capacity in a number of national and local associations connected with the industry, such as the National Herring Fisheries Association. He was also a Tory councillor. Another well-known local man and one who is invariably named as a source of finance for the fishermen, was Norford Suffling. According to his obituary he was a self-made man.

> Starting in a very humble way, Mr Suffling, who has now been engaged in the fishing industry for many years, built up an immense business, and as a herring exporter and salt merchant he was exceedingly well known.

He also was a councillor and an alderman and a J.P. and was very active in civil affairs and local charities. In contrast to these local men, there was R. C. Westmacott who came from Hull in 1900 as manager for Smith's Dock Trust Company when they started drifting operations in Yarmouth. In 1903 he left them and started his own company with six drifters, which grew to 14 by 1913; he was also chairman of Norford Suffling (Fish Salesmen) Ltd and a director of the North Sea Coaling Company. He was also involved in the various associations connected with the industry as well as local civic and charitable organizations. It is noticeable that this businessman from 'outside' was the one most actively involved in extra-business activities and when he was elected Mayor of Yarmouth in 1912 he was the first 'for over a hundred years . . . directly interested in the great industry'.

These profiles suggest that there was more business integration than the interviews would lead one to expect, for these men are usually mentioned in a familiar way by the fishermen. This respondent (3008) has just told me he worked for one of the best firms in Yarmouth:

Yes, yes. Westmacott, yes, he was a nice man.

I thought it was a company with shareholders?

No, they weren't, no, he was one of his own.

Naturally one does not necessarily accept the truth of his testimony on the lack of shareholders, but the fact that he views his employment in a company in such personal terms is the important issue. Most other companies too are mentioned by other respondents in terms of an individual owner. The respondent above also mentions the salesmen as a source of finance:

Suffling, he was a fish salesman. He'd lend you so much money to take a boat over, and then you had got to pay him back.

Was there anyone else (who would lend money)?

Not hardly, he was about the biggest, you couldn't go to Harbin or

one of the others, they wouldn't do it. He used to be a big fish salesman. Lovely man he was. Nice man, yes. Very good.

Once again it is immaterial for our purpose whether there were in fact other sources of finance (and there were),[14] but the fact is that the source which inevitably receives mention in all the relevant interviews is recalled as a 'nice man', although from the career of Mr Westmacott given above 'Suffling' was not simply a family firm but a company whose chairman had considerable links with other large sections of the fishing and ancilliary industries.

Another interview (3004) provides an opinion on the Salmon family —'Fred' was the father of the man in the business profile.

Fred Salmon, they were fairly wealthy, they were a self-made family but they'd got a nice lot of money and they soon accumulated more and they took a few other people in with them. Fred Salmon he was a big fish salesman, he'd made up the fleet himself and helped other people. As did Norford Suffling you see.

It is clear that this higher stratum of businessmen is recalled in a favourable light. This in itself is significant for they loaned money to the fishermen, and it is not often that money lenders are popularly remembered as 'helping other people' as are these men. One can only speculate as to why the respondents did not distinguish these large-scale businessmen from the smaller owners. It might be that the number of fishermen who did become owners 'legitimized' the position of men like Westmacott who came in at the top and were not 'fishermen'. His business position was also very close to that of the second-generation Salmon who progressed from boat-owner's son to large-scale businessman. And even the position of salesman kept these men 'visible'—Salmon still auctioned fish on the quayside when he held all his directorships—and the 'boss' was not concealed behind a large hierarchy of office workers. So whatever the degree of business integration, or the level of profit extracted by the businessmen in their role of middlemen, they remained known individuals and the gulf between them and the men was filled by numerous small-owners. The amount of business integration[15] requires further research but there are indications which suggest that control of the industry by a few men or companies never progressed very far and that it was always less prevalent in Lowestoft than in Yarmouth. In 1912 52 per cent of the Lowestoft fleet was in the hands of owners of one or two vessels, in Yarmouth it was only 32 per cent. Even so, 54 per cent of the Yarmouth fleet was owned by private (as opposed to company) owners so, in both ports, private ownership remained predominant.[16]

Apart from the opportunities for social mobility, there are two further aspects of the industry which were relevant to the fisherman's social imagery and sense of community. These were the system of remuneration, and the absence of conflict points at work. We will consider the latter first. One of the main areas of friction between employers and employees was over control of the work in all its aspects: intensity of work, conditions at the work place, wages, preservation of skills and demarcation lines. Most of these factors were either in the hands of the crew, dictated by the logic of the techniques, or in any case changing to the benefit of both parties. Fishermen took a share of the product, not a wage. They did not, therefore, object to the introduction of modern vessels and longer nets, the 'traditional' share ensured that they benefited from their introduction. The modernization from sail to steam meant a move from a hard and uncomfortable life on a sailing lugger to the increased comfort and rewards of the steam drifters. The more capital the owner put in, the more a fisherman could earn. The owner, unless he was sailing as skipper himself, left the recruitment of the crew in the hands of the skipper. Crews functioned as a single earning unit and group pressure excluded the lazy or inefficient. They were away from home and the main attraction was money. As they were paid entirely by results, there was no room for individual 'shirkers' or collective 'go-slow' or for any similar 'anti-employer' moves to develop. The occupational values of the fishermen could not even be simply industrial or economic. Living for months at a time in cramped quarters placed a premium on social integration. This was particularly so given the potential tensions in a drifter, where week after week of fishing may have earned the men no money whatsoever, and a successful season may have been achieved in a few days incredibly hard and sustained labour. This called for a temperament which accepted weeks of effort without reward, had a certain fatalistic acceptance of the 'luck of the game' and placed a premium on the social values of good humour, and so on—in fact all the aspects of personality which can stand disappointment and avoid conflict. In this sense the driftermen may have been a self-selecting group which excluded the industrially discontented—that is the potential industrial activists—because, socially, they were 'moaners' and disruptive of the crew as a social entity.

The main potential point of conflict did not arrive until the end of the season. This was over the details of the accounts for expenditure on food, harbour dues, etc., which were deducted before the gross take was shared. There is less unanimity in the testimony as to the conflict generated at this point. Some claim that the owners inflated the expenses and that they dared not complain out of fear of being blacklisted; others say that the owners were honest. Whatever the situation, and it may well have been very particularistic, the relief and excitement of paying-off after a long season was not conducive to sustained animosity or organised protest. This can be contrasted quite sharply with the industrial condition of other work groups, for example the miners. Here there were constant points of conflict over payment for places of special difficulty, the amount of waste in the coal, etc., issues

which placed the miners in daily opposition with the owners; 'they' were always trying to cut back what they paid.

It is extremely difficult to make general statements about the average level of reward for crew or owners. The detailed economic research has not been done. But I would re-emphasize the point that the crew received no wages, nor a modified form of wage-earning involving profit-sharing or bonus payments. All crew members were 'co-venturers'. The net produce was shared on an agreed and 'traditional' basis of nine shares to the boat and nets and six shares to the crew. The share system did vary slightly at different periods but at this time the skipper would typically get one and three-quarter shares, a crew man seven-eights of a share, and the cook boy a half-share. This is a simplification: there were five rates amongst the crew of ten, a system hardly designed to promote 'class' solidarity, although it might be observed here that there is no sign of the tension within the crew, particularly between the deckmen and engineers, found by Duncan[17] and by Tunstall[18] to exist aboard a modern trawler. On the drifters there were only two of the crew of ten in the engine-room, the 'driver' and the fireman. Unlike those in the trawler industry, these men did not have engineering experience. Of the three respondents who were 'drivers' (the senior man in the engine-room), two had worked as deckhands first, one for a considerable number of years. One skipper (3049) went from deck to stoker back to deck again and said that this was not unusual.

There was, too, a much smaller differential on the drifters than there was in the trawler industry. A skipper earned about twice as much as his crew, whereas on the modern trawler the average appears to be five times as much and up to ten times as much in individual cases. This sort of gap was not possible on the drifters. The more the vessel earned the more every member of the crew earned because there was a fixed ratio for every crew member.

A respondent (3028) who was on one of the early steam drifters for the Home season of 1901 was paid off with £90 as a three-quarter shareman. At about £9 a week it is an absolutely incredible wage, but earnings of this level can be substantiated by reference to the earnings of vessels in the Fishing Journals: these sources also substantiate the oral evidence that men sometimes worked all season—in some cases all year—and 'settled-up' with literally nothing, the vessel not having covered working expenses. So wild fluctuation in fortunes were the expectation of all.

In a situation such as this there is no clearly perceivable stratification system of earnings. The top earners would receive up to £100 per 'share'. Thus the cook boy of such a boat would earn more than the skipper of the less successful vessels, and the sharemen would equal the earnings of the middle range of skippers. This confusion of reward across class and prestige positions was bound to emphasize the importance of the individual. Fishermen were all the same in that they might have a good voyage or a bad one. It was better to be a crewman of a lucky vessel than the skipper or owner of an unlucky vessel. Those who had become owners were almost by definition good or lucky fishermen. Skippers and owners were not seen as *them* as opposed to *us* but as individuals, good or bad according to their traits. Also the value system of the ordinary fishermen legitimized the aim of ownership in a way which is rare in manual trades. Usually the manual worker who becomes an employer is under pressure to abandon his earlier commitment to the 'craft' values, as in the situation described by Tressell[19] where the master builder was forever urging, indeed compelling, his workmen to produce inferior work in order that a job might be completed more quickly and profitably. In drifting, this conflict was missing as owners and the crew shared the common aim of maximizing their output.

In the foregoing, I have argued that the fishermen's lack of class consciousness was related to their industrial conditions. It is not my intention to speculate in any detail beyond the period specified, but it is worth noting that there are comments in the interviews which suggest that the marked prosperity of the pre-1914 period was followed by a change of social perceptions.

You don't think that there was much difference between the fishermen and the owners of Lowestoft then?

Well, no. Not the old ones. But as the sons come along they seemed to have a more—more poshy way about them, if you know what I mean. But the fathers, now you take the Mrs she knew Old Coventry Capps, she knew all the other Capps, she knew practically all the owners and they used to say good morning to her or that, when she went in the office to get the pay—but you get the sons, they get a bit posh, that's my opinion of it. But the old men, they were proper old tops, but rough, rough, rough. But they brought their children up, and a lot of them only brought up in a little old cottage on the Beach.

So they didn't live in big houses?

Oh, no, no. I can remember Capps living in a house called Wilde House, that was the bottom of Wilde Score, on the Beach. And then they shifted up to Worthing Road, a bigger house, called 'Vigilant House', and that's where he died. But I knew 'em when they all started and they were all brought up on Old North Beach. (int. s 14)

The 'Beach' was the oldest part of Lowestoft where many of the fishermen lived. Many respondents report that there was some residential separation along status lines occurring just prior to 1914.

This was the area where most of the fishermen lived was it?

Yes. Well then of course they built houses right up Worthing Road and—that was when the herring industry was a little more prosperous—and all the known skippers went to there, 'cos they called

that the Skippers' Row. Yes. Worthing Road they called Skippers' Row. (int. 3006)

Clearly after the initial period of capital accumulation within a family, there was an opportunity for this wealth to start the process of separating members of the fishing community into economically defined locations. Comments from some of the younger respondents who spent most of their fishing experience in the post-war period also suggest that further research into the inter-war years would show that there was some sharpening of class perceptions in the 1920s and 1930s.[20] This was a period of decline for the industry and the combined drifter fleet of the two ports diminished from 570 in 1912 to 386 in 1931 (it had expanded from 289 in 1898 as well as changing from sail to steam). This post-war decline must have made it more difficult for ambitious fishermen to progress to ownership. It would be wrong, however, to over-emphasize the extent to which the later period is distinct from the first. The basic structure of the industry remained unchanged and with it the social and industrial imagery of an occupational community. In other words, although research into the later historical period might reveal a difference of emphasis, the fundamental sense of common identity remain.

CONCLUSION

The occupational community of the driftermen fits most easily into the descriptive framework of Blauner. His development of the notion of the occupational group being its own reference group with its work skills providing the major basis of status and prestige gives a valuable insight into the social perceptions of the driftermen. It can account for their perception of the wider social structure as a hierarchy while not applying this structure to their own occupation. The moral density of the fishermen's world was such that the hierarchical structure of the rest of the society meant little to them. As one fisherman said, in response to a question on white collar workers, 'they looked down on us—but we looked down on them'. (int. 3017). It can be too readily assumed that citizens of a common political unity live in one society which needs consensus in order to survive and that the existence of a class or status hierarchy should lead to conflict. Class consciousness as a radical social force will not manifest itself unless 'they' are perceived as being in some way responsible for, and capable of changing, unpleasant aspects in the condition of 'us'. The fishermen's images of social class showed that they had little or no perception of an *oppositional* 'them'. Their work milieux made them independent of the power of rural and small town 'traditional' social hierarchy without placing them into conflict with their employers. Moore[21] notes that:

> Market interest is usually equated with class interest, but I am suggesting that the worker may be conscious of his interests in an economic situation which he believes includes not only his fellow workers but his employers and supervisors also.

As 'co-venturers' with the owner, this belief would be particularly appropriate to the driftermen. Their failure to fit neatly into Lockwood's typification is explicable in terms of their atypical industrial conditions. Indeed, it might be argued that as 'co-venturers' they were not proletariat in terms of Lockwood's distinction—or by any other. But the fact that this particular historical community has proved to contain aspects of both types of 'traditional worker' as well as a fairly strong pecuniary motivation should not be taken as implying any rejection of the use of ideal types: these are invaluable unifying concepts for the study of diverse groups. What is needed is more investigation into the images and experience of diverse 'traditional' workers in order to provide more information from which can be developed more precise models of working-class communities.

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Notes

1. See Jeremy Tunstall, *The Fisherman*, 1962.

2. *Oral History* is the journal of the Oral History Society and is published by the Sociology Department, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester. See in particular No. 4, 'Problems of *Method in Oral History*' by Paul Thompson. Also in particular No. 4, 'The Miners: The Relevance of Oral Evidence' by Christopher Storm-Clark.

3. As part of the Social Science Research Council financed project, 'The Family and Community Life of the East Anglian Fishermen', directed by Dr Paul Thompson. Extracts from interviews in this article are identified by their project number.

4. Published lists of fishing vessels giving the names and addresses of the owner e.g. *East Norfolk Annual*, 1868, and *Flood's List of Fishing Vessels* at Yarmouth and Lowestoft, 1931.

5. R. Blauner, 'Work Satisfaction and Industrial Trends in Modern Society' in W. Galenson & S. M. Lipset (eds), *Labour and Trade Unionism*, 1960.

6. See D. Lockwood, 'Sources of Variation in Working-Class Images of Society' in M. Bulmer (ed.), *Working-Class Images of Society*, p. 17.

7. D. Lockwood, 'In search of the Traditional Worker' in Bulmer, op. cit., p. 239.

8. Lockwood, 'Sources of Variation...' in Bulmer, op. cit., p. 17.

9. Ibid.

10. This contrasts sharply with Tunstall's findings on the family life of the Hull trawlermen. This strong home-orientation was shared by the crews of the sailing trawlers of Lowestoft and Yarmouth who had a regular work-pattern, so there are other factors affecting family relationships.

11. Op. cit., p. 26.

12. This and other data on ownership have been calculated from the lists of fishing vessels detailed in Note 6.

13. Taken from *The Fishing News*,

7 November 1913 and 17 October 1913; also from *The Yarmouth Weekly Standard*, 8 March 1912.

14. Details of all vessels under mortgage were kept by the Customs and Excise at each registration port. Banks, ship-builders, relatives and other owners all show up as sources of finance, but popular memory is correct in identifying fish salesmen as the main one. They also indicate that mortgages were usually repaid within a few years. My resources did not allow for a systematic analysis of this data and my observations are based on looking at a few sample registers. My thanks are due to the Archivist of H. M. Customs and Excise for permission to consult the shipping registers held at the East Anglian ports.

15. For an example of business integration in the fishing industry and its effect on the crew's earnings, see R. K. Kelsall, *et al.*, 'The White Fish Industry' in M. P. Fogarty (ed.) *Further Studies in Industrial Organisation*, 1948.

16. For an analysis of the reasons for the continued dominance of small fishermen owners in the extremely capital intensive contemporary Norwegian herring fishery which has many factors relevant to the East Anglian predominance of small-owners, see Cato Wadel, 'Capitalization and Ownership: The persistence of Fishermen-Ownership in the Norwegian Herring Fishery' in Raoul Anderson & Cato Wadel (eds.), *North Atlantic Fishermen*, Canada, 1972.

17. P. Duncan, 'Conflict and Co-operation among Trawlermen', *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol. I, no. 3 (1963).

18. For a study which challenges Tunstall's typification of the Hull trawlermen, see P. J. Edwards, 'The Nature of Industrial Conflict in the Trawling Industries of Hull and Grimsby 1900–1938', unpublished M.A. Dissertation, Department of Sociology, University of Essex.

19. Robert Tressell, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, 1914 and 1965.

20. R. S. Moore, 'Religion as a source of Variation in Working-Class Images of Society' in *Working Class Images of Society*, for a similar example of the sharpening of class conflict in a mining community during the twentieth century.

21. Op. cit.