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A Sense of Belonging:

Religion and Identity in Yorkshire and Humber Fishing Communities, c.1815-1914.

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Abstract

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This thesis is concerned with the relationship between religion and identity in fishing communities with special emphasis being given to the three communities of Scarborough and Filey on the Yorkshire coast, and Grimsby on the Lincolnshire side of the Humber coast. The study examines the development of these communities, provides a brief overview of their development and outlines the nature of the relationships within these communities between institutionalised and popular religion. The thesis is also concerned to demonstrate that religion acts as an important narrative in a complex matrix of meaning that has had a significant influence on the construction and maintenance of identity in fishing communities. Chapters four to seven therefore explore religion as a range of discourses or narratives that provide us with a way of viewing this matrix of meaning. Chapters five and six in particular offer a contribution to the debate about the role of religion in society.

Further analysis of religion (in both its institutionalised and popular forms) acknowledges the close link to social change, and Chapter seven explores some of the implications here by making use of Durkheim's concept of mechanical and organic solidarities to demonstrate the nature of the changes that took place during the nineteenth century. Chapters four, six and seven also examine the role of ritual and performance, both of which have been shown to play an important part in the daily

lives of community members, not least in helping to provide and reinforce a sense of security and stability.

While the study is mainly concerned with the period c.1815 - 1914 more recent material has also been drawn upon from an oral history study, which has concentrated on interviewing women in these communities. This extra dimension provides the opportunity to demonstrate that similar attitudes, beliefs and practices have continued to influence the communities up to the present day.

The thesis has made use of a wide range of primary and secondary sources, and the comparative study, especially of the three mentioned fishing communities, provides a basis for comparison and contrast of such communities in future research.

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And finally a grateful thank-you to York St John University for the financial support provided, which enabled me to undertake work towards this thesis.

List of Tables

Abbreviations

BFBS	British and Foreign Bible Society
BPP	British Parliamentary Papers
CELAM	Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano (Latin American Episcopal Conference, that is, This was the conference of Latin American Roman Catholic bishops). CELAM organised the 1968 Conference at Medelin, Columbia, which officially supported the concept of 'base ecclesiastic communities'.
CTS	Catholic Truth Society
FVOA	Fishing Vessel Owners Association
GFWA	Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Association
IASMM	International Association for the Study of Maritime Mission
MS & LR	Manchester and Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway
PM	Primitive Methodist
PMM	Primitive Methodist Magazine
RNMDSF (MDSF)	Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen
SAWCM	St Andrew's Waterside Church Mission
TCM	Thames Church Mission
WM	Wesleyan Methodist
SPCK	Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge

Appendices

Ch 1: Introduction

This thesis is concerned with the relationship between religion and identity in fishing communities, with special attention being given to the three communities of Filey, Scarborough and Grimsby during the period c.1815-1914. The nineteenth century was a significant era which saw the rise, development and the eventual indications of decline of the North Sea fishing industry, and while the mid-twentieth century saw a period of rapid but short-term development in the fishing industry, restrictions on fishing during the two preceding periods of world war had no doubt helped to preserve and increase fish-stocks in the North Sea.

Scholars have long argued for the close relationship between religion and identity, including especially Emile Durkheim, for whom God and society were effectively one and the same, and who believed that a major function of religion was to reinforce social solidarity and community spirit.[1] A consequence of this view is that religion helps individuals and groups as they progress through life's difficulties and has an impact on major life events such as Rites of Passage. Religion may therefore be seen as having had a profound effect on the way people interpreted their experiences. This close link has not gone un-noticed by modern scholars including John Wolffe who has pointed out that between 1800 and 1940 the link between religion and identity was particularly strong,[2] and Callum Brown who also implied a strong historical link when he controversially argued for a sharp break from Christian culture and society in Britain during the early 1960s, focussing especially on events during 1963.[3] However, while account has been taken in the present discussion of the nature of *institutionalised* religion, especially in the three communities examined in Chapter four, the

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[1] Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (Oxford, Oxford UP, 1912/2001), p. xx.
[2] John Wolffe, *God and Greater Britain: Religion and National Life in Britain and Ireland 1843-1945* (London, Routledge, 1994), pp. 160-261.
[3] Callum Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain* (London, Routledge, 2001).

major part of the investigation concerns the nature of *popular* religion, which is examined more fully in Chapter six.

The present state of knowledge about the research here is discussed in more detail in the literature review in Chapter two although the following is a brief overview. The nature of religion has been dealt with at length by a wide range of scholars, from the 1851 Census of Religion by Horace Mann, via Thomas Wright's questioning of Mann's emphasis on institutionalised religion, to the work of the orthodox historians, such as E. R. Wickham and K. S. Inglis, who argued that with the move from rural to urban settings the working classes became alienated from the churches, a situation to which the churches responded with church-building programmes and active and aggressive missions. Wickham's argument, which drew heavily on the increase in church and chapel building, proposed that Sheffield experienced a religious boon during the second half of the nineteenth century. This situation, however, is reflected in the extensive church-building activity after 1860 in Scarborough and Grimsby. The evidence here suggests support for Wickham's thesis over and against Gilbert's argument for a decline especially in Nonconformity following 1840.[4] This 'orthodox' approach was challenged by revisionists such as Jeffrey Cox and Mark Smith during the latter years of the twentieth century, and Callum Brown's questioning of some traditional approaches to the nature of secularisation.[5] The orthodox views were gradually replaced with a more radical methodology and scholars have shown an increasing interest in the nature of popular religion although many scholars have continued to maintain a dualistic

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[4] H. Mann, 'Census of Great Britain, 1851: Religious Worship, England and Wales. Report and Tables. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty' (London, HMSO, 1853); Thomas Wright, 'The Working Classes and the Church' in *The Great Unwashed* (London, Tinsley Bros, 1868); E. R. Wickham, *Church and People in an Industrial City* (London, Lutterworth Press, 1957), esp. pp. 130-137; K. S. Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England* (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963). A. D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change 1740-1914* (London, Longman, 1976), pp. 112-113, 145-148, and 186-187.

[5] Jeffrey Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society: Lambeth 1870-1930* (Oxford, OUP, 1982); M. Smith, *Religion in Industrial Society: Oldham and Saddleworth, 1740-1853* (London, Clarendon Press, 1994); J. Obelkevich , *Religion and Rural Society in South Lindsey, 1825-1875* (Oxford, OUP, 1976); Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain*.

distinction between these perspectives. Sarah Williams is an important exception to this view in that her research in the London Borough of Southwark provided a radical reinterpretation of the influence of popular religion on the local population, hence, the discussion in Chapter six (and briefly in Chapter two) includes an examination of her findings and influence.[6] At the same time as the revisionist debate was developing during the later years of the twentieth century, a number of studies explored the nature and impact of institutionalised religion. Gilbert examined the relationship between religion and social change; Currie, Gilbert and Horsley analysed patterns of church growth; Snell and Ell explored the geography of Victorian religion and McLeod examined the nature of working class religion in Britain.[7]

In contrast to the work on urban communities, by Wickham in Sheffield, Cox in Lambeth and Smith in Oldham and Saddleworth, there has been relatively little equivalent study of the rural situation, although the work of Obelkevich and Ambler have provided some helpful material on rural Lincolnshire, and John Rule explored the nature of 'Methodism, Popular Belief and Village Culture in Cornwall'.[8] Obelkevich's work has been especially important in that it has had a wide influence on scholarship since the 1970s.

Fishing towns and villages present us with an overlap between urban and rural communities but while there has been a fair amount of research here very little has dealt in any depth with the relevance of popular religion - with the significant exception of David

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[6] Sarah C. Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture in Southwark c.1880-1939*, (Oxford, OUP, 1999).
[7] Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England*; R. Currie, A. Gilbert, & L. Horsley, *Churches and Churchgoers – Patterns of Church Growth in the British Isles since 1700* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1977); K. D. M. Snell, & P. S. Ell, 2000, *Rival Jerusalems: The Geography of Victorian Religion* (Cambridge, CUP, 2000); Hugh McLeod, *Religion and the Working Classes in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London, Macmillan, 1984), and *Religion and Society in England, 1850-1914* (London, MacMillan, 1996).
[8] Wickham, *Church and People*; Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society*; Smith, *Religion in Industrial Society*; Obelkevich , *Religion and Rural Society*; R. W. Ambler, 'Social Change and Religious Experience: Aspects of rural society in south Lincolnshire with specific reference to Primitive Methodism 1815-1875' (unpublished PhD thesis, The University of Hull, October, 1984); J. Rule, 'Methodism, Popular Belief and Village Culture in Cornwall', in R. D. Storch, ed., *Popular Culture and Custom in Nineteenth-Century England* (London, Croom Helm 1982..

Clark's work in Staithes (Clark preferred the use of the term 'folk religion').[9] Other

researchers have noted the role of religion generally, including Thompson and Lummis in

East Anglia and Scotland, Wailey in Lancashire, Chalmers and Nadel in Scotland and Cohen

on Whalsey.[10] These scholars have also noted the importance of the role of women in fishing

communities, an aspect of life that is important for our understanding of the relationship

between religion and identity.

Despite these developments much of the research on communities prior to the 1980s

suffered from a lack of coherence over the nature of concepts like 'community', and

subsequent discussion sought to clarify the issues. The debate led to important changes in

perspective and by the 1980s researchers adopted an environmental approach in their work,

which concentrated on concerns about cultural values and physical resources. This approach

also took the issue of the women's roles more seriously, hence a spate of theses, articles and

books took up the challenge although once again the bulk of the research took place outside

England.

While the scholars mentioned above referred to the role of religion in fishing

communities, some of the wider studies on religion and society have an important role to play

in helping us to understand the nature of the former. This is especially the case with

revivalism and the role of Primitive Methodism, both of which were especially evident in the

community of Filey, and to a lesser extent in Scarborough and Grimsby; while Anglo-

Catholicism had an important presence in Grimsby. Even so, there were significant

differences among these communities and the thesis explores some of the similarities and

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[9] D. Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew: folk religion in a North Yorkshire fishing community* (Cambridge, CUP, 1982).
[10] P. Thompson, T. Wailey, & T. Lummis, *Living the Fishing* (London , Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983); T. Lummis, *Occupation and Society: The East Anglian Fishermen 1880-1914* (Cambridge, CUP, 1985); D. E. M. Chalmers, 'Fishermen's Wives: the social roles of women in a Scottish community' (unpublished PhD thesis, Queen's University, Belfast, 1988); J. H. Nadel, 'Burning with the Fire of God: Calvinism and Community in a Scottish Fishing Village', *Ethnology*, 25,1, (1986), pp. 49-60; A. P. Cohen, *Whalsey, Symbol, Segment and Boundary in a Shetland Island Community* (Manchester, MUP, 1987).

differences.   Chapter two also offers a brief overview of the work and development of *maritime missions*, an important nineteenth century innovation that embraced both institutionalised and popular religion, but which few historians have explored, and while this may, in the past, have been the result of a lack of published scholarly material there is now a growing interest in this area and some of the main publications have been referred to.

In order to achieve the aim of demonstrating the importance of the role of religion in the formation and development of identity in fishing communities Chapter four will examine the nature of institutionalised religion in Filey, Scarborough and Grimsby. Chapters five and six then investigate the roles of revivalism and popular religion, and Chapter seven draws on the foregoing to examine the nature of identity and its links with religion and change in fishing communities.

We are also concerned with a number of objectives. First, it is argued that religion, especially popular religion, represents an important narrative in a complex matrix of meaning that has had a significant influence on the construction and development of identity in fishing communities. Chapters four to seven explore religion as a range of discourses or narratives that provide us with a way of viewing the matrix of meaning as shown via the 'inter-related character of different patterns of belief',[11] and which together provide a rich insight into the nature of identity. As such, Chapters five and six offer a contribution to the debate about the role of religion in the daily lives of working people, and add support to the criticisms of Mann's view that the nineteenth century working classes tended to be 'unconscious secularists'.[12] Second, religion (in both its institutionalised and popular forms) is seen to be an important factor in social change although it is argued in Chapter seven that it is not merely the religious perspectives on offer that generate the change here. The nature of this change is embedded in the third objective, demonstrated in Chapters five and seven, which

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[11] Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*, p. 13.
[12] 'H. Mann on the Religious Census, 1853' in James R. Moore, *Religion in Victorian Britain,* Vol. III: Sources, (Manchester, Manchester UP, 1988), p. 316.

further explore how change takes place and shows that it is determined to a great extent by the nature of the community, including the social, economic and political perspectives. Those communities characterised as mechanical solidarities (such as Filey, and to some extent Scarborough) tend to experience a slow and resistant response to change followed by a dramatic paradigm shift; conversely, change in an organic solidarity (such as Grimsby) tends to be a more gradual process with changes often taking place over several generations. Fourth, in Chapters four, six and seven the roles of ritual and performance have been shown to play an important part in the process of change, provides an important link between institutionalised and popular religion, and helps to provide a sense of security and stability. Thus religion is an important factor that can be seen especially in the Filey Revival of 1823, and during the 1870s in Scarborough and Grimsby where rapid church growth occurred during a period of difficult transition for fishing communities.

Members of fishing communities have been influenced by both institutionalised and popular religion although there was a tendency for nineteenth century working people to make use of the institutions as it suited them, such as for Rites of Passage and special events and festivals. Even so, allegiance to some of the churches in fishing communities raises questions as to the reasons for their popularity, and some common denominators have been noted. For example, those Anglican churches that did well tended to have clergy and lay-workers who took a special interest in the fishing community, visiting the fishermen's families at home, the fishermen at sea, providing counselling, welfare and medical support, offering a range of local facilities for the community (reading rooms, clothes and food stores), taking the beliefs and practices of the fisherfolk seriously and without criticism, and offering sermons that did not overtly criticise individuals and the local population. There were also adaptions, especially during the later years of the nineteenth century, of many practices that gave the fisherfolk a special status, such as Blessings of the Sea/Boats, Harvest

of the Sea services, and services offered at sea. Some of the issues here have been explored briefly under the topic 'Maritime Missions' in section 4.5.

The sources used in this study make use of a wide range of material, including the official secular and religious census data, newspaper censuses of religion, Archbishop's visitation records, [13] membership figures (where available), baptismal data, and draws upon a wide range of academic and other sources including some of the results of a local oral history project.[14] The detailed official census returns are currently available up to 1901 although determining the criteria for 'fishermen' here is not straightforward.[15]

Workers in a marine environment have been listed variously as seafarers, seaman, sailors and mariners, some of whom may be fishermen. With the development of steam fishing vessels in the later years of the nineteenth century 'engineers' and 'trimmers' became more evident. 'Smack owners' and 'fishing vessel owners' also appear regularly as do 'fishing apprentices', and there are some 'retired fishermen'. Determining which categories should be included under the term 'fisherman' causes problems in terms of making contrasts and comparisons with other studies – although it should be noted that there are few studies that have analysed the details of fishermen and their families in the census data to any great extent. One important exception is Margaret Gerrish and I have adopted her criteria here in that she listed fishermen as 'smack-owners', 'smack-master/master fishermen', 'fishermen', 'apprentice fishermen', and 'fishermen absent at sea' when the census was taken.[16] The census data, however, provides only a partial picture of fishing communities in that fishermen at sea are not always listed, although by using various sources that occasionally list numbers

[13] S. L. Ollard & P. C. Walker (eds), *Archbishop Herring, Visitation Returns, 1743, Church of England, Diocese of York* (Leeds, Archaeological Society, 1928); Apart from Archbishop Herring's *Visitation Returns* the only other extant returns between 1743 and 1865 are for Archbishop Drummond in May-June 1764. No further clergy returns are extant until Archbishop Thompson's primary visitation of 1856, E. Royle & R. M. Larson (eds), *Archbishop Thompson's Returns for the Diocese of York, 1865* (York, Borthwick Institute, University of York, 2006).
[14] See footnote 19 for some details about the Women's Voices Project.
[15] The 1911 census has recently become available – but unfortunately too late to make use of in this thesis.
[16] Margaret Gerrish, 'Special Industrial Migration in nineteenth-century Britain: A Case Study of the Port of Grimsby 1841-1861' (unpublished PhD thesis, The University of Hull, January 1992), p. 252.

of fishermen registered in any one port it is possible to compare these figures with those taken from the censuses. It is not, however, possible to show complete figures for the period 1815 to 1914. For example, few records were kept prior to 1881 on the numbers of fishermen working from each port, a point emphasised by His Excellency, Spencer Walpole, writing in the Fisheries Exhibition Literature of 1883, who pointed out that 'There are now no means of ascertaining with precision such simple facts as the number of persons engaged in the sea-fisheries of England and Wales.'[17]

The census data alongside the baptismal data provides helpful information in terms of residence and enables us to identify the localities in which the fishermen and their families lived at regular intervals throughout the century. This is especially important with regard to Grimsby as there was only a small fishing community there during the first half of the nineteenth century, and while new houses were erected during the 1840s the rapid influx of people put a significant strain on the local resources.[18] While there is a wide range of quantitative data within the censuses still to be explored I have made use of the data most relevant to the study that could be effectively accessed during the research. The quantitative census data are also a good source of a range of information about the lives of fishermen and their families. We can, for example, discover the average age of fishermen, follow them as they travel and migrate from port to port and see when they have established themselves in ports for an extended period of time – as Gerrish has done in her University of Hull thesis of 1992.

Baptismal and membership records have also proved useful. Hence, the baptismal records for the Anglicans and Methodists (Appendices 9a-9d) and membership records for the Methodists and Baptists (Appendices 8a1-8c3) have been tabulated, and details of Anglican membership have been provided in Tables 5, 6 and 7.

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[17] His Excellency Spencer Walpole, *Fisheries Exhibition Literature*, Vol. I (1883), pp. 4-5.
[18] Edward Gillett, *A History of Grimsby* (The University of Hull Press, 1970), p. 215-6.

At the same time, there is a very wide range of qualitative data available in newspaper reports, articles, novels, official reports, magazine articles, newsletters and a range of scholarly productions. The oral history of people living in fishing communities today also allows us to add a comparative dimension to the study, and while the data in the present study relies on the memories of people, especially the women, the views expressed draw upon the memories of parents and even grandparents, thereby reaching back into the nineteenth century.[19] Nevertheless, account has been taken of the methodological problems inherent in relying on personal memories and the views expressed have been checked against other sources, such as nineteenth century written accounts and paintings from the period (an example of the latter is to be found in Appendix 10g).

In her 1992 study, Margaret Gerrish pointed out that 'with a very few exceptions, the majority of nineteenth century populations that have undergone study have done so in isolation from each other'.[20] Hence, there is great difficulty in making comparisons and contrasts between the various studies. Margaret Stacey, too, pointed out in 1969 that we need to be more consistent in our approach to such methodological issues.[21] With all this in mind I have used three very different communities as the basis of this study and, especially with the collection of empirical data, have hopefully thereby allowed for other future studies to make comparisons and contrasts with the work.

It should also be noted that the study is interdisciplinary, drawing on the work and methodologies of historians, anthropologists, sociologists and theologians. Some aspects of the study work well within a historical framework such as the development of the churches,

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[19] The 'Women's Voices Project' was established at York St John University in April 2005, and fifty in-depth interviews were undertaken and transcripts made. The approach used a personal narrative methodology which allowed the women to tell their own stories about life in Yorkshire fishing communities. This approach allowed the interviewees to have a fair amount of control over the structure of the interviews, although a range of topics were explored (See Williams, 1999, p. 20, for discussion on her similar approach).Material from this project has recently appeared as Stephen Friend, 'Identity and Religion in Yorkshire Fishing Communities' in Sebastian C. H. Kim & Pauline Kollontai, *Community Identity: Dynamics of Religion in Context* (London, T&T Clark, 2007).
[20] Gerrish, 'Special Industrial Migration', p. 6.
[21] M. Stacey, 'The Myth of Community Studies', *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XX (2 June 1969), pp. 134-147.

while other aspects, such as superstition and folk-lore, are more difficult to view as history given that there were few major changes here either in the content or in the pervasiveness of such beliefs and practices. One change, however, may be the general reticence in recent years to admit to being superstitious.

As with a number of the major concepts discussed in this study (especially community and identity) there is a good deal of ambiguity and difference among scholars over the terminology about religion and spirituality. In recent times scholars have tried to distinguish between these two terms by relating the former to institutionalised religion and the latter (while there is a good deal of overlap here) to a sense of transcendence experienced via rites of passage, pilgrimage, times of sadness and joy, celebrations, festivals; and in a wide variety of other activities such as the production of material arts, storytelling, singing, drama, and so on.[22] As the term 'popular religion' can also be misleading some scholars have chosen to make use of the term 'spirituality' when discussing the non-official aspects of religion.[23] There are, however, numerous other terms that have been developed to identify a wide range of religious experiences. These include common religion, confessional religion, folk religion, implicit religion, invisible religion and civil religion. While none are perfect, Grace Davie, who provided a longer list, has pointed out that 'taken together they are probably getting somewhere close to the truth'.[24] This is an important point given that the present thesis argues for models that reflect areas of discourse or narrative as indicators of religious meaning.

For the purposes of this thesis we will make use of the distinction between the two concepts of *institutionalised* (formal, official) religion and *popular* (non-formal, non-official, non-institutionalised) religion. *Institutionalised religion* will refer to the formal religious perspectives such as churches, dogma, and a wide range of associated symbols and practices;

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[22] D. Hay, *The Spirit of the Child*, (London, Fount, 1998).
[23] A recent book discussing this issue is Paul Heelas and Linda Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution, why religion is giving way to spirituality* (Oxford, Blackwell, 2005).
[24] G. Davie, *Religion in Britain since 1945* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1994), p. 74.

popular religion will refer to the range of spiritual experience that is not usually seen as the main, or often an officially adequate, focus of formal religious belief and practice. The division, however, is by no means simple as many beliefs and practices originally seen to be outside the Christian religious institutions have been embraced by orthodoxy and reinterpreted in Christian terms. Nevertheless, some practices, which have long been accepted by the religious institutions, such as 'Churching', still embrace a number of associated superstitious beliefs and practices. In the light of this we will also include some discussion on superstition, magic and folklore in Chapter six, inasmuch as they may be perceived as aspects of popular religious experience.

Part of the confusion over the terminology here relates to the common usage of the term 'popular religion', which often refers to the various practices that are believed to possess a clear religious reference, such as religious festivals and ceremonies, special services, visits to shrines, and a wide range of material culture often associated with personal belief and practice. The present thesis, however, argues that by 'popular religion' we mean those cultural actions, activities, beliefs and practices that provide an opportunity for individuals and groups to give meaning and purpose to their sense of the meaning of life. But there are limitations here, especially with regard to those negative beliefs and practices that cause harm or are associated with a range of immoral behaviours. Festivals, civil ceremonies, storytelling, material culture, dress, naming, and a range of rites and rituals all have something to add to our perspective on making sense of the world we share. In the later twentieth century there has been a range of literature aimed at exploring the issues here, including *Feast of Fools* by Harvey Cox, *Religion and Everyday Life* by Timothy Jenkins and

God in Popular Culture by Andrew Greeley.[25] The relationships between theology and

literature, theology and film and theology and art are all also being explored widely today.

Identity is not a static quality but rather a dynamic process, involving the two

foundational criteria of similarity and difference.[26] Identity also involves a synthesis that is

the outcome of internal and external perceptions of selfhood – that is, the image we have of

ourselves and the image others have of us.[27] An essentialist, as opposed to a constructed,

view of identity is appealing especially with reference to nineteenth century fishing

communities. Such community members saw themselves as distinct from other communities,

with experiences that identified them as unique. This image was reinforced by their shared

history, with stories of tragedy being told and retold such that some major events gradually

took on mythical proportions. Nevertheless, an essentialist perspective is difficult to

maintain. When we take a longitudinal view of fishing communities we see that identity is

constantly being challenged and constantly changing, often in subtle ways as, for example,

with the desire for personal and social status, which is not merely selfish but may represent

an important struggle for the survival of the community.[28]

The wide range of movement between fishing communities, and the relocation of

fishermen and their families, during the nineteenth century caused much disruption to

traditional beliefs and practices. Hence, Grace Davie has pointed to the importance of

religion in maintaining identity in an unfamiliar place. Minority groups (Irish Roman

Catholics, Greek Orthodox, West Indians and Jewish immigrants) who have moved into

Britain for various reasons over the past two hundred years have tended to associate

themselves closely with their own particular cultures, religious beliefs and practices. In each

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[25] H. Cox, *Feast of Fools* (London, Harper & Row, 1970); T. Jenkins, *Religion in Everyday Life: An Ethnographic Approach* (Oxford, Berghahn Books, 1999); A. M. Greeley, *God in Popular Culture* (Chicago, The Thomas More Press, 1988).
[26] Richard Jenkins, *Social Identity (*Third Edition) (London, Routledge, 2004), Chapter 2.
[27] Ibid, p. 40.
[28] J. H. Nadel, 'Burning with the Fire of God'.

instance, says Davie, 'membership of a particular religious group is perhaps of more importance than the associated belief'. She has further argued that this attachment to the church is one aspect of the minority group's need to maintain its identity.[29] This factor was clearly present in the development of Grimsby, Scarborough and Hull as nineteenth century fishing communities, and aided groups and individuals as they gradually achieved positions of authority and power in the towns – such as the number of Primitive Methodists who became prominent in the fishing industry and civic leaders, and members of the Jewish community who became mayors of Grimsby. Such a situation is not, however, a simple relationship as numerous factors also impinge on the relationship between religion, identity and community. A variety of arguments have been posited to explain the apparently strong religious commitment in communities where change takes place rapidly. Thompson, Gilbert, and others have made the point in different ways that religion, often in the form of revivalism, acts as a short-term buffer providing security in difficult times.[30] At the same time we cannot explore the nature of local cultures without recognising that reality tends to be culturally constructed, and that the many ways in which individuals experience life are determined by a range of discourses or narratives which help to provide a sense of meaning a purpose.

Identity has a number of sources, including family, peer group, education, social, employment and religious influences. It is also rooted in a shared kinship and a shared history, especially in the small fishing communities found along the Yorkshire coast such as Filey, Staithes, Runswick Bay and Robin Hood's Bay. Symbols, both ostensibly religious and otherwise, also play a significant role here as do differences between the communities. While identity may appear to be essentialist in communities, when we look at the longer term

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[29] Geoffrey Ahern & Grace Davie, *Inner City God: The nature of belief in the inner city* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1987), pp. 71-72.

[30] Edward P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London, Penguin, 1963); Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England*.

picture we discover that the norm tends to be with constructed identities. In the light of this

we also need to explore the nature of change in fishing communities, and Durkheim's model

of mechanical and organic solidarities has been adapted in Chapter seven to help explain the

developments here. Identity in nineteenth century fishing communities, especially along the

North East coast, was linked closely to migration. An important aspect of this was noted by

Margaret Gerrish who began her study of migration to Grimsby by discussing the work of E.

Ravenstein, one of whose foundational points was that migration for most people tends to be

over small distances.[31] Gerrish has demonstrated that this was not necessarily the case

especially in Grimsby, although many of the fisherfolk did emigrate to Grimsby via periods

spent at other ports such as Great Yarmouth and Scarborough (many of the families, for

example, had some of their children at these various ports). The evidence from the nineteenth

century census data clearly shows that the majority of people moved into Grimsby from

practically every fishing port in Britain, as well as numerous places around the world

(Appendix 7).

The relationship between religion and identity is therefore a complex one and is not

merely to be linked with the religious institutions. Indeed the present thesis argues for the

importance of the influence of popular religion. That popular religion had a significant impact

on the lives of people in the Victorian era has been shown via the research of a number of

historians, such as Obelkevich, Cox, Smith and Williams,[32] and if we step back and take the

broader view we can observe that even for many conventionally religious people their

religious beliefs are often far from orthodox. Such beliefs and practices, even of Rites of

Passage and prayers, are often overlaid with superstition, folklore and magic. The churches,

however, have tended to offer Christian interpretations of persistent non-orthodox beliefs and

practices while rejecting as 'mere superstition' other beliefs and practices that cannot be so

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[31] Gerrish, 'Special Industrial Migration', p. 1.
[32] Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society*; Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society*; Smith, *Religion in Industrial Society*; Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*.

easily accommodated. By exploring such beliefs and practices with an emphasis on, for example, ritual, we can acknowledge the fundamentally spiritual nature that links such beliefs and practices to our concept of personal and social identity.

The thesis, then, offers a contribution to the debate about the nature of religion in the construction and maintenance of identity, especially with regard to the influence of popular religion. Popular religion should be seen as important in its own right, as well as a perspective of official religion (the two are often inter-twined) and, more especially, that aspects of popular religion are seen as contributing to the range of discourses and narratives that make up our religious sensibilities. Popular religion is also an important aspect of popular culture in that many aspects of the latter may be seen to fulfil some of the functions that are normally attributed to institutional religion. The discourses here include the need for security, the maintenance of hope, a feeling that the individual has some sense of control over the environment, the ups and downs of everyday life, and the tragedies that are so much a part of life in fishing communities. These discourses often include a good deal of ritual practice whether this be in the form of superstitions, Rites of Passage (with their various aspects of popular culture) or the general desire to give a sense of meaning and purpose to life. This link with ritual, as a number of modern scholars have noted, tends to provide a strong desire to engage in transformative activities that include many aspects of institutionalised and popular religion.

While Williams discusses the evidence of ritual in the lives of the residents of Southwark she does not enter into an analysis of the relevance of ritual here, although it is implied in much that she discusses about superstition and in her discussion about occasional and conditional conformity to the established churches.[33] Recent work, however, by Catherine Bell, Roy A. Rappaport and Tom F. S. Driver, as well as earlier material by Victor

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[33] Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*, pp. 89-104.

Turner, makes a good deal of the relationship between ritual and performance (although not all agree with the emphasis on performance here).[34] Performance is evident in many of the activities engaged in fishing communities, such as parades, processions, festivals, religious services at sea and on shore, and protest processions, meetings as well as on board the fishing vessels involving singing and superstitious practices. The ritual and performance engaged in on a daily basis has much in common with the religious rituals and performance of religious services and other events, and it is the transformative element in both cases that underpins the sense of meaning identified with the activities. Nevertheless, it is important that the formal aspects of religion are clearly identified before the discussion can develop, hence, Chapter four outlines the situation in relation to the fishing communities of Filey, Scarborough and Grimsby.

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[34] Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (Oxford, Oxford UP, 1997); Roy A. Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1999);Tom F. Driver, *Liberating Rites: Understanding the Transformative Power of Ritual* (Tom F. Driver, BookSurge, LLC, 2006); Victor Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance* (New York, PAJ Publications, 1987).

Chapter 2: A Review of the Literature

2.1 Introduction

Religion in fishing communities cannot be studied merely in terms of church attendance in the manner of Horace Mann (1851/4)[1]. No matter how useful the statistics on institutional allegiance, they provide only a partial understanding of the nature of religion (especially of Christianity) and only a glimpse of the relationship between religion and identity. However, as Gilbert (1976) has demonstrated, modern quantitative analysis can provide some helpful insights into our understanding of religious practice, and recent developments in the use of qualitative analysis have added to our understanding of this complex phenomenon.[2] Numerous scholars such as Gilbert, Moore, Obelkevich, Jenkins and Williams have pointed out that there are different ways of belonging to a religious institution - and regular attendance at Sunday services is only a part of this.[3] By assuming that the practice of faith is dominated by church and chapel attendance we are almost immediately drawn into a dualistic view of religion that sees the world in sacred/secular terms, with implications for the way the church sees its social, ecumenical and missionary roles. In an early response to Mann, Thomas Wright (1868) drew upon his own personal knowledge and experience of working class life and demonstrated that if we are to understand the nature of religious belief and practice,

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[1] Horace Mann, *Census of Great Britain, 1851: Religious Worship'*, pp. cxix, cxlviii, cl-cli, clviii-clvxii, clxvii-clxviii.

[2] Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England*; For example, the work of Hugh McLeod, 'New Perspectives on Victorian Working Class Religion: the oral evidence', *Oral History*, xiv (1987), pp. 31-50;Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*; R. P. M. Sykes, 'Popular Religion in Dudley and the Gornals c1914-1965' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Wolverhampton, April 1999).

[3] R. Moore, *Pit-men, Politics and Preachers* (Cambridge, CUP, 1974), p. 69; Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society*; Jenkins, *Religion in English Everyday Life;* Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*;

especially in working class communities, we must shift our perspective in order to view it from the standpoint of the members of the community and not from that of the religious institutions.[4] This approach involves us in acknowledging the value of popular religion as an important aspect of religious belief and practice.

Institutionalised religion and popular religion are both important aspects of the life of the community, providing narratives and discourses that offer meaning and purpose for its members. At the same time institutionalised religion can also provide a means by which the community's leaders can support, and perhaps also manipulate, the wider community in terms of norms of belief and practice that support the status quo. These norms have been so pervasive that it is only in recent years that serious research has been undertaken into the wider aspects of belief and practice from the perspective of the community's members. Much of this work has tended to centre on larger urban communities, important examples being the work of Williams in Southwark (1999), Jenkins in Bristol (1999) and Robson in Birmingham and the Black Country (2002)[5], but there have been significant studies in rural communities by such scholars as Obelkevich (1976) and Ambler (1984 and 2000) in Lincolnshire, and Rule (1982) and Luker (1986)in Cornwall[6]. The research in English fishing communities, however, has been somewhat limited, with Clark's research in Staithes (1982) still holding its own as the most relevant

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See also Currie, Gilbert & Horsley, *Churches and Churchgoers*; and Wright, 'On the Working Classes and the Church', p. 83.

[4] Wright, 'On the Working Classes and the Church'.

[5] Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*; Jenkins, *Religion and Everyday Life*; G. Robson, *Dark Satanic Mills?: Religion and Irreligion in Birmingham and the Black Country* (Carlisle, Paternoster, 2002).

[6] Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society*; Ambler, 1989, 'Social Change and Religious Experience'*;* R. W. Ambler, *Churches, Chapels and the Parish Communities of Lincolnshire, 1660-1900* (Lincoln, History of Lincolnshire Committee for the Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology, 2000); D. Luker, 'Revivalism in Theory and Practice: the case of Cornish Methodism', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (October 1986), pp. 603-619; Rule, 'Methodism, Popular Beliefs and Village Culture'.

study here.[7] Other important studies include the work of Paul Thompson with Tony Wailey and Trevor Lummis (1983); and of Lummis' own research in East Anglia (1985).[8]

More recent work has been opening new doors by concentrating on important perspectives, which have only cursorily been referred to in earlier studies – especially the roles of women. This is significant for the study of religion because it was often the women who were the main links with the religious and other institutions and they are usually the main carriers of tradition. Jane Nadel-Klein has discussed the nature of women as matriarchs within a patriarchal society, and she has pointed to several earlier scholars, such as Peter Anson, who argued that 'it was the women who ruled over most fisher families'.[9] There have been a number of women's support networks and the occasional politically active women's groups in British fishing ports although none of these organisations has had an ongoing and sustained influence. Neither have the occasional attempts by British fishermen to establish local fishermen's unions always met with the success they deserve, mainly because of the difficulty of marshalling support for meetings, and of the opposition of the local Fishing Vessel Owners Associations.[10] The roles of women, therefore, have been very important in terms of support for the men and their families, and there are some notable examples of women helping to bring about important changes in local working conditions. The loss of three Hull trawlers and their fifty-eight crew members in the winter of 1967/8 led in early 1968 to a number of the

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[7] Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*.
[8] Thompson with Wailey and Lummis, *Living the Fishing*; Lummis, *Occupation and Society*.
[9] P. Anson, *Fisher Folk-Lore* (London, The Faith Press, 1965), p. 27; J. Nadel-Klein, *Fishing for Heritage: Modernity and Loss Along the Scottish Coast* (Oxford, Berg, 2003), pp. 79-88.
[10] During the early 1970s a fisherman told the author that he had tried to establish a local union but a member of the local FVOA advised that if he carried on with the proposition he would not be able to obtain

fishermen's wives confronting the press and politicians. Under the auspices of the Hull Trawler Women's Association the women's campaigning contributed much to the formal hearing later that year which made a number of important recommendations for improving conditions, such as the establishment of a mother ship, the *ORSINO*, which was sent out with the fishing fleet. The facilities included a small hospital, extra accommodation for sick and injured fishermen, and a weather advisory officer stationed on board. Many of these facilities reflected the work hospital ships of the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, which began in the early 1880s and continued up until the 1950s.[11]

The present review of the research literature will concentrate on three main areas: first, the nature and focus of the research in fishing communities and the important developing area of gender studies; second, we will look briefly at the literature dealing with the nature of religion in fishing communities, including institutionalised religion, popular religion, revivalism and maritime missions; and third, we will briefly examine the literature dealing with the relationship between culture, community and identity.

2.2   Research in Fishing Communities

During the 1950s community studies suffered from a lack of consensus on the nature of the concept "community", borne witness to by innumerable definitions. Most studies based their ideas around Tönnies' concepts, which emphasised the relationship between social change and social bonds within the life of a community.[12] By the 1970s the proliferation of definitions of community gave rise to a lack of coherence and an

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work on any of the local vessels. With a family to support the fisherman naturally desisted from his activities.
[11] Stuart Russell, *Dark Winter: the Story of the Hull Triple Trawler Tragedy*, 1968 (Hull, Quality Publications, 1997); for notes on the work of maritime missions see section 4.5 below..

urgent need to redefine terms and to tackle methodological anomalies.[13] The emergence during the 1980s of concepts of community as an *invention* that relies predominantly on symbolic construction reflected a growing concern with a range of interpretations, and this led in turn to a resurgence of community studies in the 1990s, which explored the nature of communities by taking into account new spatial categories and vocabularies.[14]

Although there is no clear dividing line between these different research interests, two major trends are discernable in the research conducted in fishing communities over the last fifty years. The first trend, especially apparent during the period 1950 to 1980, was concerned with the *traditional community study* approach, with an emphasis on fieldwork and extensive use of social statistics, participant observation and oral history. The second trend, evident from the 1980s, is an *environmental approach* where the emphasis was on the relationship between the community and its maritime environment. In more recent studies both approaches have been utilised and the faults of the earlier methodologies have been acknowledged. For example, Chalmers (1988) and Nadel-Klein (1988) (both of whom did their research in Scotland) noted that studies concerned with the traditional community approach tended to concentrate on the role of the men in the community – women generally being perceived as having passive and domestic functions, with their roles in both the productive and expressive spheres being largely

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[12] F. Tönnies, *Community and Association* (New York, Harper, 1957)
[13] See especially Stacey, 'The Myth of Community Studies', pp. 134-147.
[14] Notably B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, Verso, 1983/91); A. P. Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community* (London, Routledge, 1985).

ignored.[15] Chalmers further argued that this research emphasised the relationship between fishing and the economy, with a tendency to politicise the ethnographic data.

The spate of research in fishing communities during this period was precipitated by Horobin who, in 1957, led the way with his important study of *Community and Occupation in the Hull Fishing Industry*.[16] He was followed by Tunstall, in 1962, who concentrated on the Hull trawling industry, and Clark (1982)[17] who explored the relationship between 'official' (institutionalised) and 'folk' (popular) religion in the life of the North Yorkshire fishing village of Staithes. Frank (1976) was unique among male researchers in that he looked specifically at the role of women in the Yorkshire inshore fishing industry in the mid-1970s, and later updated this work to include a chapter in his book, *Yorkshire Fisherfolk,* published in 2002.[18] Thompson, in *Living the Fishing* (1983)[19], expanded on Frank's work and included a chapter entitled 'Women in the Fishing' in which he pointed out that while fishing is usually thought of as a man's trade 'it is an occupation peculiarly dependent on the work of women'; and he went on to discuss the roles of women in a range of fishing communities.[20] The studies during the 1980s included work by Lummis (East Anglia, 1985), Wailey (Lancashire, 1983), Thompson (Scotland, 1983), Cohen (Whalsay, 1985) and Gilligan (Padstow, 1990)[21].

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[15] Tunstall, *The Fishermen*, pp. 138-143 & 160-165; Chalmers, 'Fishermen's Wives'; Jane Nadel-Klein & Donna Lee Davis (eds), *To Work and To Weep: Women in Fishing Economies* (Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St John's Newfoundland, 1988), p. 18.

[16] G. W. Horobin, 'Community and Occupation in the Hull Fishing Industry', *British Journal of Sociology*, 8 (1957), pp. 343-355.

[17] J. Tunstall, *The Fishermen*; Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*.

[18] Peter Frank, 'Women's Work in the Yorkshire Inshore Fishing Industry', *Oral History*, 4 (1976), pp. 57-72; *Yorkshire Fisherfolk* (London, Philimore, 2002).

[19] Thompson, *Living the Fishing*.

[20] Ibid, p. 167.

[21] Lummis, *Occupation and Society*; T. Wailey 'Close-up: Lancashire', Chapters 4-7 in Thompson, *Living the Fishing*; Thompson, Part IV in *Living the Fishing*; Cohen, *Whalsey*; J. H. Gilligan, 'Padstow: economic and social change in a Cornish town' in C. C. Harris (ed), *Family, Economy and Community* (University of Wales Press, 1990), pp. 65-185).

With a few exceptions, however, studies of the fishing communities in Yorkshire appear to have come to a halt by the end of the 1980s, although the earlier researchers continued to publish articles and books, such as Frank's *Yorkshire Fisherfolk* (2002)[22]. While there are therefore problems with the traditional community studies approach, anticipated by Stacey in her 1969 study, much useful material was published from sociological, anthropological and ethnographical perspectives, as Stacey herself acknowledged.[23] Nevertheless, the material on religion in fishing communities is even more sparse, and where it is present it tends to have been viewed from the perspective of the churches and chapels – an approach also common to wider community studies until recently, although this perspective had been challenged as early as 1967 by Brian Harrison.[24]

The second trend is evident among those researchers who have responded to concerns about methodological weaknesses in the 'community study approach', and who adopted an 'environmental approach'. The main emphasis here is on the wider environment of fishing communities and on exploring a particular ecosystem relating to a marine environment where the concern is with the relationship between 'cultural values and a community's physical resources' (a move away from the function and tradition of the male-centred study).[25] The focus is on the 'expressive roles' (the ideational, emotional and expressive aspects of male/female relationships of men and women in fishing communities), which complements the 'instrumental roles' (the tangible and functional - the active roles of women, responsibilities for running a household and

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[22] Frank, *Yorkshire Fisherfolk*.
[23] Stacey, 'The Myth of Community Studies'.
[24] Brian Harrison, 'Religion and Recreation in Nineteenth Century England', *Past and Present*, No. 38, (Dec, 1967), p. 98.
[25] Chalmers, *Fishermen's Wives*, (1988), pp. 88ff; Nadel-Klein and Davis, *To Work and to Weep*, pp. 47-49.

raising children).[26] Studies here have tended to concentrate on the role of women, a

growing trend clearly evident during the 1980s and 1990s that was generated partly by

the significant impact of the women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s. The

environmental approach was anticipated by Andersen and Wadel (1972) in their

comments on the scarcity of research about women in fishing communities, and was later

explored by other researchers, notably Smith (1977), Nadel (1984) and Chalmers

(1988)[27]. But much of this late-twentieth century research, while tackling important

issues, has tended to be in countries other than England: Johansen, et al in Denmark

(1993), Moring in Finland (1993), Dyrvik in Norway (1993), Davies in Newfoundland

(1986 & 2000), Grønbech (2000) and Skaptadóttir in Iceland (2000), Hapke in South

India (2001), Marshall in Canada (2001) and Hagmark in the Åland Islands (2003).[28] The

research in Britain has tended to focus on Scottish fishing ports with studies especially by

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[26] Nadel-Klein and Davis, *To Work and to Weep*, pp. 214-216.

[27] R. Anderson and C. Wadel (eds), *North Atlantic Fishermen: Anthropological Essays on Modern Fishing* (St John's Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1972); M. Estellie Smith (ed), *Those Who Live From the Sea: A Study in Maritime Anthropology* (St Paul, West Publishing Co, 1977); Jane Nadel, 'Stigma and Separation: Pariah Status and Community Persistence in a Scottish Fishing Village', *Ethnography*, 23, 2 (1984), pp. 101-115; Chalmers, 'Fishermen's Wives;

[28] Donna Lee Davis, 'Occupational Community and Fishermen's Wives in a Newfoundland Fishing Village', *Anthropological Quarterly*, 59, 3 (1986), pp. 129-142; S. Dryvik, 'Farmers at Sea: A study of fishermen in North Norway, 1801-1920', *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 18, Issue 4 (1993), pp. 341-357; H. C. Johansen, P. Madsen & P. Degn, 'Fishing Families in Three Danish Coastal Communities', *Journal of Family History*, 18, 4, Fall (1993); B. Moring, 'Household and Family in Finish Coastal Societies 1635-1895', *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 18, Issue 4 (1993), pp. 395-415; D. Grønbech, 'Recycling the Past: perspectives on women households and resource management among early twentieth century fisher/farmers in North Norway', *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 23, No. 3, (2000), pp. 355-361; U. D. Skaptadóttir 'Women Coping with Change in an Icelandic Fishing Community: a Case Study', *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 23, No 3 (2000), pp. 311-32; H. M. Hapke, 'Gender, Work and Household Survival in South India Fishing Communities: a preliminary analysis', *Professional Geographer,* Aug, Vol. 53, Issue 3, (2001); pp. 357-368; J. Marshall, 'Connectivity and Restructuring: identity and gender in a fishing community', *Gender Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, Vol. 8, Issue (4, Dec 2001), pp. 391-409; Hanna Charlotta Hagmark 'Women in Maritime communities: A Socio-Historical Study of Continuity and Change in the Domestic Lives of Seafarer's Wives in the Åland Islands, from 1930 into the New Millennium' (unpublished PhD thesis, university of Hull, September 2003).

Nadel-Klein (1984-2000), Chalmers (1988), King (1992-3) and Munro (1993).[29] Even so, as Davis pointed out many such studies have explored "the material aspects of the division of labour in the fishery" with the male/female roles being portrayed as quite separate if complementary. Davis' research in a Newfoundland fishing village therefore offers a useful and balanced analysis of the domain where gender roles overlap.

Some of the earlier traditional community studies did take gender roles into account but few researchers invested much time here. This is surprising given that even as early as 1868, the Revd Arthur Pettitt had pointed out that "the men only have to catch the fish, their labour as a rule, being over as soon as the boat touches the sand".[30] Chalmers rightly drew attention to the oddness of the focus on the men, given that women tended to take responsibility for most roles on shore within the community (with some notable exceptions such as the clergy and council leadership).[31] Peter Frank's work during the relatively early period of the mid-1970s has already been noted, but while his observations were reflected in later work, such as that of Thompson (1983) and King (1992-3), few others have referred to this aspect of his study.[32] Lummis did offer a chapter on female waged labour in chapter nine of his 1985 book, *Occupation and Society*, although he had earlier in the book alluded to a more extensive female influence.[33] Nadel-Klein, picked up this theme in her review of Lummis' book and

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[29] Nadel-Klein, *Fishing for Heritage;* Chalmers, 'Fishermen's Wives'; Margaret H. King, 'A Partnership of Equals – Women in Scottish East Coast Fishing Communities', *Folk Life*, 31 (1992-3), pp. 17-35 and 'Marriage and Traditions in Fishing Communities', *Review of Scottish Culture*, 8 (1993), pp. 58-67; G. Munro, 'Tradition and Innovation in the life of a Fisherman's Wife on the Buchan Coast', *Review of Scottish Culture*, 8 (1993), pp. 68-76.
[30] Revd A. Pettitt, *Guide to Filey*, in Deborah Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters: Female Preaching and Popular Religion in Industrial England* (New Jersey, Princeton University, 1985), p. 59.
[31] Chalmers, 'Fishermen's Wives', pp. 87-90.
[32] Thompson *Living the Fishing*, Chapter 10, 'Women in the fishing'; King, 'A Partnership of Equals'.
[33] Lummis, Occupation and Society, pp. 2 and 121-138.

argued that a major weakness was his failure to follow up on his intriguing comments about the relationship between gender, community and class.[34]

While Scottish women are not the focus of the present thesis, there are important similarities in the roles of women along the Scottish, Yorkshire and Humberside coasts, and Thompson, in his study of 'Women in Fishing: the roots of power between the sexes' (1985), generalised his findings to present a model intended to help explain the women's roles.[35] Because of the regular absence of the fishermen, women in fishing communities often have more power in the economic and spatial spheres (territorial autonomy) than is the case in many other types of community. Even so, this power suffers to some extent in that the fishing industry tends to rely on the power and control of others. This very point was made by Acheson in 1981 who commented that

> Since fishermen are absent so much of the time, they are often unrepresented in the political arena and are usually dependent on middlemen and ship owners who are often in a position to exploit them.[36]

Nadel-Klein & Davis (1988), however, point out two weaknesses in Thompson's model: firstly, that he does not subject ideological factors (for example, religion) to a similar rigorous analysis; and, secondly, his study has a European bias – thereby not sufficiently acknowledging the range of attitudes and practices relevant to the division of labour in a variety of cultures.[37]

At the same time, while it was usual for women to be involved in the processing of fish, it was not so common to find women working on fishing vessels, at least in

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[34] Jane Nadel-Klein, Review of 'Occupation and Society' by Trevor Lummis, *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Aug 1988), pp. 577-578.
[35] P. Thompson, 'Women in Fishing: the roots of power between the sexes', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 27, 1 (Jan 1985), pp. 3-32.
[36] J. M. Acheson, 'Anthropology of Fishing', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 10, pp. 275-316 (1981), p. 277.

Britain. In North American fishing communities the practice was more common as

Nadel-Klein & Davis have observed: in some places both men and women fish, in others,

only men fish. In some places, women weave nets; in others, that is a man's job.[38] When

women do fish, they do not necessarily see their role here in the same terms as the men.

Yodanis (2000), for example, has argued that the women in fishing communities

generally define their work as 'not fishing' – even when they work on fishing vessels

alongside the men.[39] Hart and Davis (1982) provide a similar example from the North

Carolina coast where one woman maintained:

> I am a fisherman and (I) mean *fisherman*. I'm not a fish person or a fisherette or
> any of those strange words. The word says what I do, I fish. The word has been
> around a long time and it deserves respect.[40]

This attitude, says Yodanis, means that gender in fishing communities is socially

constructed and not defined by the work an individual does. But this is not the only view.

Nadel-Klein, on visiting the Fisheries Museum at Lunnenberg, Nova Scotia, asked why

women were absent from the displays. She was shocked by the reply: 'Why should they

be there? They never had anything to do with the fishery. They had to stay at home with

their family'.[41] The respondent here is assuming that the kind of work engaged in *is*

determined by gender. In some cases, although these appear to be rare, women do work

as independent entrepreneurial fishers.[42] But there are significant differences within

different types of community, the socio-cultural dynamics being related to ecological and

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[37] Nadel-Klein and Davis, *To Work and to Weep*, p. 24.
[38] Ibid, p. 19.
[39] C. L. Yodanis, 'Constructing Gender and Occupational Segregation: a study of women and work in fishing communities', *Qualitative Sociology*, Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 267-290 (2000), p. 268.
[40] Quoted in Nadel-Klein and Davis, *To Work and to Weep*, p. 29.
[41] Jane Nadel-Klein, 'Granny Baited Lines: perpetual crisis and the changing role of women in Scottish fishing communities', *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 23, Issue 3 (May/June 2000), p. 364.

evolutionary paradigms.[43] Nevertheless, relatively little research has been done in this area.[44]

Given that men in fishing communities are usually associated with the sea, and that women take responsibility for most day-to-day activities on shore in the community, the main focus of recent research is perhaps not surprising, whether this be from a historical perspective (Marshall; Johansen, et al; Dyrvik; Moring) or within a contemporary context (Nadel-Klein & Davis, Hapke, Skaptadóttir, Grønbech, Yodanis).[45] Even so, these developments have not yet made the impact they should have done on historians. The recent publication of *England's Sea Fisheries*, for example, presents essays by a range of scholars on a variety of topics - but no study is included of the wider role of women in fishing communities.[46] The few relevant references tend to concentrate mainly on the role of women in processing fish, an interesting recent example of Chalmers' concern that such studies tend to concentrate on women only in so far as they have an economic role.[47]

Other scholars follow a similar pattern. Horobin (1957), for example, acknowledged that fishing families tended towards matrilocality, the result of sustained male absence; and Tunstall discussed the roles of women as girlfriends, wives and

[42] C. Allison, 'Women Fishermen in the Pacific Northwest', Ch. 12 in Nadel-Klein and Davis, *To Work and to Weep*, pp. 230-260.

[43] Nadel-Klein and Davis, *To Work and to Weep*, p. 23.

[44] See especially G. Lenski, *Human Societies* (New York, McGraw Hill, 1966); and B. Pollnac, 'Continuity and Change in Marine Fishing Communities', *Anthropology Working Paper*, No. 10, A State of Art Paper Proposal for the US Agency for International Development (1976).

[45] Marshall, 'Connectivity and Restructuring', pp. 391-409; Johansen, Madsen & Degn, 'Fishing Families in Three Danish Coastal Communities', pp. 357-368; S. Dyrvik, 'Farmers at Sea, pp. 341-357; Nadel-Klein and Davis, *To Work and to Weep*; Hapke, 'Gender, Work and Household Survival; Skaptadóttir, 'Women Coping with Change', pp. 311-321; Grønbech, 'Recycling the Past', pp. 355-361; Yodanis, 'Constructing Gender and Occupational Segregation'.

[46] David J. Starkey, Chris Reid & Neil Ashcroft, *England's Sea Fisheries: The Commercial Sea Fisheries of England and Wales since 1300* (London, Chatham Publishing, 2000).

[47] Chalmers, 'Fishermen's Wives', p. 120.

prostitutes, but provided very little insight into the wider roles of women in fishing

communities.[48] Tunstall also, significantly, argued that fishing tends to attract males who

feel awkward and uncomfortable with women – perhaps this is one reason for their

eagerness to return to the familiar security of the all-male environment at sea after a short

amount of time ashore. Festing (1977),[49] on the other hand, is an interesting exception in

that she has a chapter about the fishermen's wives in Norfolk fishing communities with a

range of views expressed by the women themselves.

The fishermen, in contrast to the women, do not normally have community links

in the sense of close regular contact with friends and neighbours, other than the fishermen

they work with, nor, given the nature of their work, are they able to establish strong

community networks. In their study of the trawling towns of Hull and Grimsby, Edwards

and Marshall (1977) demonstrated that during the 1970s the nature of deep-sea trawling

meant that the men not only rarely saw friends and family they had little effective control

over their lives and jobs.[50] There was no real opportunity to buy their own fishing vessels,

as did their early nineteenth century forebears, and with so little control over their lives it

was extremely difficult for them to form effective pressure groups for change through

organisations such as trade unions.

This variety of approaches to studying fishing communities is encouraging, although

there is a need to undertake longitudinal studies that embrace a more comprehensive

perspective. Nadel-Klein's work points to aspects of life in fishing communities that

provide cultural meaning: 'locally distinct modes of speech, secret nicknames, maritime

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[48] Horobin, 'Community and Occupation'; Tunstall, *The Fishermen,* pp. 138-143 and 156-165.
[49] Sally Festing, *Fishermen: a community living from the sea* (London, David & Charles, 1977), pp. 150-174.

church services and, perhaps, most of all their memories.'[51] But by saying that in the early years of the nineteenth century fisherfolk 'had begun to seek comfort in evangelical religion', she implicitly gives support to the theories of Hobsbawm (1957), E. P. Thompson (1963), Gilbert (1976) and other historians who have argued that religion, especially revivalist religion, is a response to social, political and economic crises.[52] It should, however, be noted that while there is agreement about Thompson's questions, there is no real consensus about his answers.[53]

2.3   Religion in Fishing Communities

Among the few English studies published on the nature of religion in fishing communities, Clarke's work in Staithes (1982) is of particular note.[54] Luker (1987), in his doctoral study of Revivalism and Cornish Methodism, also provided some relevant material, although fishing communities were not the main focus of his study.[55] Duthie (1983) offered an insight into the revivals along the North East coast of Scotland and East Anglia during the1920s – significant events that have received very little attention from researchers; and Valenze (1985) and Hatcher (1993) provided some important information on religion along the Yorkshire coast during the nineteenth century.[56]

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[50] P. J. Edwards & J. Marshall, 'Sources of Conflict and Community in the Trawling Industries of Hull and Grimsby between the Wars', *Oral History,* Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring 1977).

[51] Nadel-Klein, 'Granny Baited Lines', p. 372; See also Festing, *Fishermen*, pp. 150-174.

[52] Nadel-Klein, 'Granny Baited Lines', p. 365; E. J. Hobsbawm, 'Methodism and the Threat of Revolution in Britain', *History Today* (1957), pp. 115-123; Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, pp. 411-440; Gilbert, *Religion and Society,* pp.23-46.

[53] S. G. Hatcher, 'The Origin and Expansion of Primitive Methodism in the Hull Circuit, 1819-1851', (unpublished PhD, Manchester University, 1993).

[54] Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew.*

[55] D. H. Luker, 'Cornish Methodism, Revivalism, and Popular Belief, c1780-1870' (PhD thesis, Oxford University, 1987).

[56] J. L. Duthie, 'The Fishermen's Religious Revival', *History Today*, Vol. 33 (Dec 1983), pp. 22, 27; Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters*; Hatcher, 'Origin and Expansion'.

Most researchers have included religious beliefs and practices as part of a much broader social investigation (for example, in the work of Thompson, 1983, and Lummis, 1985). At the same time religion is barely mentioned in many significant studies, such as Fricke's *Seafarer and Community* (1973).[57] Papers are, however, occasionally published in journals which highlight the subject such as, for example, Duthie's study of 'Philanthropy and Evangelism among Aberdeen Seamen, 1814-1924' (1984);[58] and Nadel's study on the effect of revivalism on the Scottish fishing community of Ferryden (1984 and 1986).[59]

In examining the relationship between fishing communities and religion during the nineteenth century there are a number of perspectives that need exploring – the relationship between fisherfolk and religious institutions, the nature of popular religion, and the extent and manner in which this was embraced by some religious groups – especially Primitive Methodism and maritime missions. The relationship between fisherfolk and the religious institutions has often been gauged by practice, especially attendance at services. But even here there is a range of factors that need to be taken into account, such as the time fishermen spent at sea (allowing for nineteenth century attitudes to work on the Sabbath) and the class gap between churches and the working classes. This situation begs a number of questions – what was the nature of the variety of religious experience and practice? Which official religious groups were successful here and why? What was the nature of the relationship between institutionalised religion and popular religion? What was the impact of religion in the community?

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[57] P. H. Fricke, *Seafarer and Community* (London, Croom Helm, 1973).
[58] J. L. Duthie, 'Philanthropy and Evangelism among Aberdeen Seamen,1814-1924', *The Scottish Historical Review*, Vol. LXIII, 2, No. 176 (Oct 1984), pp. 155-173.

2.3.1   Revivals

An area which embraces both institutional and popular religion is that of revivalism, and this area has seen a significant amount of research (for example, Halévy, Hobsbawm, Thompson, Gilbert and Luker.).[60] Revivals are not isolated events as they link closely with the life of local churches. Indeed, Currie, Gilbert and Horsley (1977) have argued the case for a five-phase life cycle which offers an explanation for the rise and fall in membership of churches: *depression – activation – revival – deactivation – declension*.[61] In this model revival clearly follows a period of activation that is itself a response to a period of social and economic depression. Whether or not such a cyclical process is evident in Yorkshire and Humberside fishing communities, similar to that observed in Cornwall by Luker (1986), will be discussed in chapter five.[62] It is also quite possible that periods of revival, like periods of Methodist growth, were especially active during times of Anglican parochial weakness.[63] In his study of transatlantic revivalism, Carwardine reinforced this point, based on the American situation. He also argued for a regular cycle of growth and decline which occurs in '… an inverse conformity with the business cycle, rising with hard times and falling with good' (1978, quoting Whitney Cross). But he goes on to point out that the relationship between economic depression/prosperity and church growth/decline is not a 'mechanical or wholly

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[59] Duthie, 'Philanthropy and Evangelism'; Nadel, 'Stigma and Separation', pp. 101-115; and 'Burning with the Fire of God', pp. 49-60.
[60] E. Halévy, *The Birth of Methodism in England* (Univ of Chicago Press, 1871); Hobsbawm, 'Methodism and the Threat of Revolution'; Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*; Gilbert, *Religion and Society*; Luker, 'Revivalism in Theory and Practice'.
[61] Currie, Gilbert & Horsley, *Churches and Churchgoers*, pp. 44-45.
[62] Luker, 'Revivalism in Theory and Practice', p. 611.
[63] Hempton, in Thomas,T. (ed) *The British: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices 1800-1986* (London, Routledge, 1988), p. 183.

predictable relationship.'[64] Luker is clearly right in pointing to a range of factors that may

lead to revival, a point supported by Thompson and Carwardine.[65] Nevertheless,

Thompson's 'oscillation' theory has been criticised by Hatcher who argued that the

evidence from his own research, as well as that cited by Thompson, does not fully

support Thompson's 'narrow' thesis, and it is far from being substantiated.[66] At the same

time it must be borne in mind that Thompson himself put a boundary up to 1832 on the

relevance of his theory after which he would not allow for the application of the thesis:

> My thesis was never offered for universal, instant application. I proposed only
> that taking this period as a whole, the emotional evangelism, and the 'inflamed
> state of mind' accompanying it, can be seen as the chiliasm of despair.[67]

Hatcher preferred Hobsbawm's broader 'theory of affinity' as a better explanation

of events. Quoting L. Pope, Hobsbawm (1959) pointed out that a 'lack of social security

is compensated for by the fervour of congregational response'. He argued that Methodism

and Radicalism often advanced together, and that revivals did not normally occur when

trade depressions were at their lowest.[68] Gilbert (1976) modified Thompson's thesis by

arguing that revival is a short-term response to social and economic deprivation; and

Luker saw revivalism as in part a response to rapid change rather than to economic

uncertainty alone. While not wishing to minimize the complexities it is useful to note that

Hobsbawm's thesis has recently gained support from others. Nadel (1986), for example,

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[64] Richard Carwadine, *Transatlantic Revivalism – Popular Evangelicalism in Britain and America 1790-1865* (London, Greenwood Press, 1978), p. 54.
[65] Luker, 'Revivalism in Theory and Practice', pp. 604 & 618; Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, pp. 191-920; Carwadine, *Transatlantic Revivalism*, p. 604.
[66] Hatcher, 'The Origin and Expansion of Primitive Methodism' pp. 101-102, 428-429, 445 & 500.
[67] Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*; pp. 920ff.
[68] E. J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Manchester, MUP, 1959), pp. 124 &131.

argued that revivalism in Ferryden was a means of achieving respectability for the

fisherfolk who found themselves at the bottom of the social pile:

> Effectively disenfranchised from participation in decision-making and deprived
> of economic alternatives, Ferrydeners turned in large numbers – when given the
> opportunity in the middle of the nineteenth century – to a powerful patron who
> they believed represented their interests: Jesus.[69]

Valenze argued a similar point saying 'Through Methodism, servants sustained a rigorous

piety that gave them autonomy – even a certain superiority – under the constraints of their

employment.'[70]

There therefore appears to be a fairly general agreement on the link between

social conditions and the appearance of religious revivals although the actual mechanisms

are hotly debated. Luker, for example, wisely pointed out (like Thompson) that we should

not assume one overriding theory here, but acknowledge the possibility that revival may

well be a response to a range of different conditions in different situations.[71] And it

should not be forgotten that much nineteenth century comment on revivalism was made

by those with a strong sympathy with the movement. Thus George Shaw (1867)

commented, somewhat optimistically, that in early-nineteenth century Filey revival

brought religion to the village.[72] Even so, Hatcher has warned that in accounts of

missions and revivals there is always the danger of bias and distortion.[73] In particular

Shaw's history of Filey (1867) has presented us with an image of a pagan community

prior to the advent of Primitive Methodism[74] although Valenze (1985) and Hatcher

(1993) pointed to much earlier local religious activity, and there was the psychological

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[69] Nadel, 'Burning with the Fire of God', p. 51.
[70] Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters*, p. 69.
[71] Luker, 'Revivalism in Theory and Practice', pp. 611ff.
[72] G. Shaw, *Our Filey Fishermen* (London, Hamilton Adams, 1867).
[73] Hatcher, 'Origin and Expansion of Primitive Methodism', p. 519.

impact that an emotionally-charged revival had on other groups in the area. Once the movement was established it tended to perpetuate itself with the psychological expectation of revival.[75]

While the Primitive Methodists had a good deal of success in missioning fishing communities along the Yorkshire and Cornish coasts, we must be wary of assuming too much here. The Wesleyan Methodists, for example, established work in practically all the fishing ports well before the Primitive Methodists arrived on the scene. Indeed the Wesleyan Methodist Yorkshire Revival occurred during the years 1792-6, a period well before the Primitive Methodists had been conceived.[76]

This of course begs the question as to why the Primitive Methodists made such claims for paganism prior to their missioning of the area – and based on what evidence? There is perhaps a psychological explanation here in that the point was not so much to focus on the negative aspects of the earlier state of the local community but to emphasize the quality of the new situation. The hagiographical nature of the stories about the preachers, such as John Oxtoby, also served to heighten the status of the 'saint' as opposed to the low status of other religious leaders.[77] Other traditions also support this understanding, such as the oft-cited claim that Wesleyan Methodism had lost contact with the working classes by the early nineteenth century and thereby precipitated the advent of Primitive Methodism, the Bible Christians and other similar groups. This is, however, an oversimplification. Robin Hood's Bay, for example, has never had a Primitive Methodist

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[74] Shaw, *Our Filey Fishermen*, p. 8. See also Hatcher, 'Origin and Expansion of Primitive Methodism', p. 538.
[75] Luker, 'Revivalism in Theory and Practice', pp. 606 & 613.
[76] John Baxter, 'The Great Yorkshire Revival 1792-6: A Study of Mass Revival Among the Methodists', Ch 4 in M. Hill, *A Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain 7* (London, SCM, 1974), pp. 46-76.
[77] See, for example, Rev. Henry Woodcock, *Piety and Peasantry: being sketches of Primitive Methodism on the Yorkshire Wolds* (London, Primitive Methodist Book Dept, 1889), pp. 37ff.

chapel, although the Wesleyans have had a very strong continuing presence there. And without the Wesleyan Methodist presence in many of the villages visited by Primitive Methodists it is likely that the latter would have found it even harder to obtain a hearing.

While Hatcher's study of Primitive Methodism in Hull (1993) provides us with a good overview and analysis of developments, the work now needs extending to further explore the role of Primitive Methodists in other coastal communities. At the same time it is helpful to look at other groups that also appealed to working class people. Some major religious groups which have received very little academic attention are the maritime missions although they had a significant influence on fishing communities. The vast majority of literature on this subject is that produced by the many maritime mission societies themselves, and, as such, tends to focus on promoting their own religious and charitable work. There was no shortage of such societies in English fishing communities, with many traditions within the Christian churches being represented.

2.3.2 Maritime Missions

During the last twenty years a considerable body of research has been compiled in the exploration of the work and role of maritime missions in seafaring communities, although there has been relatively little on the roles of such organisations in *fishing* communities. The research by Roald Kverndal (1986), Alston Kennerley (1988), Robert Miller (1989 & 2003), Stephen Friend (1994 and 2000) and Paul Mooney has been helpful in identifying the historical outlines of the many and varied maritime missions and the parameters of the work of these various organisations, but much work remains to

be done.[78] The maritime missions, like the Primitive Methodists, built upon a working

class base during the nineteenth century and many fishermen were employed in various

aspects of the work in fishing ports.

The relationship between maritime missions and other religious groups remains to

be more fully explored, although we would expect to see some close links with

Methodism, and Kverndal has argued this very point – although these links are mainly

with the Wesleyan Methodists.[79] In the North East coast fishing ports maritime missions

initially avoided establishing themselves as institutions to rival others and instead they

tended to rely on the support, initially, of a range of Nonconformist denominations. In

Whitby, for example, the Whitby Seamen's Friend and Bethel Union (founded 1822)

held its meetings in several Nonconformist chapels in rotation. And although the various

maritime missions gradually provided Seafarers' Homes, Canteens, medical and social

support, as well as religious services at sea and on shore, there was never any intention of

taking fishermen away from the local churches, quite the contrary. Even so, much of the

literature on this subject still remains to be identified and indexed. Some remains in the

hands of the now major Seafarers' Missions, although documents have recently been

deposited with museums and archives, and yet other materials are yet to be located and

identified.[80]

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[78]   There is no comprehensive study here, although different aspects of the work of maritime mission have been explored by a range of scholars. These include: Roald Kverndal, *Seamen's Missions: Their Origin and Early Growth* (California, William Carey Library, 1986); Alson Kennerley, 'British Seamen's and Sailors' Homes, 1815 to 1970: Voluntary Welfare Provision for Serving seafarers' (CNAA, University of Exeter, 1989); Robert Miller, *From Shore to Shore: A history of the Church and the Merchant seafarer from the earliest times,* published Privately, Ladycroft, Newmarket Road, Nailsworth, Glos. (1989); Stephen Friend 'The Rise and Development of Missions Amongst Fishing Communities in Britain during the Nineteenth Century' (unpublished MPhil thesis, Leeds University, 1994); Paul Mooney, *Maritime Mission: History, Developments, A New Perspective* (Zoetermeer, The Netherlands, Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 2005).
[79] Kverndal, *Seamen's Missions*, Chapter 2.
[80] For example, the British and Foreign Seafarers' Society has deposited archives with the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich; the Missions to Seafarers has deposited material with the archives in the

2.3.3 Popular Religion

The term 'religion', following Durkheim, has tended to be used in reference to the religious institutions. Hence, it has been official religion that has attracted researchers from Horace Mann's 1851 census of religion onwards, although even Mann had his detractors, such as Thomas Wright, who, during the 1860s, pointed to the wider aspects of religious belief among working class people.[81] And the Bishop of Rochester in 1903 warned 'his clergymen not to dismiss what he called "diffusive Christianity", which he described as the penumbra of the "embodied" Christianity of the church'. [82]

Hatcher has argued that one reason for the success of Primitive Methodism in fishing ports was because of the affinity with 'the convictions of the seafaring folk.' [83] This includes the immanence of a spiritual world where the dead could readily appear to grieving relatives, a belief in the efficacy of dreams which conveyed messages in times of crisis, spiritual conflict, a predilection for signs, belief in 'second sight' and a strong belief in the power of prayer (the practice of which very often had overtones of sympathetic magic). Hatcher has also pointed out that 'Many of the areas where it might be thought that Christianity and folk religion would openly confront each other, also reveal a substantial degree of underlying harmony.'[84] The point has been clearly made by a number of researchers, most notably Obelkevich in his *Religion and Rural Society in South Lindsey* (1976), where he argued that popular religion was not 'a counter-religion to Christianity; rather, the two coexisted and complemented each other'.[85] The problem,

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Brynmor Jones Library at the University of Hull; and the Sailors' Children's Society has deposited material with the Reference Section of the Hull Public Library.
[81] Mann, 'Religious Census of Great Britain, 1851'; Wright, 'The Working Classes and the Church'.
[82] Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society*, p. 93.
[83] Hatcher, 'Origin and Expansion', p. 535.
[84]Ibid, pp. 537-538.
[85] Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society*, p. 280.

however, is that researchers have tended to view 'popular (folk)' religion from the perspective of the religious institutions, and have seen the former as being towards the pagan end of an orthodox/pagan religious spectrum. It has also been tragically underplayed by many researchers who have preferred to place their emphasis on official religion, and many social and economic historians have completely ignored the importance of religion in the local culture. The lack of research generally in this area is bemoaned in numerous publications, such as Snell and Ell's *Rival Jerusalems* (2000).[86]

Nevertheless, if we are to adequately understand the role of popular religion within specific communities we need to begin with an overview of the official religious perspectives. The present thesis therefore offers an overview of institutionalised religion in the three towns of Filey, Scarborough and Grimsby, and, as relatively little published material has offered an analysis of the religious institutions in these three communities, chapter four is a brief response to this need by providing an outline of the religious developments here.

Among the various terms used by a variety of scholars to cover non-orthodox forms of Christianity and religion, 'folk religion' has perhaps been the most commonly used as in Clark's research in the Yorkshire fishing village of Staithes.[87] The concept of folk religion appears to have been adopted from the German *religiöse Volkskunde*, having been coined in 1901 by a German Lutheran minister.[88] Edward Bailey also pointed out that the term (often associated with implicit religion) began to be used during the 1970s to refer to 'folk' use and interpretation of Church practices, especially for Rites of

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[86] Snell & Ell, *Rival Jerusalems*, pp. 3-4.
[87] Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*.

Passage. At the same time he argued for use of the term the 'folk' (volk) religion of early

Christianity in Northern Europe, which lacked a distinct liturgical tradition.[89] But prior to

Bailey, Thomas Luckmann had pioneered work on 'invisible religion' (first published in

German in 1963[90]), which anticipated an outpouring of interest in the subject-matter

during the 1970s with scholars, especially in the USA,[91] England[92] and Holland[93],

exploring the nature of the relationship between official and popular religion - especially,

but not exclusively, in Christianity. The research here was also inter-disciplinary

involving historians, theologians, anthropologists and sociologists.

While Robert Towler used the term *common religion* in his research in Leeds (and

contrasted it with *official religion*) he did so in the same sense as the term *popular and

folk religion* had been used by others.[94] But he still adhered to a dualistic concept (an

approach that was followed by others, such as Obelkevich):[95]

> (The) beliefs of common religion often seem utterly implausible to the academic
> person. That belief in luck, fate, the influence of the moon or the stars, and so on,
> can actually make life more meaningful to people is so far outside their
> experience that they assume that people who do not accept the beliefs of some
> variety of intellectually comprehensible official religion must, like themselves,
> live in a world in which ultimate explanations and ultimate satisfactions are
> denied them. But that is an empirical question which can be answered only after
> examining the beliefs people actually hold, regardless of whether or not those
> beliefs fall within the orthodoxy of belief and practice of the official religion.[96]

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[88] Don Yoder, 'Toward a Definition of Folk Religion', in *Western Folklore: Symposium of Folk Religion*, Vol. XXXIII, (January 1974), No. 1, published for the California Folklore Society by the University of California Press, pp. 1-15.

[89] Edward Bailey, *Implicit Religion: an introduction* (London, Middlesex University, 1998), pp. 32-33.

[90] Thomas Luckmann, *The Invisible Religion: The problem of religion in modern society* (London, Macmillan, 1967).

[91] Yoder provides a helpful bibliography on Folk Religion in his *Symposium on Western Folk Religion,* 1974.

[92] Robert Towler, *Homo Religiosus: Sociological problems in the study of religion* (London, Constable, 1974); Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society*; Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew* (1982).

[93] Pieter H. Vrijhof, & Jacques Waardenburg, (eds), *Official and Popular Religion: Analysis of a Theme for Religious studies* (The Hague, Mouton Publishers, 1979).

[94] Luckmann, *The Invisible Religion, (*1967). Towler, *Homo Religiosus, (*1974), p. 149.

[95] Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society*, p. 318ff.

[96] Towler, *Homo Religiosus*, p. 150.

Towler's point about the need to examine people's beliefs before making a judgement is right at the heart of the present thesis, although very different conclusions have been drawn here.

Roman Catholics were also at the forefront of the debate here with the 1986 edition of the journal *Concilium* being given over to a discussion on 'Popular Religion'. The editorial set the scene with the observation that the traditional approach to the study of religion (that is, with an emphasis on institutionalised religion), was not only unhelpful but very misleading, especially in its advocation of a dualistic understanding of official versus popular religion that at the same time downplayed the importance of the latter:

> For a long time the view governing both theological reflection and pastoral practice was that 'popular religion' consisted of vestiges of superstition and religious ignorance which had somehow not been 'Christianised'. In more recent times, however, this view has been replaced by a productive re-evaluation which has even found its way into official Church documents namely, that faith is expressed in popular religion in a form that is historically concrete, social and cultural. Its substance and practices simply and directly express people's fundamental concerns, such as the meaning of life, of suffering, and of an after-life. Thus popular religion helps to give coherence and a sense of direction to life; it is a central factor in creating and maintaining individual and collective identity.[97]

In the same volume Luis Maldonado pointed out that interest in popular religion was 'aroused by the meeting of the CELAM in Medellín in 1968'[98] (CELAM was the conference of Latin American Roman Catholic Bishops who met in Medellín, Colombia, during 1968). Interest in the subject had been debated for a while preceding this date and there had been some cross-fertilisation between Catholics and Protestants, even though there is no reference in *Concilium* to Luckmann's work. In the same volume, however, there are passing references by Ernest Henau (in his chapter on 'Popular Religiosity and

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[97] N. Greinacher, & N. Mette, (eds) 'Popular Religion' (*Concilium,* 1986), p. ix.

Christian Faith') to Towler's work on *common religion,* and to the work of Karl Barth

and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. [99]

The debate continued throughout the 1980s as scholars began to note the

importance of popular religion, especially in the work of English and American scholars

such as Cox (1982), Valenze (1985) and Luker (1986) who argued that popular religion

should be seen from the perspective of its own internal dynamic, a belief system with its

own grammar.[100] For Valenze, popular religion was also centred on the home where

religious belief and practice was determined by 'generational, seasonal and personal

changes'.[101]

Cox and Bartlett (1987) both provided a helpful insight into the nature of diffusive

Christianity and explored popular religion 'primarily at the points at which it touches the

institutional church'.[102] But a significant stage was reached during the 1990s with the

work of Sarah C. Williams (1996 and 1999) who, in her study of Southwark, London,

undertook a more rigorous analysis of the nature and importance of popular religion.[103]

Her definition of popular religion is helpful:

> *Popular religion is more appropriately defined, therefore, as a generally shared*
> *understanding of religious meaning including both folk beliefs as well as formal*
> *and officially sanctioned practices and ideas, operating within a loosely bound*
> *interpretive community.* These formed part of a particular value orientation or
> culture: a generalized and organized conception of nature, of man's place in it, of
> man's relation to man and of the desirable and non-desirable as they relate to
> man's environment and interpersonal relations.[104] (My italics)

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98 Ibid, p. 3.
99 Ibid, p. 73.
100 Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society,* Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters*; Luker,
'Revivalism in Theory and Practice'.
101 Valenze, Ibid, p. 22.
102 Cox, Ibid; A. Bartlett, 'The Churches in Bermondsey 1880-1939', (unpublished PhD Thesis,
Birmingham University, 1987).
103 Williams, 'The Problem of Belief: the place of oral history in the study of popular religion', Oral
History (Autumn 1996), pp. 27-34, and *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*.
104 Williams, R*eligious Belief and Popular Culture*, p. 11.

Williams clearly points to the overlap of *popular religion* with institutionalised religious beliefs and practices and with folk culture, and her approach made extensive use of oral history – but this only takes us back to c1880 (given that systematic recordings of the memories of working people were generally begun in the 1960s, that is, of people whose lives began in the late Victorian period). For earlier years we have to adapt our methodology, perhaps making use of a range of narrative resources available in newspapers, journals, diaries, reports, letters, etc., especially those documents held by the missionary and philanthropic societies. John Baxter's study of 'The Great Yorkshire Revival 1792-6' and the studies of Filey by Valenze (1985) and of Hull by Hatcher (1993) are good examples of this approach.[105] We do, however, need to be a little wary here in that the narratives may represent the more 'respectable' end of the working-class spectrum (for example, we would be relying at the very least on those members of the working class who could read and write) and, as such, the written results may well prove to be only a limited range of views in a complex matrix of cultural perspectives. On the other hand, narratives that have a direct link with dramatic and often tragic events and experiences in fishing communities can often be enlightening (chapter 6 discusses some examples).

It should also be noted that a wide range of other terms have been used to describe aspects of non-orthodox forms of religion, including civil religion,[106] implicit religion[107]

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[105] Baxter, 'The Great Yorkshire Revival, 1792-6', pp. 46-76; Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters*; Hatcher, 'Origin and Expansion'.

[106] Robert Bellah, first used the term 'civil religion' in his article published in *Daedalus* 96, No. 1 (Winter 1967), pp. 1-21. However, in the more recently published *The Robert Bellah Reader*, ed. by R. N Bellah and S. M. Tipton (Durham and London, Duke UP, 2006), Chapter 9, Bellah has rejected his use of the term 'civil religion').

[107] Bailey, *Implicit Religion* (1998).

and surrogate religion.[108] And of particular note is the term *lived religion* used by Robert

Orsi in his work The Madonna of 115th Street.[109] Orsi appears to have used the term

synonymously with popular religion, in that his definition is very similar to that of Sarah

Williams.[110]

As is often the case it is the outsider who recognises that which those too close to

the culture and events have missed. Obelkevich (1976), Cox (1982) and Valenze (1985)

are American, and all tackled the issue of popular religion and the English working

classes.[111] All, too, rejected the political interpretations proffered by Halévy (1971),

Thompson (1963), Hobsbawm (1957, 1959) and Hempton (1984).[112] Gilbert (1976),

however, did explore the wider social context and, as such, provided something of a

bridge between the major political interpretations and the more holistic approaches

offered in recent studies. (It should perhaps be mentioned here that Gilbert, like his

contemporary K. S. Inglis, is an Australian).[113]

2.4   Culture, Community and Identity

2.4.1   Culture and Community

The relationship between revivalism and economic conditions points to a wider

relationship between religion and culture. Religion is ubiquitous in human society,

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[108] Robert W. Coles, 'Football as a "Surrogate" Religion?' pp. 61-77 in Hill (ed), *A Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain, 8,* (1975).

[109] Robert A. Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950* (Yale, Yale UP, 1985/2002).

[110] In an earlier form of this discussion I had used the term *Lived Religion* to cover both formal and popular religion, but this tends to oversimplify the relationship. See Stephen Friend, 'Identity and Religion in Yorkshire Fishing Communities', Chapter 11 in Kim &Kollontai*, Community Identity*.

[111] Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society*; Cox, *The English Churches*; Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters*.

[112] Halévy, *The Birth of Methodism in England* ; Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*; Hobsbawm, 'Methodism and the Threat of Revolution'; David Hempton, *Methodism and Politics in British Society 1750-1850* (London, Hutchinson, 1984).

providing meaning and purpose via stories, ritual, art and morality – all of which are often moulded within a religious and cultural framework. In exploring fishing communities within the culture of the nineteenth century we need to draw upon this matrix of meaning, in order to reconstruct, as far as is possible, the daily life of the communities. The extent to which culture is influenced by religion or vice-versa is not necessarily an issue, as one purpose of the present study is to explore the reciprocal relationship. The two approaches are not mutually exclusive although there is a good deal of evidence that popular religion had a far more influential impact on the construction and development of identity than has usually been attributed.

The term "culture" implies a consistency that is homogenous. Yet it is clearly difficult to identify a specific culture without modern preconceptions. We tend, for example, to assume the existence and influence of long-held traditions, yet Hobsbawm (1983) has quite clearly demonstrated that many of our traditions are relatively new inventions.[114] At the same time cultures long thought to be homogenous have been shown to be far more diverse in nature than previously believed – a point brought forcibly home when we see the diverse array of artwork and myths embedded under the generic term 'Celtic' (for a brief discussion of the issues here see Trubshaw, 2002).[115] The development of the heritage industry has clouded the waters even more as Nadel-Klein has pointed out in her book *Fishing for Heritage*.[116] Talk of fishing communities conjures up a stereotypical, romanticised image, which may well attract tourists but often bears only a vague relation to the communities as they existed half a century earlier.

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[113] Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England*; Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes*.
[114] E. J. Hobsbawm & T. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, CUP, 1983).
[115] Bob Trubshaw, *Explore Folklore* (Loughborough, Explore Books, 2002), pp. 47-52.
[116] Nadel-Klein, *Fishing for Heritage*.

While many communities are not tied to a particular place the activity of place-making 'and the resultant sense of place are an essential part of how people experience community'.[117] The importance of place is at the heart of the sense of community (and the phenomenal growth of family history in recent years bears testimony to this claim). Nadel-Klein (1991) is significant among those anthropologists who have been rethinking the relationship between people and place and has explored the way in which the loss of place often precipitates a renewed search for cultural and community identity.[118] This sometimes takes the form of compromise in order to meet the requirements of the tourist industry. While this process was predominantly a late twentieth century one, there are clear links with changes in the nineteenth century. The folklorist, Bob Trubshaw, in discussing eighteenth and nineteenth century perceptions of "customs" and "culture", pointed out that 'By the later nineteenth century folklorists saw themselves restoring or regenerating a traditional rural culture that, they believed, had been all but obliterated by the advance of industrialisation'. The point that much in the way of tradition has been lost has also been well made by a number of other scholars, including Bob Bushaway, Robert D. Storch and Ronald Hutton.[119] The regenerated 'rural culture', however, was highly influenced by puritan ideologies:

> Many 'traditional customs' simply did not reappear. Those that were 'restored' were much more organised by the gentry for the populace than before the Commonwealth when the customs had been sustained by the populace with little reliance on the gentry.

[117] V. Amit, *Realizing Community* (London, Routledge, 2002), p. 40.

[118] J. Nadel-Klein, 'Reweaving the Fringe: Localism, Tradition and Representation in British Ethnography', *American Ethnologist*, 18, 3 (1991), pp. 500-517.

[119] Bob Bushaway, *By Rite: Custom, Ceremony and Community in England 1700-1880* (London, Junction Books, 1982); Storch, *Popular Culture and Custom*; Ronald Hutton, *The Stations of the Sun: A History of the Ritual Year in Britain* (Oxford, Oxford UP, 1996).

The sanitised culture and customs thus become more palatable to a wider public.[120]

Taking up a slightly different but related point put forward by Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo, Valenze argued that the status of women is often determined by the status of the home and that the woman's status is at its lowest when the public and domestic spheres are separated and the roles of women become more distinct – usually as the result of various forms of industrial development that employ waged labour.[121] But as Sally Cole has shown improvement in the quality of life for fishing families, as a result of the women taking paid employment in local factories, can often lead to a sharper segregation of male and female roles.[122] An important implication here, as Elizabeth Bott has observed, is that

> The degree of segregation in the role relationship of husband and wife varies directly with the connectedness of the family's social network. The more connected the network, the greater the degree of segregation between the roles of husband and wife.[123]

The wife of the fisherman, therefore, may come into her own when her husband is away at sea, in that she has the greater role to play in family life, and the women in the community are reliant on each other for help and support.

In traditional fishing communities such as Filey, Robin Hood's Bay and Staithes, where inshore fishing was the norm, we might expect to have seen a fairly stable environment as the public and domestic spheres were well integrated. With a larger community, where the men are engaged in deep sea fishing, the distinction between the private and public spheres is likely to be more evident, and when the husband comes

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[120] Trubshaw, *Explore Folklore*, p. 6.
[121] Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters*.
[122] S. Cole, 'The Sexual Division of Labour and Social Change in a Portuguese Fishery', Chapter 9 in Nadel Klein and Davis, *To Work and to Weep*.

home from sea the wife's status may be quite low – the husband's needs tend to be dominant. At this point there is no time for the wife to pursue activities in the public sphere other than those that are absolutely necessary for the comfort of the husband and the wellbeing of the children. The roles and identity of the men and women therefore vary depending on the nature of the local fishing industry.

2.4.2 Identity

The religious impulse (John Kent has referred to this the 'primary religious impulse') is often manifested in the transformation of personal identity.[124] Such a transformation, however, is not necessarily always positive, as Leo Walmsley has demonstrated in his novel *Master Mariner* (1948) where the main character, Tom Bransby, transforms from the selfish character of local drunkard into the selfish character of local religious enthusiast.[125] No doubt there were many such transformations along the Yorkshire coast, as well as many people who became self-less, during the various religious revivals, which were predominantly associated with Methodism and Evangelicalism. Such transformations of personality would embrace both institutionalised and popular aspects of religious behaviour and practice. Primitive Methodism in particular helped its members find 'a sense of identity and a degree of emotional security' in difficult periods of social change.[126] They were willing, too, to accept the more informal range of religious expression that falls under the general heading of spirituality. It should also be noted here that it is usually the women who are to be found attending

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[123] E. Bott, *Family and Social Network* (London, Tavistock, 1957), p. 60.
[124] John Kent, *Wesley and the Wesleyans* (Cambridge, CUP, 2002), p. 2.
[125] Leo Walmsley, *Master Mariner* (London, Collins, 1948).
[126] Rodney Ambler, *Ranters, Revivalists and Reformers* (Hull, University Press, 1989), p. 85.

services in churches and chapels. In his study of Gender in the English constituency of Oxford, Clive Field has noted that over the period of 1651 to 1950 Nonconformist membership for each quarter of a century there was a two-thirds majority of female membership.[127] While Field advises caution in generalising from these figures the statistics available for Malton in Yorkshire do seem to support a significant number of females present over the males.[128] Field is also hesitant in drawing conclusions from his evidence, although he does say that

> The proportion of women in a lay religious community seems to be in direct proportion to the level of commitment – spiritual, intellectual, social financial – demanded of that community; the less that is required by way of active involvement or personal sacrifice, the greater the number of men.[129]

This raises a number of questions for fishing communities in that the men could not always be present at services and because of the nature of their work they were not able to be involved with the range of week-day activities of the churches. Yet we cannot generalise too much here. In Filey, for example, the fishermen were sabbatarian from the 1830s and this allowed for a higher proportion of men to be present at Sunday services. The fishermen also had strong links with the various Friendly Societies and managed to gain much support for each other as the result of the meetings and rituals. In the trawler ports during the same period the religious institutions provided an opportunity for the women to meet socially on Sundays and during the week. In all fishing ports, as within the wider society, Sunday Schools were also seen as important for the children. Clearly, therefore, the religious institutions played an important part in identity formation. The

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[127] Clive Field, 'Adam and Eve: Gender in the English Free Church Constituency', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (January 1993), pp. 63-79.
[128] Ibid, p. 71.
[129] Ibid, p. 78.

religious institutions also provided strong links with the past and were often the focus of family rites and rituals, such as rites of passage.

Jane Nadel-Klein has pointed to a number of ways in which identity is formed and has agued that identity formation is very much part of a process rather than a given. Hence it is 'learned, lived, transmuted, and always contextualized'.[130] This involves being part of a group, which involves both seeing themselves as others see them and considering possibilities as to what the future might hold. Hence, while the individual is part of a common heritage their identity also involves them in being inventive (creative) in ways which help them to construct their future. A similar point was made by Anthony P. Cohen when he stated that 'the perception of identity is relational: the sense of self is founded, at least in part, on a sense of the other.'[131]

The earlier discussion, under Culture and Community, suggests that while men and women have regularly sought ways in which they can express their identity, there are, nevertheless, important and creative means, especially via rituals, festivals and superstitions. When, for example, women are seen as polluters and jinxers this perception may be implicitly perceived in functional terms as an attempt by the men to preserve *their own* autonomy and identity. At the same time, the women are often regarded as being intermediaries between the natural and supernatural, and innumerable superstitions embraced by fishing communities serve the function of enabling the women to preserve their autonomy and identity.[132] This general view has been reinforced by the Church of England in its legitimizing of folk practice regarding the need for purification, by institutionalising the process in the ceremony of 'Churching'.

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[130] Nadel-Klein, *Fishing for Heritage*, p. 94.
[131] Cohen, *Whalsey,* pp.178-9.

Identity can also be manifested in the expressions of art found in fishing communities. This is especially important in that it is an area where institutionalised and popular religion and culture meet. Alfred Gell has taken this point to heart, arguing: "The nature of the art object is a function of the social-relational matrix in which it is embodied. It has no intrinsic 'nature, independent of the relational context'.[133] Perhaps the concept of 'art for art's sake' ultimately provides us with a paradox in that the concept itself was a reflection of a cultural context. Marshall Sahlins (1981 & 1985) has made a similar point in arguing that customs and physical objects are a dynamic aspect of cultural meaning and historical change.[134] Artistic expression can take many forms, and the reinvention of fishing communities under the umbrella term of 'Heritage' embraces a broad range: for example, the folk art of the community members in terms of dress, ritual pageants, festivals, stories and tapestries; and the material arts, embracing rope work, shell pictures, boats and knitting (although the appellation 'folk art' does tend to perpetuate a false dichotomy between 'high' and 'low' art). There is also a wide range of art *about* fishing communities, especially paintings, pottery and photographs, which provide some insights into the daily lives of fisherfolk although the idealised images can often mislead.

The rapid decline of the fishing industry in Britain during the late twentieth century, as with many other European and American fishing communities, has left fisherfolk feeling lost and socially dislocated. A common response has been to reinvent fishing communities in the romantic image often created by novelists, photographers and painters. Twentieth century authors such as Leo Walmsley in Yorkshire, Stephen

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[132] Nadel-Klein & Davis, *To Work and to Weep*, p. 218.
[133] A. Gell, *Art and Agency: an anthropological theory* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 7.

Reynolds in Devon, Neil M Gunn in Caithness and George MacKay Brown in the Orkneys, offer some interesting and helpful insights into the daily life of men, women and children who depended largely on the fishing industry for a living.[135] But while they wrote from a more realistic perspective than their nineteenth century forebears, they still often present a romanticised image – a view reinforced by early films such as *Turn of the Tide* based on Walmsley's novel *Three Fevers*.[136] Victorian writers, on the other hand, had no such concerns, and often took advantage of the fact that few ordinary people had visited the seaside. They drew idyllic portraits of life in fishing communities and added a little bit of melodrama to keep interest. R. M. Ballantyne and James Runciman were among the more popular writers of this genre – although, significantly, both were writing partly to publicise the work of the 'Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen', and both drew attention to problems such as the liquor traffic in the North Sea during the 1880s.[137]

Victorian photographers also created a romantic image, and published their prints as postcards and books for visitors to the seaside – with nostalgia playing an important role here. Many of these publications draw especially upon the work of photographic pioneers such as James W Herald in Arbroath, Hill and Adamson in Edinburgh, Ford Jenkins in Lowestoft, George Wood in Hastings, Francis Frith in Grimsby and Frank Meadow Sutcliffe in Yorkshire. Even allowing for the need to contrive scenes (the result of heavy equipment and early photographic processes) Victorian photographers tended to

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[134] M. Sahlins, cited in Trubshaw, *Explore Folklore,* p. 44.

[135] Leo Walmsley, *Three Fevers* (London, Collins, 1932); S. Reynolds, *A Poor Man's House* (London, John Lane, 1908); Neil M. Gunn, *The Silver Darlings* (London, Faber & Faber, 1941); George MacKay Brown, *Greenvoe* (London, Hogarth Press, 1972).

[136] Leo Walmsley, *Three Fevers; Turn of the Tide,* by J. Arthur Rank, Directed by Norman Walker (1935).

[137] R. M. Ballantyne, *The Young Trawler* (London, J Nisbet & Co., 1884), and *The Lively Poll* (London, J. Nisbet & Co, 1886); James Runciman, *A Dream of the North Sea* (London, J. Nisbet & Co, 1889); Stephen Friend, 'The North Sea Liquor Trade, c. 1850-1893', *International Journal of Maritime History*, Memorial

capitalise on comfortable images, which people were happy to display in their homes. As such, they (like the early film-makers) built upon the techniques and styles used by painters who also travelled to the fishing communities in droves, in many cases forming colonies and schools, such as those in Staithes, Newlyn and St Ives. But given all this work, very little research has been undertaken into the extent to which these portrayals reflected the life of the communities in which they operated, and the effect on the communities of the images they produced.[138]

The result of such work since the mid-nineteenth century, and especially today, is a rapid growth in the tourist industry in fishing ports where members of the public have been offered sanitised displays and exhibitions coupled with festivals, pageants, ceremonies and publications, which, more often than not, have reinforced the idyllic image. This was clearly evident in Newfoundland fishing villages when the author visited the area in 1999.[139] And later visits to Scottish and Irish fishing communities, during August 2002, served to confirm this observation - of twenty-five fishing ports visited in North East Scotland only four remain significantly involved in fishing, although museums and heritage centres are developing rapidly along the coast. In Buckie, for example, where the fishing industry is still active, the tourists are offered a brief history of the industry in a pristine museum called the Buckie Drifter. Sadly, the local view is that this museum was imposed on the community rather than being developed in harmony with the local fisherfolk, and despite some early involvement by the fishers they now tend to avoid involvement and have been critical of the development, preferring to put their

University of Newfoundland, Vol. XV, No. 2 (December 2003), pp. 43-71. See also E. J. Mather, *Nor'ard of the Dogger,* (London, J. Nisbet & Co, 1887).
[138] Charles Hemming, *British Painters of the Coast and Sea: A History and Gazetteer* (London, Victor Gollancz, 1988).

energies into their own museum located in a few rooms behind the local library. My own experience of talking to community members was confirmed by Jane Nadel-Klein in her book *Fishing for Heritage*.[140] In her examination of this and other developments in fishing ports Nadel-Klein offered an analysis of the demands and effects of tourism: 'Fishing villages are marketed for tourist consumption, and where culture has become a commodity. Drawing upon fieldwork, novels, folk music and travel literature, she has explored how these influences have affected the local sense of identity within a modern European nation.'[141]

The significant role of women in fishing communities is an important aspect of the community's identity – and it is often the women who publicly stand up to make the case for improved conditions, and within the fishing communities the women generally have a high status. In her an article entitled 'Granny Baited Lines' (2000) Nadel-Klein concluded that the contemporary focus on women as symbols of fishing communities (she is talking here about the emphasis given *within* fishing communities) helps to remind the fishermen of their masculinity in earlier days.[142] In the light of this it is noteworthy that, with the decline of the European and American fishing industries, it is the women who have been pro-active in responding to the crisis. Examples of such groups are 'The Gloucester Fisherwives' Association' set up in 1969, 'The Coastal Women's Action Group' in Norway, and 'The Norwegian Fishermen's Wives Association'. A similar group has recently been formed in Britain; and there have been some notable women in the past who were prominent in political protests against restrictions on fishing.

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[139] This visit was supported by the award of a Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship in 1999.
[140] Nadel-Klein, *Fishing For Heritage*, pp. 204-209.
[141] Review of *Fishing for Heritage*, in the Berg catalogue (Autumn, 2002).
[142] Nadel-Klein, 'Granny Baited the Lines', p. 372.

2.5   Conclusion

The constant change of fortunes in fishing communities during the nineteenth century meant a relentless need to adapt to new situations, and the fishing families did so in a range of ways. Sadly, the role of religion here has often been ignored by historians and social scientists, and much work remains to be done before the many fishing villages and towns disappear forever. The relationship between religion and community is a complex phenomenon, with the nature of the community often being substantially determined by the religious influences within it. This is no less true of fishing communities than of others. Clifford Geertz has made the perceptive observation that

> …sacred symbols function to synthesize a people's ethos – the tone, character and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood – and their world view – the picture they have of the way things in sheer actuality are, their most comprehensive ideas of order.[143]

Coming from a different direction, Davis has called for more analysis of the "ideational emotional or expressive aspects of the fisher/husband/wife relationship." And the "relationship of the fishing enterprise to the overall community ethos."[144] The direction of recent studies of fishing communities has been first, to offer a balance to the earlier male-focussed research; and second, to explore the wider material and non-material perspectives of culture and community. It is surely also important that the role of religion in helping people to cope with change is a significant area for research, although in the process of exploration questions need to be posed about the various traditional theories put forward about the relationship between religion and social change.[145]

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[143] C. Geertz, 'Religion as a Cultural System', In *The Interpretation of Culture* (New York, Basic Books, 1973), p. 87.
[144] Nadel-Klein & Davis, *To Work and to Weep*, p. 216.
[145] K. Thompson, *Beliefs and Ideology* (London, Tavistock 1986), esp. Chapter 12.

<center>**Ch 3: The Nature of the Fishing Communities.**</center>

3.1   The Nature of Communities.

The traditional meaning of the term 'community' centres on the human need

for social interaction and generally involves the three areas of community of *place*,

interest and *attachment* (the territory, social relationships and shared identity of the

group). More recently the goalposts have shifted with an emphasis being placed on

the *imagined* and *symbolic* concepts of community, as developed by Anderson (1983)

and Cohen (1985).[1] Cohen's approach is that regardless of

> … whether or not its structural boundaries remain intact, the reality of
> community lies in its members' perception of the vitality of its culture. People
> construct community symbolically, making it a resource and repository of
> meaning, and a referent of their identity.[2]

The earlier concepts nevertheless remain important and present-day researchers

embrace a range of perspectives while applying a rigorous methodology. The present

chapter begins with an overview of these developments and looks at the nature of

fishing communities before going on to examine, briefly, the nature of the three

fishing communities under consideration in this thesis, Filey, Scarborough and

Grimsby.

The term 'community' remains conceptually useful despite problems of clarity.

Suggestions for alternative terms have nevertheless been put forward by scholars,

including Cooke (1989) who proposed the use of the term *localities*, and Giddens

(1984) who preferred the concept *locales*.[3] Indeed, studies in a range of disciplines

have led to new and creative insights over the least twenty years. In particular, Cohen

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[1] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*.
[2] Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, p. 118.
[3] P. Cooke, *Localities: the Changing Face of Urban Britain* (London, Unwin Hyman, 1989); A.
Giddens, *The Constitution of Society* (London, Polity, 1984).

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has argued that a 'community' is predominantly a symbolic concept that exists in the mind of its members and is therefore essentially subjective by nature,[4] a view that was anticipated by Margaret Stacey in 1969 when she pointed out that 'physical proximity does not always lead to the establishment of social relations.'[5] Cohen went on to develop this point by arguing that

> Whether or not its structural boundaries remain intact the reality of community lies in its members' perception of the vitality of its culture. People construct community symbolically, making it a resource and repository of meaning, and a referent of their identity.[6]

Boundaries such as 'place', 'interest' and 'attachment' have therefore been identified for the sake of convenience. Perhaps a two-tier approach here is helpful in that when the *symbolic* community is superimposed over the other boundaries we can begin to make use of a three-dimensional model to understand the nature of particular communities. But Cohen's approach has often been misunderstood and the perception that he abandoned the social aspect of community is misleading. Indeed, Cohen himself has expressed dissatisfaction with his most popular work, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, and claimed that many authors have misrepresented his views. He said that the term 'community', of its nature, lacks precision, and went further by stating that there is no real point in spending time trying to define the word 'community' in terms of an analytical category, and that the most helpful approach is to make use of its ordinary popular usage. Clearly, in the light of the debate Cohen has made an important point. Amit, for example, has argued

> It is difficult to discern much in the way of coherence among the multitude of definitions, descriptors and claims of community which occur in quotidian conversation as well as within a variety of scholarly work. [7]

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[4] Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Communities.*
[5] Stacey, 'The Myth of Community Studies', p. 114.
[6] Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, p. 118.
[7] Amit, *Realizing Community*, p. 1.

Such problems, however, have not been restricted to the concept of 'community' alone but are evident in numerous terms that have been applied to complex concepts such as 'religion' and 'identity'. The problem here is that all-embracing, analytical and descriptive definitions have often been sought. One method of dealing with the lack of clarity is to restrict the definition to the particular study being undertaken, although we may run into methodological difficulties with respect to comparative analysis. An alternative approach might be to formulate a definition for a particular *aspect* of the study. For example, in studying attitudes to death we need to define clearly what it is we are studying (fear of death, death phobia, death anxiety, latent death anxiety, and so on).[8] We also need to remember that the nature of complex concepts change over time. Peter Fricke (1973) has drawn attention to this and has argued that while change is an integral aspect of community development we should not abandon earlier models. In the light of this he offered a definition which embraces this perspective 'We conceive of community as changing over time, of becoming differentiated with the advent of new skills, but also integrating itself through a common tradition and social life.'[9]

More recent research in community studies has highlighted the need to take into account the individual and communal sense of the past.[10] Such change relates closely to social and emotional interaction and there is perhaps inevitably a degree of tension between 'community structure' and 'community as construction'. It must also be remembered that a social and emotional sense of community helps to create and maintain a sense of personal and communal identity, with shared meanings found

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[8] H. G. Magni, 'The Fear of Death: Studies of its character and Concomitants', in L. B. Brown, Ed, *Psychology and Religion*, Penguin (1973), pp. 329-342.

[9] Fricke, *Seafarer and Community*, p. 3.

[10] R. Pearson, 'Knowing One's Place: perceptions of community in the industrial suburbs of Leeds, 1790-1890', *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (Dec. 1993), pp. 221-224; J. K. Walton, 'Fishing Communities, 1850-1950', in Starkey, Reid & Ashcroft, *England's Sea Fisheries*, p. 221.

within social codes, special local interest groups and local conventions and values and the 'transmission and interpretation of customs, language and beliefs'.[11] Conversely, a loss of personal identity often follows on from a loss of a sense of community (an issue explored in many contemporary novels and films). The past, therefore, impacts upon the present in important ways, and there can be an invisible boundary between those who claim several generations' descent in the community and those who are relative newcomers - a theme explored not only by research such as that conducted by Clark in Staithes, and Tunstall in Hull, but also in novels, such as Leo Walmsley's trilogy about life in Robin Hood's Bay.[12]

Perhaps, not surprisingly, modern research in communities has embraced the need to explore both the social and emotional attachments. Day and Murdock (1993), for example, have argued for exploring and analysing the importance of the ways in which people see their relation to society as well as their location (place).[13] The emphasis here is particularly on an emotional link between the community and its members. Such points clearly take on board the need to be more rigorous in our methodology. During the 1950s and 1960s there was little by way of an agreed methodological approach that allowed for comparative analysis, and this led to a dearth of research in community studies during the 1970s while scholars argued over the criteria. The work of Margaret Stacey is of crucial importance here in that she tackled this lack of methodological rigour, and emphasised the need for a more solid methodological foundation that allowed for comparative analysis between different research projects in a variety of communities.[14] Today, researchers are more inclined

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[11] Pearson, 'Knowing One's Place', p. 222.
[12] Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*; Tunstall, *The Fishermen*; Walmsley, *Three Fevers*, *Phantom Lobster* (J. Cape 1933) and *Sally Lunn* (Collins, 1937).
[13] E. Day & J. Murdock, 'Locality and Community: coming to terms with place', *Sociological Review*, 41, 1 (1993), pp. 82-111.
[14] Stacey, 'The Myth of Community Studies', p. 114.

to place their sphere of research within the wider social context in order that comparative analysis may be carried out. Modern researchers are again approaching the subject-matter with the vitality evident in earlier community studies. A major problem, however, may be how we integrate the earlier studies into this more rigorous approach.

3.1.1   The Nature of Fishing Communities

Concepts such as the 'British maritime community' and the 'British fishing community' conjure up an idealised, romanticised image in the public mind, which is not unlike the idealised image portrayed by Victorian and Edwardian painters and novelists, and the early photographers such as the Yorkshire coast photographer, Frank Meadow Sutcliffe. These constructed views of fishing communities tend to idealise the situation and thereby distort the reality of community life. Such conscious identity within a community context is usually the perception of the elderly who tend to compare and contrast the past and with the present. Nevertheless, there may also be some form of conscious perception of a constructed community by those fishermen who may have a tendency to idealise their home community while spending a considerable time away from their geographical community.

The problems inherent in defining a community generally are no less an issue when we try to define a particular fishing community – let alone the concept of a national fishing community. Definitions that take account of the fishing environment and the significance of the life of the local population are helpful but restricted. Such definitions will need to emphasise a number of factors, such as local economic dependence on a range of employment related maritime activity, and other ways in which the sea is important to the people, such as social structures, cultural perceptions

and local traditions. In some small fishing villages and towns such as Staithes and Filey a relatively large percentage of the population was directly involved in the fishing-related trade during the nineteenth century, although the proportion changed dramatically over time, while with the larger fishing communities, such as Scarborough, Whitby, Hull and Grimsby, the community was part of a much wider and more complex social and economic local structure.[15] During the eighteenth century Scarborough, Whitby and Bridlington were the only harbour ports along the Yorkshire coast and of the three only Scarborough was concerned with fishing. Other Yorkshire ports, however, had more important fishing communities such as Staithes, Robin Hood's Bay and Flamborough.

Within and between such communities there were also a variety of social divisions,[16] which often took the form of symbolic boundaries that distinguished 'insiders' from 'outsiders' – individuals and groups often being identified according to how long they had been resident in the locality. 'Insiders' were often referred to more colloquially in such terms as 'Filey, born and bred'. Even among those who had long association with the community there were geographical divisions that occurred over time; for example, in Grimsby and Hull the trawler skippers tended to move away from those areas of the town dominated by the crews, thereby making a physical statement about their rise in status. They also tended to have their own pubs and clubs where they socialised with each other.[17] Fishing vessel owners, too, tended to live in the more exclusive areas of the towns where they became part of the nouveau riche. Hence, within the fishing communities there were a variety of communities each with its own concept of place, history and identity – a point noted by Pearson in a different context when he argued that community 'was perceived by the Victorian lower

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[15] Walton, 'Fishing Communities, p. 127.
[16] Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*, pp. 32-34.
[17] Thompson, Wailey and Lummis, *Living the Fishing*, p. 19.

middle class from a class standpoint, and defined with a keen eye on the barometer of local social relations.'[18]

There is another kind of social division – that between the home and the workplace, and for the fisherman this division was often more thoroughgoing than that between the factory labourer and his or her family. The nineteenth century fishing community's relationship with the sea was a very precarious and ambivalent one. For the women the vessel on which the fishermen sailed was a rival mistress who could be jealous and demanding, hence, the prevalence of superstitions which forbade women on board fishing vessels and even contact with women when the fishermen were on the way to their vessels. In some fishing communities (especially where inshore fishing dominated during the nineteenth century, such as Staithes, Robin Hood's Bay, Scarborough and Filey), the women actively participated in the work of their men-folk, collecting and preparing bait for the fishing lines, mending nets and helping to launch and beach the fishing boats (see the example in Appendix 10g).

The unique setting of the North Sea means that it has a significant impact on those countries bordering it, with social movement occurring which impacted on the nature of the communities in the various European countries.[19] Many Danish fishermen, for example, settled in Grimsby during the 1950s and 1960s when the fishing industry there reached its modern peak. Local fishing vessel owners provided vessels for them to pursue seine netting and several men gradually managed to purchase their own vessels. The Danish Seamen's Mission acted as a social centre keeping the memory of home alive with language and traditions. The men also met regularly in a local public house. By the 1970s many of these fishermen had married local girls and built up local links, which in turn led to them settling permanently in

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[18] Pearson, 'Knowing One's Place', p. 225.
[19] J. Roding & J. H. van Voss, *The North Sea and Culture, 1550-1800* (Hilversum Verloren, 1996).

the town. While the older generation still retains a sense of a local Danish community

the number is now rapidly diminishing. The second generation retains some Danish

links, most notably in terms of familiarity with the Danish language, customs and

festivals (Christmas, for example, is celebrated on Christmas Eve). But the third

generation has tended to lose this link. The Danish Seamen's Mission closed in the

1990s, and to all intents and purposes the Danish community has been absorbed into

the wider community.[20]

3.1.2   Research in Fishing Community?

Rural life is usually thought of as the ideal of community life, possessing

consensus, cohesion and stability, and fishing communities are often perceived to

follow the rural pattern. Yet such a model is inherently misleading, despite the fact

that many members of early British fishing communities both farmed and fished

according to the season. With technological innovations, nineteenth and twentieth

century fishing communities were moulded more by the nature of the work rather than

being constructed by their members although there is some overlap here. The isolation

of some fishing communities, such as Filey, Staithes, Runswick Bay, Robin Hood's

Bay and Flamborough Head clearly had an effect upon their nature, but others such as

Whitby, Scarborough, Hull and Grimsby were part of a more complex social and

economic structure. During some periods (especially Hull and Grimsby during the late

nineteenth century and during the mid-twentieth century) the local fishing community

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[20] *Berthie Hjelm Willey* (nee Thinnesen). Interviewed 19 May 2002. Berthie's parents moved to Grimsby from Esbjerg in early 1950. Her father, Frode Thinnesen, was given work by a Grimsby fishing company on a local seine net vessel. In time he saved enough to purchase his own vessel, as did other Danish families, and he fished from the port until his death. His children, including Berthie, married local men, and the extended family members are now fully integrated and permanent local residents. Berthie's mother, Kirsten Bruun Thinnensen (nee Hjelm) has a growing number of descendents in the town. Kirsten (Kis) still keeps in contact with Danish Women who have settled locally although the number is declining rapidly. Berthie speaks Danish although her children do not.

was more influential on the local economy than at other times. While fishing communities are unique in that there is a significant separation of the workplace and the home (even to the extent of a fishing vessel sometimes being viewed as a 'total institution'), there are significant ways in which the two dimensions of life at sea and on shore overlap and are integrated especially in small villages where the emphasis is on inshore fishing. The nature of such communities has drawn many to view and write about them, but intriguingly there have been relatively few sociological studies on fishing communities generally.

There is of course a great danger in romanticizing and idealising late nineteenth century fishing communities, and there are plenty of examples of just this approach. Cohen's model would appear to be of particular benefit in analysing the nature of seafaring, especially fishing communities. His concept embraces a number of elements especially symbols such as dress, speech and art, and rituals some of which are more fixed and universally acknowledged, others more mundane and idiosyncratic.

The lack of consensus in the definition of 'community', and the lack of methodological rigour in early 'community studies', has made comparative analysis with the earlier studies difficult. Margaret Stacey (1969) offered some criteria that simplifies the approach here and she argued that a community study should be undertaken within a context where propositions can be tested. The context should allow us to explore a hypothesis which in turn sets the scene for comparative studies with aspects of the wider society. This research was extended by a spate of studies that further developed the use of oral history and participant observation. Among the most important research here was David Clark's study of Staithes, Trevor Lummis

work in East Anglia, Paul Thompson's work in Scotland, Peter Frank's work in Yorkshire and Tony Wailey's work in Lancashire.[21]

Despite the fallow period during the 1970s for community studies generally, there was in contrast a significant outpouring of research in British fishing communities during the second half of the 1970s. Nevertheless, with a few notable exceptions, such as Anthony Cohen's study of Whalsey, in the Shetland Islands, during 1987, and H. Gilligan's study of Padstow in Cornwall in 1990, this outpouring of research was greatly diminished by the early 1980s – although it was during this period that several of the above authors published their work.[22] Why this research should have been curtailed is something of a puzzle – even allowing for the problems of methodological rigour, which were undergoing intense scrutiny and discussion. The rapid decline and in some cases the demise of British fishing communities, which may well have been a major factor giving rise to the above studies, should have provided raw material for a wealth of research similar to that which took place in mining communities during the 1980s and 1990s. But it may be that despite their apparent simplicity the very complex and rapidly changing nature of fishing communities has been part of the problem.

A major influence on, and involvement with, the shore-based community is usually the domain of the women. This may also often have been the case where fishermen were engaged in an inshore fishery where long days and erratic times of fishing prevented the men from being involved with any major engagement in the wider day-to-day social activities. Feminist interpretations of "community studies" are helpful here in that they allow us to recognise the importance of the role of women

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[21] Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*; Lummis, *Occupation and Society*; Thompson, *Living the Fishing*; Frank, *Yorkshire Fisherfolk*; Wailey, *Living the Fishing,* pp. 70-109.
[22] Cohen, *Whalsey;* Gilligan, Padstow, pp. 165-185; Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*; Thompson, Wailey & *Lummis, Living the Fishing*.

within the social structure.[23] This is especially applicable to fishing communities in that women are in many ways the essence of the community. It is the women who keep the rites alive, who dominate the membership of local institutions and who continue the community's customs and traditions. In contrast, fishermen have tended to form their own social world onshore, which is often exclusively male, such as Friendly Societies (like the 'Shepherds' and the 'Oddfellows' in Robin Hood's Bay, the fishermen's choir and music groups such as the Scarborough Primitive Methodist band (Leo Walmsley described the development of a local band at Robin Hood's Bay in his novel, *Phantom Lobster*).[24] But there are some activities in which both males and females play a joint role, such as festivals, concerts and social activities in times of great trauma.

There are of course particular problems in studying fishing communities that existed during the early and mid-nineteenth century where oral history is of little use. There seems to be a dearth of source materials, although it has to be said that this may only be apparent. Indeed, a wide range of source materials may be found including newspapers, parish magazines and the reports published by local charities. Even so, this is not to diminish the problems of accessibility and the regular destruction of such materials, often because the various archives and museums do not have the space, resources or the interest to relocate them.

The present thesis will concentrate on three fishing communities, two on the Yorkshire cost (Filey and Scarborough) and one on the Humberside coast (Grimsby). Filey is a small town that retains only a small number of fishing vessels, and has no harbour. Scarborough is an ancient town with a harbour and currently has a small

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[23] See especially G. Crowe & G. Allen, *Community Life: an introduction to local social relations* (Harvester/Wheatsheaf, 1994), p. 16.
[24] Walmsley, *Phantom Lobster*, p. 41 ff.

fishing fleet. Grimsby is a large town that grew from a market town in the mid-1800s, and while it no longer has a fishing fleet a few vessels do continue to catch fish.

3.2   Filey

3.2.1   The Growth of the Town

Filey is an ancient and small town on the North Yorkshire coast situated in a sandy bay eight miles south of Scarborough and eleven miles north of Flamborough. There is evidence that the area was populated during the Bronze Age, and later the Romans built a signal station and perhaps a small settlement there. Following the Roman exit from Britain the sheltered area around Filey saw the arrival of numerous invaders before the village settled down to a sustained period of occupation during the Medieval period, when Filey, like many other villages, established itself and saw the building in the twelfth century of the substantial parish church of St Oswald. There was very little change in Filey's population, from c.500 people in the sixteenth century to c.505 in 1801.[25] But by 1841 this number had increased to 1,231, and by 1901 had risen to over 3,000.

A proposed harbour was never built and Filey remained isolated with a local culture that changed little in 1,000 years, although a railway, introduced in 1846, and the town's isolation became part of the attraction as the leisure industry subsequently developed making it a popular Edwardian resort with regular visitors travelling to the town from Scarborough. The second half of the nineteenth century saw an increase in the growth of the leisure industry, local societies and public services. Writing in his 'Guide for Visitors' in 1853, Edward William Pritchard said of these new developments:

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[25] M. Fearon, *Filey, From Fishing Village to Edwardian Resort* (Pickering, Yorkshire, Blackthorn Press, 2008), pp. 20 & 29; Also census data, 1801-1901.

> The New Town, the chief resort of visitors, has been entirely built within the last fifteen years. It is principally made up of three ranges of buildings or terraces; one facing the sea, called the Crescent; the second facing inland, called Clarence Place; and the third, forming a side of yet unfinished square, called Rutland Terrace; add to these Taylor's Royal Hotel, several detached and well suited villas for lodgings, and the large new Hotel, now nearly finished, which adjoins the crescent.[26]

For many years Filey had just one main thoroughfare, Queen Street, which housed both fishermen and farmers and a number of local tradesmen. The development of 'new Filey' in the 1830s saw the rapid expansion of the town, especially with tourists during the summer months.

3.2.2 The Filey Fishery

Legend claims that the Yorkshire cobbles originated with the Viking long ships and this suggests the existence of a local fishery reaching back to at least the ninth century. Written evidence also exists of the Filey fishing community in the early twelfth century (and incidentally of the Grimsby fishing community) as indicated from details about local disputes, such as a disagreement with the Abbot of Bridlington about paying tithes of fish, and later with the Prior of Bridlington and the Prior of Grimsby, before 1196, 'about the tithe of fish taken at Filey.'[27] While such records are rare the occasional references suggest an ongoing local fishery. By the late eighteenth century the fishing vessels had developed into two-masted luggers with crews of six, and in 1833 the first of the Yorkshire yawls was built in Scarborough. The Filey fishing fleet appears to have reached its zenith in the 1860s with 34 yawls, 17 herring cobbles and 64 inshore cobbles. The vessels had crews of six for the yawls, 4 for the herring cobbles and 3 for the inshore cobbles. Hence, there were

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[26] Edward William Pritchard, *Filey 1853 A Guide for Visitors* (Scarborough, 1853), p. 21.
[27] J. Cole, *The History and Antiquities of Filey in the County of Yorkshire* (Scarborough, 1828), p. 103.

approximately 400 men and boys fishing at this period, although the number of vessels and fishermen declined sharply with the development of steam vessels towards the end of the century (Table 1). While the number of fishermen declined the prosperity of Filey increased, not least because of the growing popularity of the tourist industry. At the parish tea of 1897 the parish priest, Canon Cooper, pointed out that the nature of Filey as a fishing village had changed and it was now a fashionable tourist attraction, with local people being able to let out their houses to visitors. [28]

John Cole, writing in 1828, identified four distinct periods in the Filey fishery during the year. [29] These were the *Spring fishing* (February to Easter) involving large boats (yawls: two-masted vessels of fifty to sixty tons burthen with a crew of six men and two boys), which conducted line fishing for cod, halibut, ling, skate and haddock and sailed southwards to take advantage of the markets at Hull, Boston and Kings Lynn. The *summer fishery* (Easter to August) during which the fishermen worked from Monday to Friday, returning home at the end of the week to sell their fish (Turbot, Halibut and Haddock) on the sands at Filey and to deliver the rest of their catch (mainly ling and cod) to the fish salters for curing. During the autumn (mid-September to November) the Filey Yawls (about ten or twelve) engaged in the *Yarmouth Herring fishery* and took their families with them to live in the town until the end of November, where the women looked after the children and mended nets on shore. But by between the 1840s and 1850s trade declined and the annual visits to Yarmouth were gradually abandoned.[30] The *winter fishery* (December and January) was when the local fishermen sailed their cobbles (small open boats with a crew of three) ten to fifteen miles off the coast.

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[28] *The Filey Advertiser* (March 1958).
[29] Cole, *The History and Antiquities of Filey*, pp. 93-94.
[30] M. Andrews, *The Story of Filey,* 5th edition, (M J Milwood, Loughborough, 1975), p. 24.

With no harbour to assist the daily launch of vessels at Filey, the fishermen

relied on manpower and a team of horses with the men joining in rhythmic chanting

in order to synchronise their activities, until the 1950s when tractors took over the

role.[31] With the growing market for fish as the nineteenth century progressed, and the

clear advantages of working from a port with a harbour, many of the Filey fishermen

travelled by train to Scarborough on Mondays to sail their yawls during the week and

then returned to Filey for the weekend. It should perhaps also be pointed out that the

Filey fishermen were sabbatarians, and although this has been generally attributed to

the revival of 1823, sabbatarianism did not take hold until ten years later.

Table 1: Fishermen and Fishing Apprentices in Filey.

Date	Filey Population	Fishing Apprentices	Fishermen
1801	505		
1811	579		
1821	773		
1831	802	20[32]	60
1841	1,231	1	132
1851	1,511	2	146
1861	1,881	4	150 (1866: 392)*
1871	2,267		202
1881	2,337		175
1891	2,481	3	188 (1896: 252)*
1901	3,003	1	200
1911	3,228		
1921	4,549		

Sources: Census figures (Other sources, such as *The English Coble, Maritime
Monographs and Reports*, No 30, National Maritime Museum, London, 1978,

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[31] Fearon, *Filey,* p. 151. A harbour scheme was proposed in c.1879 – but had failed by c.1883. At this point some fishermen, frustrated with the lack of support, left the town for Scarborough and Grimsby.
[32] Cole, *History and Antiquities of Filey*, pp. 94 and 96: Cole says that ten or twelve boats sailed from Filey for the Yarmouth Herring Fishery in the middle of September, c.1828, (p. 96) , and that each vessel has a crew of six men and two boys (p. 94). The boys would not be registered as apprentices but were the sons of Filey fishermen. Presumably there were other fishermen who did not sail to Yarmouth. Hence the figures here can only be tentative.

p. 34, provide higher figures. This document shows the figures reaching a peak in 1912, after which there was a sharp decline.) *G. Waller, Filey Advertiser, March 1958.

Table one shows a gradual increase in the numbers of fishermen throughout the nineteenth century although there is a small decrease during the 1880s. There is, however, a discrepancy here as other sources provide somewhat different figures. There could be several reasons for this: some fishermen away at sea were not recorded on every census, and some fishermen may have been working from other ports such as Scarborough on the day of the census. Apprentices are not very much in evidence, with only one recorded as such in the 1841 census; later censuses simply recorded the younger fishermen as 'fisherboys'. Filey, therefore, does not appear to have had many boys registered as apprentices. Given the local nature of the fishing community it would seem that the young fisherboys would on the whole be those sons of fishermen that had reached an age when their fathers were willing to take them to sea.

The women were involved in collecting bait (limpets, called 'flithers' along the Yorkshire coast) and spent many hours each day during the winter fishing season baiting the lines. The 1861 census shows twenty females recorded as 'bait gatherers', all of whom were single except one recorded as a widow (Appendix 5c). The ages ranged from fifteen to twenty-eight years, and one, the widow, who was aged forty-two years. The origins of this bait gathering activity by the women have been lost, although Arthur J. Munby recorded his contact with the flither girls of the Yorkshire coast in his diaries during the 1860s. While the main focus of flither-picking centred on the Filey women, there were others from Staithes, Whitby, Scarborough and Flamborough. Peter Frank has argued that the development of flither-picking was the result of the decline in mussels during the nineteenth century. Later, during the mid-

twentieth century, mussels were transported from East Anglia and the need for flither-pickers declined. But the women still needed to work at 'skaning', (the process of removing the mussels and limpets from the shells and attaching them to the long-lines ready for the fishermen to take to sea the next morning). Skaning was usually done in the home although a shed was provided for the Scarborough women who worked together. The work was laborious and hard as it was done in cold water during the winter months and the women had to complete the work of skaning several thousand limpets before getting on with their various household duties. The work of the women was therefore very hard, and one of Frank's interviewees during the 1970s (James Cole, a fisherman in his nineties) stated 'Well, to tell you the truth. A woman in Staithes did more work than a man that went off to sea'.[33]

Fishing was of course a very hazardous occupation, conducted mainly in open sailing boats during the nineteenth century, and many lives were lost at sea, especially from the small open fishing boats at Filey. The Revd. C. Kendall's book, *God's Hand in the Storm*, provides some detail about the great storm of October 1869.[34] That no Filey fishermen were lost on that occasion was regarded as miraculous by the local population, although many fishermen were lost over the years in other winter storms, not only at Filey but all along the Yorkshire coast. Given the many injuries suffered by fishermen, and the great loss of life, various societies gradually developed in the fishing communities to provide financial support for their families. Cole gives a few details about one such society that developed in Filey in the 1820s, although as there was no major loss of life for some years the society eventually lapsed.[35]

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[33] P. Frank, 'Women's Work in the Yorkshire Inshore Fishing Industry', *Oral History*, 4 (1976), pp. 57-72; D. H. Hudson, *Man of Two Worlds: The Life and Diaries of Arthur J. Munby, 1828-1910* (London, Abacus, 1974).
[34] Rev. C. Kendall, *God's Hand in the Storm* (1870).
[35] Cole, *History and Antiquities of Filey*, p. 127.

3.3 Scarborough

3.3.1 The Growth of the Town

The earliest record of inhabitants living on the Scarborough headland (where the present castle was eventually built) is c. 500 BCE.[36] In 1745 the town's population was c. 5,000, and by 1801 this had risen to 6,688.[37] The latter half of the eighteenth century saw a significant increase in immigrants, especially of apprentices who were attracted to the growing importance of the maritime trades - although Whitby's shipbuilding industry had surpassed that of Scarborough by 1801. By the mid-nineteenth century there was just one shipyard left in Scarborough, that owned by the Tindall family whose last ship was launched in 1863. Throughout the nineteenth century Scarborough continued to grow, reaching over 38,000 by the beginning of the twentieth century.[38] Even so, the impetus of the fishing industry was gradually lost to Hull and Grimsby, both of which were located more strategically on the banks of the River Humber.

3.3.2 The Scarborough Fishery

As the second largest town along the Yorkshire coast Scarborough has consistently been engaged in seafaring, notably trading and fishing, although boatbuilding remained significant during the period 1691-1801.[39] The fishing industry was established early here and there was a significant international herring trade by the fourteenth century.[40] By the early 1800s there were only three fishing

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[36] J. Binns, *The History of Scarborough From the Earliest Times to the Year 2000* (Pickering, Yorkshire, Blackthorne Press, 2001), p. 3.
[37] Census figures. But see Binns' discussion on these figures, ibid, pp. 194-195.
[38] Census figures.
[39] R. W. N. Robinson, 'The English Fishing Industry 1790-1914: A Case Study of the Yorkshire Coast' (unpublished PhD Thesis, The University of Hull, June 1984), p. 7.
[40] P. G. Vasey, 'The Later Medieval Herring Industry in Scarborough', *The Transactions of the Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society*, No. 21 (1978), p. 17.

communities of any note along the Yorkshire coast: the three harbour ports of Scarborough, Whitby and Bridlington, but 'only Scarborough could rank as of any importance as a fishing station', although during the nineteenth century Scarborough also became a fashionable seaside resort and attracted many to the spa waters and sea bathing.[41] The harbour and fishing vessels acted as a picturesque backdrop for the visitors and was no doubt one of the attractions.

The growth of the North Sea fisheries during the mid-1800s attracted fishermen from other ports, for which some figures have been provided by Margaret Gerrish:

> When the 1851 census was taken… just under forty per-cent of the 164 men fishing out of Scarborough at that time had not been born in the town. Twenty years later, at the taking of the 1871 census, the local fishing labour force had increased in size to 355 of which more than half were in-migrants.[42]

While seasonal visits to Scarborough had been of long-standing, by, for example, the Brighton fishermen who had fished for North Sea cod since the late sixteenth century, it was not until the mid-nineteenth century that the Devon and Kent fishermen relocated there after several years of seasonal visits.[43] By the 1830s the visiting fishermen were using trawling methods and this caused a good deal of friction with their hosts. The local Scarborough fishermen relied mainly on line-fishing throughout the year and drift-net fishing during the late summer and autumn herring season, and with the visiting fishermen sweeping through the fishing grounds with their trawlers there was soon antagonism between the two groups, which sometimes led to violent conflict such as the stabbing of a southern fishermen by a Scarborough fisherman.[44] Even so, by the 1840s trawling became an established method of fishing in the port,

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[41] Robinson, 'The English Fishing Industry 1790-1914', p. 25.
[42] M. Gerrish, 'Who Followed the Fish to Scarborough "Fare"?', Part three, *Yorkshire History Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (February 1998), p. 93.
[43] Ibid, Part One, *Yorkshire History Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Aug 1997), pp. 15-16.
[44] Ibid, p. 18. See also, Robinson, *The English Fishing Industry 1790-1914*, p. 51.

leaving Staithes and Filey to retain their dominant role of line-fishing. While this situation eventually calmed down, and the Scarborough fishermen adopted trawling, many of the visiting fishermen had by this time relocated to Grimsby where the facilities were tailor-made to the needs of the trawlers.

Table 2; Fishermen and Fishing Apprentices in Scarborough

Date	Scarborough Population (Census)	Fishing Apprentices	Fishermen
1801	6,688		
1811	7,067		
1821	8,533		
1831	8,760		
1841	10,048	0	99
1851	12,915	2	148 (164 Gerrish)
1861	18,377	10	234
1871	24,259	4	359 (355 Gerrish)
1875		3	
1876		13	
1877		8	
1878		14	
1879		10	
1880		2	
1881	30,504	16	497
1885		18	
1887		21	564
1888		34	
1889		32	
1890		23	
1891	33,776	14	347
1892		9	
1893		1	
1894		2	
1895		2	
1896		1	
1897		1	
1898		1	
1899		0	
1900			
1901	38,161	0	277
1911	37,201		
1921	46,179		

Sources: Census figures; Alward, *The Sea Fisheries of Great Britain and Ireland*; Binns, *The History of Scarborough*; BPP 1887, Vol XXViii, c. 5412.

3.4   Grimsby

3.4.1   The Growth of the Town

The North Lincolnshire town of Grimsby developed from a market town in the early nineteenth century to the country's leading fishing port by 1900, with a population of over 36,000. Grimsby was significantly different to most fishing towns during the nineteenth century in its nature, development and impact. It was not a case of merely expanding an already existing infrastructure that had gradually built up around a fishing town but of starting from scratch – even to the extent of building the fishing docks on reclaimed land from the River Humber.

Lying on the east coast of England on the south bank at the mouth of the River Humber, Grimsby had been a busy port in the middle ages, but by the late eighteenth century trade had declined and the harbour had silted up thereby allowing Hull to claim a monopoly of the seagoing trade. Anderson Bates wrote that in 1792 the town 'may be described as being so obscure that it probably owed its place in maps and topographical dictionaries to its privileges as a Parliamentary and municipal Borough'.[45] In the 1790s Grimsby was a market town with a population of approximately 1,000 (Appendix 4a). Very little fishing activity took place there during the early1800s although a small number of fishermen worked from Cleethorpes.[46] An attempt to reverse the decline in the town's fortunes was made with the formation of the Grimsby Haven Company in 1796, initially by building a lock at the point where the Haven met the Humber and by dredging the river up to the River

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[45] Anderson Bates, *A Gossip about Old Grimsby*, (Grimsby, Albert Gait, 1893), p. 7.
[46] Gerrish, 'Following the Fish to Grimsby' pp. 39-50.

Head.[47] The short-term situation improved but the lack of an infrastructure linking Grimsby to the wider population, and the failure of the Ropery in 1832, one of the town's major employers, led to another population decline when people sought jobs and business opportunities elsewhere.[48]

With the commencement of work on the Royal Dock in 1841 the situation changed dramatically and during the next ten years Grimsby experienced an influx of over 5,000 people, the population more than doubling from 3,700 to 8,860 (Table 3). Even so, the Times correspondent, who covered the laying of the foundation stone in the Royal Dock by Prince Albert in 1849, wrote that Grimsby was 'one of those places that few of our readers have heard of, and a less number have seen, but which a London contractor would cart away in three weeks'.[49] With the extension of the railway line to Cleethorpes in 1863 there was a significant increase in population there from 325 in 1861 to 2,058 in 1871, and 11,620 by 1881. Hence, Grimsby benefited not merely as a centre for trade and industry associated with its docks, but as an adjunct to the rapidly growing excursion traffic to the coast.[50]

Grimsby's expanding population came from four significant sources – *navvies* (600 of them, the majority of whom were Irish) who built the docks; *migrating fishermen and their families* from ports like Brixham and Barking, as well as from other countries (the 1851 census shows that the town had already absorbed a number of European migrants from Poland, Germany, Sweden, and some from further afield such as the East Indies and Australia).[51] *fishing apprentices* who were brought to the

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[47] G. Jackson, *Grimsby and the Haven Company* (Grimsby Public Libraries, 1971).

[48] Gillett, *A History of Grimsby*, p. 213

[49] Cited in H. B. Kendall, *The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church* (London, Primitive Methodist Publishing House, 1907), p. 445.

[50] J K Walton, 'Beside the Sea: Visual Imagery, Aging and Heritage', *Aging and Society*, 17 (1997), pp. 629-648).

[51] Appendix 7; Cited in E. Gillett, *A History of Grimsby*, p. 220. See also Gerrish, 'Following the Fish to Grimsby'.

town from orphanages, prisons, reformatories, workhouses and training ships around the country, many of whom were as young as 12 years old (by 1872 the apprentices outnumbered fishermen 1350 to 1,150- see Tables 3 and 4);[52] and *migrating people from Europe* (Jewish, Mennonites, Mormons, and so on, many of whom left for Liverpool and the USA, although some stayed in Grimsby who sought to take advantage of the growing business opportunities).

3.4.2   The Grimsby Fishery

The rise of the North Sea fishing industry during the mid-Victorian era, especially with the discovery of the Silver Pitts on the Dogger Bank, gave impetus to the development of Grimsby and numerous other fishing ports along the north east coast. This development was facilitated in Grimsby by a new infrastructure that included the construction of a railway network during the years 1846-1849, of the Royal Dock 1841-1852 and a fish dock in the1850s, both by the Manchester and Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway (MS & LR).[53] The town now had two important railway branch lines - west to Manchester and Liverpool, and north to London (see Appendix 2a). Further increases in the local population took place quickly between 1840 and 1870, then doubling, from over 20,000 in 1870 to over 40,000 by the early 1900s, and reaching over 82,000 by 1921 (the figures being significantly higher if Cleethorpes, Scartho and Humberston are included [see Appendix 4a]). The local fishing industry, too, developed quickly from having only nineteen fishermen in 1861 to over 900 vessels and in excess of 3,000 fishermen by the late late1880s.

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[52] D. Boswell, Sea *Fishing Apprentices of Grimsby* (Grimsby, Grimsby Public Libraries, 1973) lists 393 sources for this apprentice labour, pp. 144-149.
[53] Gerrish, 'Special Industrial Migration', p. 170, citing Frank Bowen, *A Hundred Years of Grimsby,* (Docks and Harbour Authority, 1945). Gerrish points to the development of Grimsby being 'founded on the discovery of the Silver Pitts sometime during the period of the late 1830s to the late 1840s'. Nevertheless, others disagree with this view. See, e.g., G Jackson, *Grimsby and the Haven Co.* (cited in Gerrish, 'Special Industrial Migration', p. 171). See also Gillett, *A History of Grimsby*, p. 231.

In the late 1850s the MS & LR also acknowledged the need to provide houses for incoming fishermen in order to develop a permanent fishing population in the town, and twenty-five houses (the Worsley Buildings) were built in 1858.[54] The 1861 census shows that seventeen of the twenty-five occupants were smack-owners. All this was in addition to the Cleethorpes Oyster fishermen who, according to George Alwood, provided the nucleus of crews for the Grimsby fishing vessels.[55] The rapidly increasing population created a number of social problems such as poor sanitation, inadequate housing, a lack of healthy water supplies and poor roads. At the same time there were, in the early 1850s, two distinct populations: the old town centred on the Old Market Place in the Bull Ring, overlooked by the parish church, and the new town rapidly developing around the docks. By 1855 the population of the new town exceeded that of the old and within a few decades the old medieval market town was practically obliterated.[56] Gerrish has argued that the Thames fishermen appear to have moved directly to Grimsby from their home ports during the period 1857-1860. This view led to the important observation that the fishermen moved almost directly from communities with a high degree of social and residential stability to a town that was little better than a noisy, bustling frontier situation.[57]

Unlike smaller fishing towns and villages along the Yorkshire coast, Grimsby was not picturesque. In 1873 a Hull journalist described the scene:

> There is no centre to the town. There is certainly a small market place, but it is quite at one end of the town; there is another market place, styled new, which does not seem to be patronised at all except on Saturday nights and then chiefly by cheap-jacks, paltry shows and punching machines. The town is straggling, without order, method or construction. Freeman Street is by far the most compact and uniform and should properly be the main artery of the town, but Victoria Street which takes precedence by inheritance is a long, winding,

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[54] Gerrish, 'Special Industrial Migration', p. 206.
[55] G. L. Alward, *The Sea Fisheries of Great Britain and Ireland* (Grimsby, Albert Gait, 1932), p. 447; Also Gerrish, 'Special Industrial Migration', pp. 210 and 245.
[56] *Grimsby Gazette* (9 March 1855); Gillett, *A History of Grimsby*, p. 222.
[57] Gerrish, 'Following the Fish to Grimsby', p. 44.

rambling place with dirty hovels, good houses, gaunt timber yards and modern cottages all jumbled together in a manner offensive to the eye. The road to Cleethorpes is spoilt by ugly gaps and small rows of shops falling to pieces, and the causeway in front rotting into gaping holes.[58]

The growth of the town continued unabated, and, as if to announce the new town's emergence, a 300 foot high hydraulic tower modelled on the tower of the Palazzo Pubblico in Sienna was completed in 1852 and used to open and close the lock gates. With the growth of the fishing industry the Royal Dock quickly reached saturation point. The tower has, nevertheless, remained a potent symbol of Grimsby since then.

Table 3:   Comparative chart of the Grimsby fishing community

Date	Grimsby Population (Census)	Clee with Weelsby Population (Census)	Fishermen (Census)	Fishing Vessels Registered at Grimsby	Fish Landed (excluding foreign landings) Tons
1801	1,524	103			
1811	2,747	115			
1821	3,064	154			
1831	4,048	177		29	
1841	3,700	199	13	30	
1851	8,860	195	17	64	188 (1855)
1861	11,067	325	209	179	5,300
1871	20,244	2,058	646	302	30,000
1872			1,150		
1877			1,676		
1881	28,503	11,620	1,402	607	49,000
1887			2,988*		
1891	33,283	18,775	3,588**	636	64,000
1901	36,857	26,400		478	99,000
1911	74,659			575	190,000
1921	82,355			622	138,000

Sources: Population excludes Scartho, Cleethorpes and Humberston. In 1911 the figures for Clee were included with Grimsby. The figures for fishermen and vessels differ according to the source used; I have relied here on Margaret Gerrish for the 1861 census figures. Details of fish landed from Edward Gillett,p301; Victoria County History, Lincolnshire, 1901.
   *   Figures supplied by Gillett, *A History of Grimsby*, p. 301
   ** Figures from Lincoln, *The Rise of Grimsby*, p. 242.

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[58] Gillett, *A History of Grimsby*, p. 236

While the fishing boats used the Royal Dock initially they moved to the newly built fish dock in 1857. Another fish dock was added in 1877 with further enlargements to both docks taking place over the next ten years. With the improvements to dock facilities and the rapid increase in the fishing workforce the industry quickly experienced a shortage of labourers and tried to attract men to the industry. One aspect of this was the recruitment of fisherlads, apprentices, brought to Grimsby from workhouses and orphanages across the country. This was an adaption of an existing system already in use in some other fishing ports and was presumably advocated by the immigrant fishermen from Barking who were already familiar with this apprenticeship system.[59] While local employers argued that the system of apprenticeship controlled entry to the industry and ensured a good standard of training, others saw the system as one of exploitation by which the employers obtained cheap labour and the poor law unions disposed of their young paupers. Pamela Horn has argued that there was an element of both in the Grimsby industry, and at least one publication referred to the apprenticeship system as little more than slavery.[60]

Actual numbers of apprentices are difficult to obtain, although those indentured between 1870 and 1937 are provided by Boswell and the British Parliamentary Papers. Other sources providing actual numbers in Grimsby are somewhat diverse, including the census figures and a number of reports, although the figures produced here are not significantly different to those provided by Martin Wilcox.[61] Boswell says that 4,277 boys signed indentures during the period 1868-

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[59] Pamala Horn, 'Pauper apprenticeship and the Grimsby fishing industry 1870-1914', *Labour History Review*, pp. 173-194 (1996), p. 174.

[60] Horn, Ibid, p. 173; See also R. H. Sherard, *The Child-Slaves of Britain* (London, Hurst and Blackett, 1905), pp. 141-170: Chapter VI: 'On Child-Slavery in Grimsby'.

[61] Martin Howard Wilcox, 'Apprenticed Labour in the English Fishing Industry, 1850-1914' (unpublished PhD thesis, the University of Hull, September 2005), see, e.g., tables 42 (p. 133) and 45 (p. 137).

1878.[62] Fleming's Report estimated there to be 200 apprentices engaged in fishing in 1871.[63] Wilcox has argued that apprentices from respectable labouring families generally made up the greater proportion of apprentices in the smaller and more traditional ports. The newer ports, however, such as Grimsby and Hull, tended to recruit a much higher number of pauper apprentices, resulting in a range of social problems for the industry.[64] The various estimates, along with the Annual Reports of the Inspectors of Sea Fisheries (England and Wales), give the following numbers of apprentices in Grimsby:

Table 4: Grimsby Fishing Apprentices

Year	Grimsby Apprentices indentured during the year	Grimsby Number of apprentices employed during the year	Years	Grimsby Total by decades
1861	38			
1868	231			
1869	534			
1871		200		
1872	424	1,350		
1876	576			
1877	534	1,794		
1878			1868-78	4,277
1879				
1880				
1881	277	320		
1882	419	591		
1883	365	700		
1884	413	947		
1885	292	952		
1886	343	1,026		
1887	339	1,020		
1888	368	900		
1889	348	964	1880-89	3,312
1890	298	948		
1891	215	805		
1892	277	882		
1893	282	882		

[62] Boswell, *Sea Fishing Apprentices of Grimsby*, p. 40.
[63] Ibid, p. 27.
[64] Wilcox, Apprentices Labour', pp. 18-20.

1894	214	731		
1895	137	686		
1896	150	449		
1897	134	447		
1898	113	432		
1899	111	378	1890-99	1,574
1900				
1901	61			
1902		278		
1909			1900-09	590
1910				
1911	28			
1919			1910-19	212

Sources: Boswell, *Sea Fishing Apprentices of Grimsby*, pp. 32 & 40; *Annual Reports of the Inspectors of Sea Fisheries (England and Wales).*

The work did not appeal to the all the apprentices, many of whom had never seen the sea before their arrival in the town let alone having had experience of working in fishing boats. Some absconded, and, when caught, were sent to prison (over 1,000 fisherlads between 1870 and 1880).[65] The problem became the subject of outrage and was gradually addressed, the working conditions improved and the threat of imprisonment was abandoned.[66] Fatalities were also high: 1 in 84 for fishermen; 1 in 12 for apprentices[67] Approximately one quarter of the apprentices ran away and a significant number of others lost their lives during the course of their apprenticeship. Horn has also pointed out that during the 1880s only about 35% of the Grimsby fishing apprentices completed their term.[68] But it was the newspaper attention that reported abuses suffered by the apprentices and a number of deaths at sea that gave

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[65] Boswell, *Sea Fishing Apprentices of Grimsby*, p. 32.
[66] See, e.g., Martin Wilcox, 'Opportunity or Exploitation? Apprenticeship in the British Trawl Fisheries, 1850-1936' (*Genealogists' Magazine*, Vol. 28, No. 4, December 2004). Wilcox begins his article by recounting the events surrounding the death of 'Will Pepper' in Hull, January 1882, which led to national outrage at the treatment of apprentices.
[67] Ibid.
[68] P. Horn, 'Youth Migration – the fisher boy apprentices of Grimsby 1870-1914' (London, *Genealogists Magazine*, September,1995), pp. 100-102.

rise to a national outcry against the conditions in which boys were expected to work.[69] The number of apprentices in Grimsby dropped dramatically after World War One and the system was finally abolished in the 1930s, partly due to economic problems. Horn also pointed out that the rapid growth of the local population increased the number of local young people looking for work and this tended to negate the need for apprentices from outside agencies, a need that had become evident as the local fishing industry rapidly developed following the mid-nineteenth century.[70]

There is equally great difficulty in recording accurate numbers of fishermen, as was pointed out by Spencer Walpole in 1883.[71] And recently, Pat Midgley, writing of the King's Lynn fishing community, has said: 'We know the figures of fishermen are inaccurate (for King's Lynn) because during a hotly contested General Election in 1911 … the candidate, Holcombe Ingleby, took over 400 fishermen on a picnic to his estate at Ringstead….'[72] The census for that year apparently recorded a considerably smaller number of fishermen.

Following 1880 the sailing vessels were gradually replaced with steam trawlers, and, as costs rose, few fishermen could now look forward to the day when they would own their own vessel. Other changes affected the nature of the industry, such as the demise of the fleeting system, but Grimsby nevertheless continued to prosper well into the twentieth century.

3.4.3   Changes in Grimsby's Social Structure

With the discovery of new fishing grounds, and the development of an infrastructure for the town, there was a significant migration of fishermen into the port

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[69] Sherard, *The Child-Slaves of Britain*, Chapter VI.
[70] Horn, 'Youth Migration', p. 103
[71] His Excellency Spencer Walpole, *The Fisheries Exhibition Literature*, Vol. 1 (1883), pp. 4-5.
[72] Pat Midgley, private letter (dated 8 April 2004).

during the late 1850s. By 1858 twenty fishing smacks left other ports to register in Grimsby.[73] This influx of labour had a reciprocal effect upon the port's facilities in that the fishermen petitioned for improvements, and the improvements once made attracted more fishermen. In 1851 48% (109 fishermen) of all males in Cleethorpes were employed in fishing (0.6% of Grimsby's working males).[74] By 1872 there were 1,150 fishermen in Grimsby (see Table 3).

Most fishing smacks in the nineteenth century were owned by working skippers, some of whom gradually moved on to owning several vessels, and then became fish curers and managers. In due course members of this new group became leaders in the town as counsellors, magistrates and respected businessmen. By the1880s owners and skippers were living in large houses in the town's suburbs to the south, and Cleethorpes to the east, while fishermen lived in the cramped housing around the docks. Inevitably this situation gave rise to the proliferation of pubs, clubs, boarding houses and brothels, and all the social paraphernalia associated with a large vibrant port, all of which tended to be located within a fairly defined area, bounded by Alexandra Dock, Eleanor St and Park Street. Initially the fishing community lived close to the docks on the west side of the railway line (along the main thoroughfares: Burgess St. King Edward St and Victoria Street). But as the town expanded the fishing community moved eastwards, with a few fishing families finding accommodation in the West Marsh (Appendix 3a). Within the local expanding community there were small groups which maintained their own individual identity, such as the Jewish immigrants who had now settled in the town. By 1871 the local Jewish community had 87 members and the increase continued for some years: to 113

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[73] Gerrish, 'Special Industrial Migration', p. 192.
[74] Ibid, p. 215, Table 17.

in 1881, 149 in 1896 and reached a peak of 450 in 1899 – a number that remained

constant for twenty years before declining slowly throughout the twentieth century.

During the1840s-1860s there was little sense of 'belonging' in Grimsby, and

even in 1871 the census showed that only one out of forty-one Grimsby smack-

owners had been born in the town.[75] The many diverse individuals and groups (dock

and railway navvies, immigrants, Jews, Danes, Norwegians, migrating fishermen)

tended to be somewhat insular and many arrived with little or nothing in the way of

finances. The following comment gives an example:

> Some, however, are transients. That is to say, they come to England penniless, hoping to pick up enough money here to carry them across the Atlantic to the Promised Land.
>
> One such family, a Russian Jew, his wife and three children landed recently in Grimsby. They had not one penny. They managed to get into a house. 'There are houses here which the landlords will let out on the chance of getting the rent.' They furnished this house with nothing in the front room, a table and a few boxes in the back. The bed upstairs on the floor. The attention of the authorities was drawn to this family by a report from the parish doctor. The woman had come to him with her three children, who were all covered in sores and 'were breaking out in a scaly disease.' The man, whose trade it was ' to go putting in windows,' was found lying, ill and starving, on the bed on the floor.[76]

Several groups, such as the Friendly Societies and Temperance groups, sought

to raise the standard of living and the morality of the large influx of workers, and

during the1870s numerous church groups began to expand and establish themselves in

the community. Nonconformists and Roman Catholics did not have the restrictions of

the old structures to cope with and were able to establish new buildings, new services

and new organisations in order to appeal to the rapidly growing working class

population.

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[75] Horn, 'Pauper Apprentices of Grimsby', p. 175
[76] Sherard, *The Child Slaves of Britain*, pp. 167-8.

Despite all this activity the roles of the local women in nineteenth century Grimsby have been sadly neglected by scholars. Indeed, Lynn Abrams has argued that while many historians have ignored the roles of women in society, when women *have* been included in their grand narratives "they tend to see them as acted upon – women are included as passive vessels in a historical landscape that has already been determined."[77] The same argument can be applied at local level, and is no less true of fishing communities in that the history tends to reflect and emphasize the activity of the men.

Although some women did do the same jobs as fishermen, these were very few. In Grimsby, when a Mrs Jackson's husband, a former fish merchant, died she took over his work, and continued with this when she remarried.[78]Women were, however, included in most aspects of the trade other than going to sea or holding management responsibilities. The women generally made the fishing nets, knitted ganseys; and while they acted as fish hawkers in other fishing towns there is little evidence of this activity in Grimsby. They cared for the children and their education, had responsibility for the finances and looked after the home. Nevertheless, the census often has only a blank against the occupation of women in fishing communities, or they were sometimes recorded as "fisherman's wife" when the husband was away at sea. When women did work for pay it was often as a servant or a charwoman, although some were active in running or working in local pubs. As the fishing industry became more mechanised, the women worked in processing plants – but here, again, they are portrayed as supporting the main work of the men. During the Victorian era identity was often seen as formed largely by religion. But even here the roles of women (who were and are the most evident in attendance and support) have

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[77] L. Abrams, *The Making of Modern Woman* (London, Longman, 2002), p. 11.
[78] Anon, 'History of Grimsby' *the Fish Trades Gazette and Rabbit Trades Chronicle*, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 1952 (16 Oct 1920), p. 5.

been largely ignored. It was common practice, for example, for a society or a charity to be initiated by a woman and then for the men to take much of the credit.

In such a social context as nineteenth century Grimsby we might initially expect to see a lack of coherent social structures, and a subsequent developing sense of coherence that reflected the situation many had moved from and which provided a sense of meaning and purpose. Gerrish, for example, has referred to the fishermen from similar backgrounds living in close proximity to each other but has downplayed this as simply a need to live close to the docks. [79] Clearly there are many gaps in our understanding here although further analysis of the census data could and should help our understanding a little.

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[79] Gerrish, 'Following the Fish to Grimsby', p. 50, note 11.

Ch 4: Institutionalised Christianity in Fishing Communities along the Yorkshire and Humber coasts.

4.1   Introduction

Some studies about fishing communities, such as Clarke's work in Staithes, have included discussion on popular religion; others, such as that by Lummis, have included religious beliefs and practices as part of a much broader social investigation.[1] Papers have also occasionally been published exploring the subject on a local basis such as John Duthie's study of 'Philanthropy and Evangelism Among Aberdeen Seamen, 1814-1924', and Jane H. Nadel's study on the effect of revivalism in the Scottish fishing community of Ferryden.[2] However, in approaching the study of religion in fishing communities along the Yorkshire and Humber coasts there is relatively little research to build upon although there is a growing amount of wider research that has implications for the study here, and while there has been some relevant empirical research the emphasis has tended to be on *institutionalised* religion. *Popular* religion is much less straightforward although some significant work has been done on non-fishing communities by Cox, Williams and Jenkins, among others.[3]

The present chapter will explore the nature of religion in Filey, Scarborough and Grimsby, concentrating mainly on institutionalised religion in order to provide a context for the discussion in Chapter 6 on popular religion. There will also be some discussion on the nature and influence of maritime missions as these had a significant influence especially in the nineteenth century fishing communities.

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[1] Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*; Lummis, *Occupation and Society*.
[2] Duthie, 'Philanthropy and Evangelism among Aberdeen Seamen', pp. 155-173; Nadel, 'Burning with the Fire of God', pp. 49-60.
[3] Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society*; Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*; Jenkins, *Religion in English Everyday Life*.

4.2   Religion in Filey

During the nineteenth century Filey was an isolated village with a culture that had changed little during the previous thousand years. Christianity appears to have been brought to Filey by the monks of Lindisfarne as part of St Ninian's missioning of northern England although no evidence remains of a local church or chapel from this period. The first recorded chapel was dedicated to St Bartholomew during the Middle Ages but by the sixteenth century this was in ruins and St Oswald's Church, built during the twelfth century, was in any case now serving the local community.[4]

Throughout most of the nineteenth century religion in Filey was dominated by Anglicanism and Methodism. There were several smaller Nonconformist groups including the Quakers, Christian Scientists and the Plymouth Brethren, although none of these appear to have attracted more than a few members. Nevertheless, the emphasis on experiential religion developed in the town by the Methodists was further enhanced in the late nineteenth century by the Salvation Army whose parades, bands and open-air meetings attracted both locals and visitors.

Roman Catholics did not develop a significant presence in Filey until the twentieth century when the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Evron, a French order, extended their work to England as they were faced with persecution during the period of the Third Republic.[5] The first congregation was established in Filey in 1904 with the opening of the Convent of the Sacred Heart in John Street. Father Eugene Roulin, a French Benedictine monk, was sent by Ampleforth Abbey to act as chaplain to the sisters and he became the town's first resident Roman Catholic priest. This event re-established a link that had been severed during the Dissolution, and led to the building

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[4] Fearon, *Filey*, p. 16.
[5] Clive Price and Sister Anne Marie Crowley, *Serving God's People: Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Evron English Province of the Congregation 1904-2000* (Altrincham, The Catholic Printing Company, 2002).

of St Mary's Church, an Italianate building, in Brooklands which was opened in May 1906. This development clearly met a need especially for the many visitors who frequented the town, and an extension was added and the new building opened in 1961.

The Anglican St Oswald's Parish Church still dominates the town from the hill on the north side of the Church Ravine. Named after the Saxon king of Mercia in AD 642, it is not known who built the church although tradition says it was the Augustine Canons from Bridlington Priory. Archaeological evidence suggests that the Church was built between 1180 and 1230 during a very turbulent period of English history, and there have since been a number of changes and restorations.[6] The local population was initially served by priests from Bridlington Priory and following the Dissolution by a parochial chaplain, with curates supplied by the Vicar of Folkton and Hunmanby. In 1839 the Revd. Thomas N. Jackson had the building restored and sought to obliterate any remaining traces of Roman Catholicism by painting the walls to hide medieval murals. Statues were destroyed and the altar was moved from the sanctuary to the porch.[7] The first vicarage was built in 1845, although the vicar remained non-resident and employed an assistant curate for Filey until 1871. Several incumbants then served the village for short periods until the appointment of the Revd. Arthur Neville Cooper in 1880.

While Mr Cooper was popular some thought him arrogant.[8] Even so he clearly cared for his parishioners and one of his first acts on being appointed was to set up a collection on behalf of the fishing families who had lost their men-folk at sea. Having moved to Filey Mr Cooper was too poor to hire a carriage and so walked to his various meetings around the county. The experience led him to visit many parts of

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[6] Fearon, *Filey*, p. 14.
[7] Ibid, p. 96.
[8] Oral testimony from various people resident in Filey today.

Britain on foot as a result of which he became known as the 'Walking Parson', and he later extended his walking tours to the continent and published several books and articles on his exploits.[9] St Oswald's Church thrived under his care and he regularly held four services on Sundays with an average out-of-season congregation of 500, which seems to have been a significant improvement on earlier numbers, such as that of 1851 census, which gives only an evening congregation of 80 (See Table 5). Under Mr Cooper's care attendance numbers appear to have increased significantly during the summer months although by the end of the nineteenth century attendance had begun to decline and this has continued up to the present day. Mr Cooper remained vicar of the parish for fifty-five years until his resignation in 1935. During his incumbency he worked closely with other church leaders and became friendly with the Roman Catholic priest, Fr Eugene Roulin, and the two worked together amicably for the benefit of the local population. Mr Cooper was also able to view things from a wider perspective than just the institution. In his book 'The Curiosities of East Yorkshire', he commented on the ornately designed font at Cowlam, saying: '(it) bears a number of sculptured figures and is reminiscent of the days when sacred and secular things were blended together as they ought to be'.[10]

With the development of the resort during the late nineteenth century there was clearly a need for another church in south Filey and an iron church was erected in 1857 in West Street to seat 350 people. This served until 1871 when a stone building, a Chapel-of-Ease to St Oswald's, dedicated to St John the Evangelist, replaced the iron structure. These corrugated structures became very popular in the late Victorian era, often known as 'Tin Tabernacles', and many were supplied to missionary

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[9] Ibid, p. 100; Many of Mr Cooper's books are subtitled 'By the Walking Parson'. See for example, A. N. Cooper, *Across the Broad Acres by the Walking Parson* (London, Brown & Sons, n.d.)

[10] A. N. Cooper, *The Curiosities of East Yorkshire* (Scarborough, E. T. W. Dennis & Sons, c. 1920), pp. 61-63.

organisations as a cheap means of providing places of worship for growing congregations. They were useful, too, for the growing towns and villages, and Filey was just one of several fishing communities that adopted the approach – in Grimsby, for example, an 'iron church' was erected on the docks to meet the needs of the rapidly growing number of dockworkers and fishermen there.[11]

While John Wesley visited many of the communities along the Yorkshire coast he did not visit Filey, and when Methodists missionaries tried to preach in the town they failed to make much of an impact. Those who attempted preaching in the streets faced a tough time being tormented and pelted with dried fish by the locals. It was not until 1806 that a Wesleyan mission was established in Filey, and a *society* was established in 1810 – although numbers did not increase rapidly, there being only fifteen members in 1823.[12]

The Primitive Methodists later sought to improve on this. Primitive Methodist tradition paints a picture of Filey, prior to its missioning by John Oxtoby in the early 1820s, as a town in which 'Drunkenness, Sabbath breaking, swearing , cock-fighting, card-playing, and similar evils were very prevalent.'[13] Today we might rephrase this to say the explanation was a natural psychological adjustment used to justify the change, although from the fishermen's personal perspective such a change was no doubt very real. But exactly what that change was and why it was necessary remains obscure with the various reports being written by parties who had a vested interest in claiming they were (or rather God was) responsible for a major change in the local moral climate. Shaw noted in his biography of Oxtoby that an earlier biographer had

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[11] *Grimsby News*, Friday, 9 December 1881; Ian Smith, *Tin Tabernacles: corrugated iron mission halls, churches and chapels of Britain* (Pembroke, Camrose Organisation., 2004).
[12] Shaw, *Our Filey Fishermen*, pp. 16-17.
[13] Ibid, 1867, p. 19. See also *W. Howden, 'On the Work of God at Filey'* (*PMM*, 1823), p. 255.

claimed he had 'lived a life of most abandoned wickedness'. [14] But even Shaw

contested this view saying that the evidence taken from recollections by those who

knew Oxtoby in his youth pointed to an honest man and a regular churchgoer. Such

distortions of history, as Stephen Hatcher has pointed out, are usually made about

towns and individuals prior to a period of revival when the missioning group writes its

own history.[15] Sadly, very little objective evidence now remains about the events of

1823, although we will explore the issues further in Chapter 5.

It would in any case appear that the Filey Revival of 1823 lasted

approximately two years, and the event would not have appeared in a social, political

and economic vacuum. While many of the actual events in the Filey of 1823 are now

lost to us there are some small lights that can be thrown on the era. It would thus

appear that while Oxtoby was, according to Methodist writers, the right person in the

right place at the right time, the previous work of the Wesleyan Methodists had

prepared the ground for revival. Even so, despite the initial boost to Primitive

Methodist membership in the early 1820s numbers remained fairly steady in the

1830s before beginning to climb during the 1840s. The Wesleyan Methodists,

however, did rather better with membership figures in the 50s and 60s from the mid-

1820s (Appendix 8c2).[16] Not surprisingly, increasing membership led to extensions

being added to the Primitive Methodist chapel in 1843 and 1859, and in 1865

fundraising began for a new building, the Ebenezer Chapel, which was opened in

September 1871 with seating for 900 people. Fish feasts and fish suppers were held

regularly and attracted several hundred people at a time, and the by now well-

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[14] Rev Geo. Shaw, *The Life of John Oxtoby* (London, William Andrews & Co, 1894 - reprinted in 2002 by Hype Print, Pickering, North Yorks.), p. 12.
[15] Hatcher, 'The Origin and Expansion of Primitive Methodism', p. 519.
[16] East Riding Archives, Beverley: *July figures for the Bridlington Circuit* (MRQ 1/36: 1736-1838).

established fishermen's choir dressed in local ganseys sang at chapel meetings and open-air services at the cliff top.[17]

The Wesleyans experienced some benefit from the Revival and increased their membership throughout the nineteenth century, eventually opening new premises in Murray Street in 1876, which was built in the early Gothic style with a spire, allowing the building to make a clear statement about the Methodist presence in the town. The Wesleyans and Primitives, however, continued to worship in separate buildings until the 1970s when the Ebenezer Chapel was closed in May 1975 and the two congregations united with the chapel simply being renamed Filey Methodist Church.[18]

Given the increase in membership of both the Primitive Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist congregations we might expect there to have been something of a decline in membership of the Parish Church, but this appears not to have been the case although there is an odd anomaly of a dramatic decrease of Anglican baptisms with a subsequent rise in Methodist baptisms from the mid-1860s during the high point of the North Sea fishing industry (Appendices 9c and 9d). It was not uncommon for locals and visitors to attend both Anglican and Nonconformist services, and the Revd Jackson (inducted to St Oswald's Church in 1832) replied to Archbishop's Thompson's Visitation (1865) question 'What dissenting places of worship are there…?' by saying 'I am almost incapable of affording a direct answer, as very many of the Methodists, the only dissenters in the place, divide their attendance between Church and Chapel.[19]

Other smaller groups had, from time to time, attempted to establish themselves there, although none appear to have had the success of the Primitive and Wesleyan

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[17] Fearon, *Filey,* p. 103-4.
[18] Ibid, p. 104.
[19] Edward Royle & Ruth M. Larson (eds), *Archbishop Thompson's Visitation Returns for the Diocese of York, 1865,* Borthwick Texts and Studies, 34 (Borthwick Institute for Archives, University of York, 2006).

Methodists. By 1851 over three hundred locals were attending Primitive Methodist

services, as Table 5 for the 1851 census demonstrates. The figures here suggest that

the Anglicans did not initially lose a significant number of people to the Primitive

Methodists, although there is clearly a dip in the number of Filey baptisms at St

Oswald's during the period 1865-1885 (appendices 9c and 9d). This rise in Primitive

Methodist baptismal numbers is also similar for Grimsby and Scarborough and

reflects an increase in the wake of the fishing industry which reached its peak c.1880.

Table 5: Filey results of the 1851 Religious Census.

Church/Chapels/Meeting Places		Seating			Numbers present at 1851 Census			Sunday School	
		Free .	**Other .**	**Free Space**	**am**	**pm**	**eve**	**am**	**pm**
C of E	St Oswald's	120	280			80			45
Methodists (Wesleyan)		158		266	84				
Methodists (PM)		80	270	50	120		300	107	107
Totals		**358**	**550**	**316**	**204**	**80**	**300**	**107**	**152**

4.3   Religion in Scarborough

Theakston's guide of 1841 makes the point that 'Probably no town in the

empire, of the same size, possesses a greater number of places for the worship of God

than Scarborough.'[20] With fourteen religious congregations, including St Mary's

Church, it seems likely that there was room to meet the needs of the population of

9,515. By the 1881 census of religion, conducted by the *Scarborough Mercury*, there

were forty-four churches with accommodation for 20, 362, and a total of 20,709

attending services on census Sunday although a number of these would have attended

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[20] S. W. Theakston, *Theakston's Guide to Scarborough* (Scarborough, Theakston, 2nd edn. 1841), p. 41.

more than once (Appendix 8b3).[21] In 1881 Scarborough had a population of 30,484, so, even with a number attending more than once the figure is still very high.

Robin Gill has commented that 'Among these smallest towns, Scarborough seems to present the most startling evidence of the effectiveness of vigorous church building.[22] In the light of this the figures for 1872 provided by the *Nonconformist* (Appendix 8b2) seem to be exceptionally high - until we discover that thirty-seven villages outside Scarborough were included.[23] Even so, the situation in Scarborough, Rotherham and Sheffield was, for Gill, somewhat exceptional in that for each area attendance was good, while for most other places the church-building programmes tended to provide far more space than would be used by the local populations. By 1901, therefore, the presence of over 50 religious groups must have provided more than adequate seating for Scarborough's population of 38,161 (Appendix 8b1).

Scarborough, like Grimsby, experienced a dramatic increase in church growth after mid-century, although both towns had a long history of religious presence. St Mary's Church, for example, was built in the early twelfth century and an early close link was established with the Cistercians. Jack Binns has commented here that:

> The day before he set sail from Dover, 11 December 1189, Richard Lionheart sealed a charter granting the revenues of the parish church of Scarborough to the abbot of Citeaux to pay the expenses of the general chapter there.[24]

Binns goes on to note that there was apparently an ulterior motive in Richard's gift – that of ensuring favoured hospitality as he marched his army overland to Marseilles en route to Palestine. The tithes granted to the Cistercians included locally caught fish, with Scarborough fishermen paying 'a tithe of every fortieth cod and every twentieth

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[21] Details reported in the *Scarborough Mercury* (10 Dec 1881).
[22] R. Gill, *The 'Empty' Church Revisited* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2003), p. 101; See also Appendix 8b1. Gill may not have been aware that church building in Grimsby was even more dynamic with eight places of worship in 1851 and 36 in 1881.
[23] See the letter to the *Nonconformist* of 15 January 1873 by Robert Balcarnie (Appendix 8b2).
[24] Binns, *The History of Scarborough,* p. 19.

herring and other catches'.[25] All of this suggests a thriving local fishing industry during the twelfth century.

Various religious orders owned property and/or lived in the town during the medieval period although only St Mary's survived the effects of the Reformation and Dissolution and remained Scarborough's only parish church between 1649 and 1828 with seating for 1300. The 1851 census shows 800 attending the morning service and 450 the afternoon service (Table 6), while Archbishop Thompson's Visitation Returns for 1865 show about 400 attending the winter services and approximately 1500 attending the summer services. This figure, however, does seem to be a little optimistic given the seating numbers.[26] It would, nevertheless, appear from these figures that St Mary's did not lose many members with the building of the new St Thomas' Church in East Sandgate in 1839 specifically for the Sandside fishing community. The vicar of St Thomas's church appears to have provided some form of welfare services for the local people as in 1904 the vicar, as instanced in a note by Revd. C. H. Clissold, wrote in the parish magazine:

> I came here as your vicar not as a relieving officer. It has, I am afraid been the custom of some to expect, or rather demand as a right, money, coal, or groceries. I want to speak plainly so that these may not mistake me. My work amongst you is to look after your religious life, to hold services, to visit the sick. And, as far as I have the power, to give them a few nourishments, etc.[27]

Given the wide variety of social support offered by similar churches, for example, at St Andrew's, Grimsby, it would appear that the vicar was pulling back from a period during which more substantial help was offered to the local community. While the new building on Sandside increased Anglican accommodation it seems that the Nonconformists were not only growing much faster than the Anglicans but could not

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[25] Ibid, 2001, p. 20.

[26] Royle & Larson (ed), *Archbishop Thompson's Visitation Returns, 1865*.

[27] Cited in the *Scarborough Mercury* (Friday, 27 January 1956).

provide sufficient seating for the numbers of people attending services. Among the Nonconformists, members of the (Quaker) Tindall family converted Scarborough's ancient Town Hall into a chapel, c.1800, in order to provide services for the employees of their extensive Sandside shipbuilding yards. The building later passed through many hands, although its function remained religious, including being rented by the Port of Hull Society in the 1830s, and later sold to the Wesleyan Methodist Society subsequent to being rebuilt as a nondenominational Bethel Mission supported by a number of religious organisations providing services primarily for fishermen and their families.[28]

The results of the 1851 census for Scarborough (Table 6) may be compared with the results of Archbishop Herring's Visitation Returns for 1743.[29] Herring identified 120 Presbytarians and 120 Quakers living in the town, and both groups had licensed chapels there. The 1851 census shows a significant increase in numbers here with 406 Presbytarians attending evening services. But by 1881 the numbers appear to have decreased significantly in that only a total of 93 attended the morning and evening services. The Quakers also had a large community here in mid-century having opened their Meeting House in 1676 with seating for 400 - although no attendance numbers were provided on the 1851 census. Attendance for 1881 was 138 in the morning and twenty-one in the evening (Appendix 8b3). Other Nonconformist groups, such as the Baptists, have long resided in Scarborough (see Table 6 and Appendix 8b3).

During the early eighteenth century a small number of Roman Catholics first met at houses in King Street and later at a small chapel in a house in Westgate. Archbishop Herring's Visitation recorded there being three families of Roman

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[28] *Scarborough Evening News,* 12 May 1988, p. 15 and 8 Aug 1989, p. 11; Theakston, *Guide to Scarborough*, p. 55; Binns, *The History of Scarborough*, pp. 168, 253.
[29] Ollard & Walker (eds), Archbishop Herring, *Visitation Returns, 1743* .

Catholics living in the town in 1743 and 24 in 1780, which was significantly less that in other Yorkshire coastal communities, such as Whitby which had 25 Roman Catholic families. A number of French emigrant priests joined the group during the years of the Revolution, and towards the end of the eighteenth century a group of between 40 and 80 members attended meetings overseen by an itinerant priest. There was a Roman Catholic Priest in 1788 and a small Catholic chapel was built in 1783 in Aubrough Street. A larger building was erected in 1809 with seating for 400 people, perhaps in anticipation of later changes, especially Roman Catholic emancipation in 1829.

While Methodism began in Scarborough before John Wesley's first visit in 1759, by the time of his death in 1791 there were 621 Methodists in the town. By 1851 over 1,300 Wesleyans attended the evening services at four Methodist Chapels (Table 6). The first Methodist preaching house in Scarborough was built in 1756 in Foster's Yard, and by 1770 Scarborough was the head of a Methodist circuit. This was replaced by a new building in Cross Street in 1813, which was in turn subsequently replaced by a Methodist Chapel in Queen Street in 1839.[30] While Wesleyan Methodism attracted high numbers of 'respectable' Dissenters, the poor and the fishing community tended to prefer the Primitive Methodists, and the one Primitive Methodist Chapel recorded on the 1851 census shows 560 attending evening service in 1851.[31] By 1881 this number had doubled with 1,042 people attended morning services and 1,212 in the evening (Appendix 8b3).[32]

William Clowes had preached in the open-air at Scarborough in 1821 and founded the Primitive Methodist Society there. Several temporary places were initially used for worship, and the first Primitive Methodist building, a home-made

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[30] Binns, *The History of Scarborough,* pp. 204-5.
[31] Mann, 'Census of Great Britain (1851): Religious Worship'.
[32] *Scarborough Mercury*, 10 December 1881.

structure, was erected in 1821 by local fishermen in St Sepulchre Street on the site of the Franciscans' Church of the Holy Sepulchre. A more substantial chapel was built in 1830 and the work grew rapidly. In 1840 a second, larger building, with seating for 600, was erected on the same site. Expansion continued and in 1861 a new church was built in Aberdeen Walk, named Jubilee, and in 1864 an even larger building was erected and opened a year later named the St Sepulchre Street Methodist Church. As with the Wesleyan Methodists numbers were significantly higher in 1881, hence, with the exception of some smaller groups the Nonconformists clearly did well in recruiting members. From these figures Methodism was very popular in the town, with the Primitive Methodists tending to attract fewer members than the Wesleyans.

Overall the 1851 Census of religion shows a total morning attendance for the fourteen churches as 3,926, and an evening attendance of 3,931. The 1881 figures show a total of 9,042 people attending morning services, 10,515 in the evening, and a general total of 20,707 worshippers, including plural attendance. With a population of 12,158, in 1851 and 30,484 in 1881 over half the population in 1851 and approximately two thirds of the population in 1881 appear to have attended services on census Sundays. In other words the numbers of attendees at church services appears to have increased significantly over the thirty years between 1851 and 1881.

Table 6: Scarborough results of the 1851 census of Religion[33] (excluding Scalby, Scawby, Burnston, Cloughton, Stainton Vale and Harwood Dale).

Church/Chapels/Meeting Places	Seating			Numbers present at 1851 Census			Sunday School	
	Erected	Free .	Other . Free Space	am	pm	eve	am	pm
C of E St Mary's	Consecrated before 1800	426	875	800	450		76	170
C of E Christ Church	Consecrated 1828	550	750	750		800	115	
C of E St Thomas	Consecrated Oct 1840	340	120	180		120	40	
RC	Erected c. 1817		170 . 40	150		230		

[33] 1851 Census of Religion (Borthwick Institute, York University, MF 116/525).

Methodists (Wesleyan) George St	Erected 1847	194	72	80	Special event day.			61	67
Methodist (Wesleyan) Queen St	Erected	480	142		1054		1195		
Methodist (Wesleyan) Tabernacle	Erected 1838	60	560		60		120		
Methodist (Wesleyan)	Falsgrave Erected 1836	50	120			33	60		56
Methodists (PM)	Built 1821 Rebuilt 1839	60	505		300		560	180	
Independent Bar St	Erected 1850	220	200	200	209		406	No Sunday Sch.	
Quaker	Built 1801	400							
Particular Baptists (Ebenezer)	Erected 1826	185	655		220	50	300	70	85
Independent (Old Meeting House)	Erected before 1800	40	550	20	167		140	15	
Sailors' Bethel (Bethel Mission)	Erected since 1800	400			36 in week-day meeting			No Sunday Sch.	
Totals		**3,405**	**4,719**	**340**	**3,926**	**533**	**3,931**	**557**	**378**

4.4   Religion in Grimsby

Given the 'frontier' situation in Grimsby during the mid-nineteenth century it might be expected that the churches, especially the Nonconformists, would have responded to missionary work with enthusiasm. Indeed prior to Horace Mann's Religious Census of 1851, and his subsequent report, the lack of church involvement with the lower classes was generally evident - and afterwards there was plenty of incentive for 'aggressive missionary zeal',[34] but apart from the work of the Methodists and a few other groups in Grimsby there was little effective response until the 1870s (See Appendix 8a1). On the other hand the work of the Temperance Associations and Friendly Societies was well-established by the 1840s and when we look back to the period preceding 1870 we find that there is not quite the lack of religious influence in the community that might at first be thought. The previous thirty years were characterised by the pervasive influence of the temperance movement, which was not merely aimed at reducing the intake of alcohol, but was characterised

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[34] Mann, 'Census of Great Britain (1851): Religious Worship'.

by a range of moral concerns and social activities. The well-attended meetings and numerous events suggest a comprehensive lifestyle that was later mainly focussed on the churches – especially after 1860 when the temperance movement became dominated by the middle classes.[35]

The churches were of course very much involved in the temperance movement during its heyday, and once the movement lost its impetus for the workers it was perhaps natural for some of the people to retain links with the religious institutions. The Band of Hope (founded in Leeds in 1847) seems to have been very much a link between the early and later developments of the Temperance movement.[36] In 1883, for example, a memorial temperance demonstration in Grimsby was attended by 4,056 children (all members of local Sunday Schools). The procession extended over a mile in length, with musical concerts by groups a thousand strong, several visiting bands and representatives of twenty-one local schools.[37]

The community of the old town with its culture, identity and stable organisations found itself in conflict with a rapidly growing new town, which had little in the way of a coherent culture and identity. The various influences in the new town (small racial, cultural and religious groups, Friendly Societies, teetotalism, churches, etc.) all contributed to an emerging culture that would, by 1900, embrace both old and new towns, and help to give the town a common identity.

With the apparently sudden urge to build churches, chapels and meeting places, the figures in Appendix 8a1 give the impression that there was a rush in the 1870s to meet a need that had been growing during the previous twenty years (in early 1868 there were only eight churches and chapels in the town, yet by 1881 there were 36).

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[35] Ernest Cabon, 'Intemperance and Temperance', BA Dissertation (University of Hull, March 1994), Copy in Grimsby Reference Library.
[36] B. Harrison, *Drink and The Victorians: The temperance question in England 1815-1872* (Keele, Keele UP, 1994), pp. 178-179.
[37] B. Lincoln, *The Rise of Grimsby,* Vol. 2 (Grimsby, Farnol, Eades, Irvine & Co, 1913), pp. 136-137.

The impression is that of a growing gap between church and population which was only closed when the population growth was at its most dramatic (over 40 new churches and chapels were built between 1868 and 1900). Part of the reason for this 'explosion' of religious building was linked to the immigration of significant numbers of people from specific religious groups, such as the growing number of Primitive Methodists and the Jewish community, although we cannot discount competition between the denominations and the desire to build ever more elaborate buildings as a statement of each denomination's status.

The Grimsby Hebrew Congregation founded in 1865 initially met in private houses. A synagogue was opened in Clyde Street in 1874 and later moved to Strand Street (1878). This was subsequently replaced with a purpose-built building consecrated in Dec. 1888 as the Sir Moses Montefiore Synagogue in Heneage Road.[38] Although the Grimsby Jewish community had no maritime background, members did get involved with the fish trade as trawler owners and fish merchants from at least 1878.[39]

The missionary role of the churches can be seen as one influence among several that helped to establish an emergent culture and identity in Grimsby. It might, for example, be expected that new churches had an initial period of influence whereby they attracted high numbers in the short-term, then lost members before reaching an equilibrium. Hence, Alan Gilbert's argument that revivalism is a short-term response to a social and economic crisis is especially pertinent – although care needs taking over how we use the term revivalism here.

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[38] D. & L. Gerlis, *The Story of the Grimsby Jewish Community* (Hull, Humberside Leisure Services, 1986), pp. 18 and 25.
[39] Ibid, p. 104.

Prior to the influence of Methodism in Grimsby there was no real challenge to the authority of the established church, even though the various churches and other religious institutions of the medieval era had disappeared, leaving only St James as the parish church. In 1757 the Wesleyans established a meeting house in the Bull Ring, with a second in New Street in 1808 and a third in George Street in 1847; the Congregationalists also opened a chapel in Silver Street in 1779; the Baptists opened their first local building in Burgess Street in 1824; and the Primitive Methodists, who had been introduced into the town in 1819, made use of a disused chapel in Loft Street in 1839 followed by a second venue in Victoria Street in 1859.[40]

The figures for the 1851 census are given below (Table 7 – although Cleethorpes, Clee and Scartho have been excluded). These show that a total of 5,682 people, including Sunday School children, attended worship on Census Sunday. Horace Mann thought that a deduction of one third would provide a reasonable approximation of actual non-attendance of those attending more than one service. A realistic attendance would be 3,500 individuals – less than half the Grimsby population of 8,860, hence, Church attendance in Grimsby would appear to be similar to the national figure. At this point there appear to have been sufficient seats for the numbers present, although less than half the seating required for the total population – and the Church of England was clearly under-represented, even with the additional figures for Cleethorpes, Clee and Scartho.

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[40] *The Grimsby and Cleethorpes Directory and Illustrated Visitors Handbook*,(Grimsby, Albert Gait), 1871; White's Directory,(Sheffield, Wm White), 1872,1882, 1892; Kendall, *The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church,* Vol. 1, pp. 447-448.

Table 7: "Attendance at Religious Worship in Grimsby & District", 1851[41]

Church/Chapels/Meeting Places		Seating			Numbers present at 1851 Census			Sunday School	
		Free	Other	Free Space	am	pm	eve	am	pm
C of E	St James Church (c1365)	168	724	40	450		800	80	
RC	*The Ropery*	16	96	80	80	80			
Baptists	Upper Burgess St (c1823)	172	378		107		241		
Particular Baptist	*Odd Fellows' Hall?* Ladysmith Rd	120	130		70		50	97	97
Methodists (Wesleyan)	Bull Ring Meeting House (1757) *Apollo Lodge?* (1849)	100	70				170		
Ditto	New Street Chapel (1808)								
Ditto	George St (1846)	50	1000		796	133	1010	299	
Methodists (PM)	*Loft St* (1821)	160	530			350	500	136	136
Totals		**786** **(3844)**	**2928**	**120**	**1503** **(4837)**	**563**	**2771**	**612** **(845)**	**233**

By 1861 four new religious buildings had been added, yet the population had increased significantly to 11,067. Despite the enlargement of several churches and chapels the dramatic increase in population during the following ten years (from 11,067 to 20,244) left room for a more dynamic response. Hence, from the late 1860s there was a rapid proliferation of religious building – 24 new buildings between 1868 and 1880, and a further 17 between 1880 and 1900 (Appendix 8a1). The majority of these buildings were erected in the area bounded by the east side of Alexandra Dock, Cleethorpes Road, Park Street and Pasture Street to cater for the rapidly expanding population in the area.[42]

Many of these religious institutions had a specific interest in the fishing community, especially St Andrew's Church which was opened in 1870 in Freeman Street and quickly developed into a major focus for the fishing community, and the Church of England's baptismal figures (Appendix 9a) showed a sharp increase in baptisms for the fishermen's children. These figures to some extent are in inverse

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[41] Ambler (ed), *Lincolnshire Returns*.
[42] The area populated by the fishermen and their families was determined by data taken from both the censuses and baptismal records. The map in Appendix 3a shows the extent of the Grimsby fishing community.

proportion to the baptisms in the Primitive Methodist chapels, which show an increase in fishermen's children being baptised during the period 1846 to 1868 in Circuit One. It is somewhat puzzling, however, to see a dramatic decline in such baptisms during the 1880s. And while St Andrew's Church appears to have benefited from this decline for a while, we see that the increase was only sustained for a couple of decades - by 1900 the number here was also in decline. It is possible that in the short term the increasing numbers of baptisms for St Andrew's Church following 1890 (and the decline in numbers for the Primitive Methodists) merely reflects a change of status (or allegiance) from Nonconformity to the Church of England for some fishing families. On the other hand, the situation might reflect the relative rise and subsequent national decline in church membership. It would be interesting to compare the baptismal figures for both the Roman Catholics and the Wesleyan Methodists but unfortunately neither list the father's occupation. Nevertheless, churches and chapels were not built in the knowledge that few people would attend.

The dramatic increase in religious buildings suggests that these buildings were being used, and the rise in baptisms of local fishermen's children during the period following 1869, suggests that the local churches and chapels were attracting support – despite some shifts in allegiance. Religious buildings have a number of functions: they make a statement about the social status of the group; they enclose 'sacred space', and the walls indicate a barrier that divides the sacred from the secular; and they make a visual statement about how the religious institution controls access to the sacred. The rapid growth of religious buildings in Grimsby during the 1870s and 1880s demonstrates the growing influence of the religious institutions in and over the local community.

It was during the period following mid-century that the Roman Catholics

began to re-establish themselves in Grimsby. The Lincolnshire Returns of the Census

of Religious worship for 1851 show that the local Roman Catholic community met in

an old building known as the Ropery, on Cleethorpes Road, under the oversight of

their first resident priest, Fr Patrick Joseph Phelan, who had arrived in 1850 'fresh

from Maynooth College.'[43] He instigated Sunday services in the town 'in an old

wooden shed, then known as the Baltic Warehouse, … an old warehouse without

windows, but well and conveniently situated and large enough to contain 500

persons.'[44] This was perhaps a rather optimistic move as, on average, services

attracted about 80 people, although Ambler's Report report on the 1851 census shows

there to have been a small but significant Catholic community made up mainly of

Irish immigrants who had been drawn to Grimsby to work on the new docks in 1846:

> From 170 to 200 men, in the prime of early manhood, say from 20 to 30 years
> of age, the majority of whom were married; perhaps five or six had attained
> the age of forty. They had nearly all of them been brought direct from Ireland
> by Mr Lynn (Lynch), a contractor, to work as navvies at the making of a
> Dock. This was a situation nearer to that in the manufacturing towns than in
> the country mission of rural Lincolnshire.[45]

Despite the growing community, Fr Phelan found it difficult to survive on the small

income that the local Roman Catholic community could raise and he departed for

Liverpool in 1852. It was another three years before local Catholics had their own

meeting place again, this time in an old warehouse at the River Head – reached by an

old flight of steps that became affectionately known as 'Jacob's Ladder'.

Chadwick says that Irish immigrants were distrusted for their language, their

religion and their social habits.[46] Whatever the reason, there was some anti-Catholic

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[43] W. Bedford, & M. Knight, *Jacob's Ladder, the rise of a Catholic community* 1848-1913 (Grimsby, St Mary by the Sea, 1990), p. 14.
[44] Ibid, p. 16.
[45] Ambler, *Lincolnshire Returns of the Census of Religious Worship, 1851.*

feeling in Grimsby during the early 1850s, whipped up no doubt by the 'Papal Aggression' of 1850. In this instance it was exacerbated by the visit of the itinerant apostate, Fr Allesandro Gavazzi who held a meeting in the Oddfellows' Hall and attracted a good number of Protestants.[47] But, as with other anti-Catholic outbursts in Britain during mid-century, the events quickly died down. The local outburst was in any case probably not simply the growth of the local Catholic community but the sudden influx of Irish navvies in 1851. By 1856 the Revd George Austin Bent was appointed priest in Grimsby and the town seems to have quickly accepted the Roman Catholic presence.

Financial support for the Grimsby Roman Catholic Mission was provided by Sir John Sutton (a wealthy convert), and the search for a suitable site for a church began in earnest during the 1860s with land eventually being bought in 1869 at Holm Hill. [48] Unfortunately, Sir John Sutton, after promising funding towards the building, died in 1872 leaving no funds for the project. Despite such setbacks further land was bought with the help of the Hon Georgina Fraser and the Church was erected in 1880 and formally opened in August.[49]

Following a 'scandal' in 1883 (the details were not been recorded) that led to Canon Johnson and Fr Barry, the curate, leaving Grimsby. The Bishop of Nottingham, Edward G. F. Bagshaw, supported by Cardinal Manning, asked the Sisters of a relatively new religious order, the St Joseph's sisters of Peace of the Immaculate Conception, to move to Grimsby. A period of unrest followed involving the coming and going of priests, which was finally resolved on 3 February 1884 with the

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[46] O. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church 1829-1859*, Part I (London, A&C Black, 1966), p. 272.

[47] Bedford & Knight, *Jacobs Ladder*, pp. 37-8 and 43: St Mary's Archive file, No. 6, Isaac Drakes, 'A Few Hasty Jottings From My Recollections Of Happier Days', pp. 43-44. See also Edward Norman, *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1984) for more information on Gavazzi.

[48] Bedford & Knight, *Jacob's Ladder*, pp.73 ff.

[49] Ibid, p. 88; *Grimsby News* (24 Aug 1883).

appointment of Fr Joseph Hawkins. A few week's earlier, on 7 January 1884, Bishop

Bagshaw had initiated St Joseph's Confraternity of Peace at St Mary's church. Named

after the confraternity at Knock, Co. Mayo, the Grimsby confraternity's main purpose,

as developed by Mother Clare, the leader, was to pray for peace. A magazine was

established (the St Mary's Magazine) and the confraternity became intimately

involved in running local social welfare services, lunches for hungry youths, a library,

and so on.[50]

In 1892 the Confraternity began work with seafarers and fisherlads. A

Fisherlads' Committee was established in August 1892 by the Hon. Mrs Georgina

Fraser, who appears to have been very active in National Roman Catholic circles,

especially in her work on behalf of Catholic seafarers.[51] A year earlier, the Catholic

Truth Society (CTS) had formed a committee to provide literature for Catholic

seamen. Mgr John Virtue, Bishop of Portsmouth, had been elected Chairman, and the

Hon. Mrs Georgina Fraser was appointed Secretary. Some members of the

international Apostleship of Prayer, led in Britain by Miss Mary Scott-Murray and

Miss Margaret Stewart, established the 'work for catholic Bluejackets', and sent out

the first batch of literature on 31 July 1891.[52] Father Goldie SJ, editor of The

Messenger of the Sacred Heart, agreed to compile a prayer book, which he called *A

Guide to Heaven for Use of those at Sea*. This was subsequently accepted as the

official Roman Catholic prayer book in the Royal Navy. This initiative by the CTS

and the Apostleship of Prayer was followed up on 3 June 1892 with a meeting of the

CTS Congress in Liverpool, where the topic of discussion was 'How can we help our

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[50] Bedford & Knight, *Jacob's Ladder*, pp. 109, 121-122.
[51] Miller, *From Shore to Shore*, p. 62
[52] The Hon. Mrs Georgina Mary Fraser, only daughter of George F Heneage of Hainton Hall, Co. Lincoln, married Lt-Col. The Hon. Alexander Fraser, second son of the twelfth Baron Lovat. An obituary appeared in the *Tablet* (31 March 1928). See also *Burke's Peerage*, 1959. Miss Scott Murray was a Lovat grand-daughter, *Bournmouth Daily Echo* (18 April 1928).

seamen?' (including fishermen), and reference was made to the work in several ports, including that of Canon Hawkins in Grimsby. Fr Goldie argued that the work should be organised under the local confraternities rather than being left to the overworked parish priest, and he argued for the establishment of homes similar to those run by Miss Agnes Weston in Portsmouth and Devonport.[53] He also argued for the establishment of a trained Catholic Sea Apostolate, although it was to be another thirty years before this was inaugurated.[54]

Despite the Roman Catholic developments that were quietly taking place in British ports during the early 1890s, fishing apprentices seem to have been largely ignored and Canon Hawkins and his colleagues were left to their own devices in developing an appropriate response to the needs of the local Catholic apprentices. A Fisherlads' Committee was established in 1891 for this purpose as an aspect of the work of the Confraternity:

> Notice cards were placed at the Ice Company's Fisherlads' Home and at the Home run by the North Sea trawling Company. A register was started to keep track of Catholics – 37 being noted at this time – and the boys invited to make use of the Guild-room when in port.[55]

A club was opened for the fisherlads and within a year over 100 apprentices were registered, although most were acknowledged to be not 'practical Catholics'. Magazines, books and newspapers were distributed among the boys by the Confraternity and the Committee members kept up a correspondence with the Catholic fisherlads at sea. Of this work, Canon Hawkins wrote in the *Tablet* (30 Oct 1893):

> To be chained for long years in apprenticeship to the hard calling of deep-sea fishers… penned for ten, twelve or fourteen weeks at a time within the narrow

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[53] *The Messenger of the Sacred Heart* (May 1890).
[54] Robert Miller, 'Ship of Peter: The Catholic Sea Apostolate and the Apostleship of the Sea' (unpublished MPhil thesis, Institute of Marine Studies, The University of Plymouth, April 1995).
[55] Bedford & Knight, *Jacob's Ladder*, p. 123.

compass of the trawler, the Catholic fisher lad stands unsupported often among a course and ignorant crew – the mark of ribald jeers, his religion the target for every species of contumely. And joined to this is the insidious whispering of the would-be proselytisers – the Protestant chaplain or the self-elected 'Evangelist' of the mission ship.

The first report of the Confraternity, published in 1893, gives a number of reasons for the lapsed faith of many young Catholic fisherlads:

1) There was almost a total failure to notify the removal of boys from schools, union, reformatories, etc., to the parish priest or other Catholic authority in the fishing ports. Out of 100 lads on the register of St Joseph's Confraternity, only 26 had been notified as coming to Grimsby.

2) Although the usual age was thirteen to fifteen, only the smallest percentage of these boys had any definite knowledge of the Catholic faith. This want of instruction was the most important factor working for their spiritual death. It was rare to find one who had been confirmed, rarer still to meet one who had received the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist. Only fifteen lads were entered as confirmed.[56]

Given the problems facing the Roman Catholic fisherlads, the Confraternity urged that Catholic lads should not be sent to Grimsby, and it was not long before these views were being reported in several newspapers. In the light of growing national interest, Mrs Fraser asked Fr Hawkins to present a paper to the Annual Conference of the CTS, which was due to be held in Portsmouth. As Fr Hawkins was in America at the time, a Prefect of the Confraternity formulated a paper with Fr Hawkins and passed it to Mr Britten, the CTS Secretary, who read it at the Conference. The report urged:

if it were desired for a boy to lose… all religious feeling and moral influence – a surer, a more certain method could not be devised than to send him, at the most critical time in his life, friendless into the midst of the open vice and immorality of the greater part of the fishing community of Grimsby. It would be better, infinitely better, for the lads to remain in the poorest capacity on land.

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[56] P. Anson, *The Church and the Sailor* (London, J Gifford, 1948), p. 56.

Fr Hawkins, wholly supportive of the work among fisherlads, was nevertheless concerned at the lack of practical support from some members of the Confraternity. At the half-yearly meeting in 1893 he said that he

> … considered the confraternity as a body had failed to render the aid they might have done in parish matters and warned them against the tendency to drift into the spirit of a club, instead of realising the higher ideals of the associations.[57]

By the mid-1890s the number of fisherlads under the care of the Confraternity was reduced, mainly because of the failure of a large fishing company in 1895-6, which resulted in the sale of a hundred fishing smacks.[58] The Annual Report of the Seamen's Branch of the CTS in 1895-6 stated that as a result of the sale 100 fisherlads lost their employment – 40 of whom were said to be Catholics. The last entries in the register of the confraternity appear in 1897, following which the association appears to have ceased and the club rooms closed. Of the 100 fisherlads on the register it seems that almost all were subsequently lost to the Catholic Church.[59] Although other priests followed Canon Hawkins' example there was no co-ordinated Catholic approach to caring for members of the fishing community until the advent of the international Apostleship of the Sea in 1921/2.[60]

Grimsby is a particularly helpful situation in which to explore the development of the various groups and the influence that these groups had on the emerging wider culture. As can be seen from the above, civic leaders emerged especially from the Methodists, Jewish and Roman Catholic groups. A further important factor in the development of an emerging culture is the gradual assimilation of the wider culture's norms, something that takes place over several generations. The

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[57] *Faith of Our Fathers: St Mary's Magazine,* reference: 2/1893 (1893).
[58] Anson, *The Church and the Sailor*, p. 58.
[59] Anson, Ibid, pp. 55-58. The register now appears to have been lost although Anson was able to view it and recorded the details given above.
[60] Miller, 'Ship of Peter', 1995, p. 123.

third generation members established themselves more extrovertly in the locality with important social, economic and political roles.[61] Such examples here are the civic and business roles that Primitive Methodists, Jewish and the Roman Catholic individuals and groups attained towards the beginning of the twentieth century. There were, therefore, a number of important points in the development of the wider social identity among group members. At this point the norms of the group and of the wider community tended to merge and a sense of a local culture gradually emerged and developed. Those groups from a specific religious tradition tended to have a significant influence on the development of the community and culture, perhaps because their concept of a godly community was clearly developed. Their support for the temperance movement and its ideals was also especially evident.

Perhaps significantly each of these groups was motivated by religious beliefs and practices, and each had experienced a degree of opposition and abuse in their early establishment in the town. Even those groups with a common geographical basis, such as the fishing families from Sherringham maintained a strong religious foundation – although they tended to merge more quickly with the wider community. More recently those fishermen from Denmark that settled in Grimsby during the 1950s and 1960s gradually assimilated to the extent that their own culture and traditions have been largely abandoned as the local fishing industry has been decimated as pubs closed and centres of Danish social life disappeared.[62]

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[61] Lincoln provides a number of examples of primitive Methodists and Jewish men who achieved a high status in the town: see, for example, Lincoln, *The Rise of Grimsby,* Vol. 1, pp. 124, in which he identifies an influential group of Primitive Methodists.

[62] There is very little published information on the Danish community in Grimsby, although Rob Robinson has a brief reference in his book, *Trawling*, p. 1800; It would appear that the first Danish immigrants (Anders and Nicoline Olsen) opened a Delicatessen in Grimsby in 1900, and a Sailors' Home for visiting Scandinavian fishermen in 1901 (Edward Drury, *The Great Grimsby Story, Book 2, 1870-1940*, Cleethorpes, Kingsway Printers, pp 50-51).

One other movement that had a significant influence on the emerging culture, hinted at in the discussion on the work of St Joseph's Confraternity, was that of the maritime missions. These missions have been largely ignored by historians although like the temperance movement they had a significant impact on the development of the wider culture and community.

4.5   Maritime Missions

Yorkshire and Humberside fishing communities were regularly visited by maritime missionaries during the nineteenth century, and many communities had their own maritime missions.[63] Yet, it was not until 1881/2 that a dedicated maritime mission, the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, concerned itself solely with fishing communities, although why this should be the case, at the very point where the fishing industry had reached its zenith, is not immediately clear.[64]

The maritime missions were strongly dependent on the work of the literature distribution societies, which had emerged during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The interdenominational 'Religious Tract Society' (1799) and 'The British and Foreign Bible Society' (1804) were especially influential and gave rise to a number of auxiliaries along the Yorkshire coast, including the Scarborough Auxiliary Bible Society (1812) which later joined with the Scarborough Bible Association with John Rowntree (the Quaker) as President. Whitby, too, had a number of such societies, including the Whitby Auxiliary Bible Society (1812) and

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[63]Among the many travelling missionaries one of the most well known is William Sharrah of the Sailors' Children's Society who regularly visited the many ports along the East coast during the last quarter of the nineteenth century: *Ashore and Afloat* (Sailors' Children's Society), July 1908, p.153.

[64] The *Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen* was initially an aspect of the work of the *Thames Church Mission* but became independent in 1886. The society's vessels were modified into floating hospitals in 1888, under the direction of Sir Frederick Treves. The society was given 'Royal' status in 1897. For a chart showing the development of British maritime missions see Appendix 10c.

the Whitby Marine Bible Association (1816).[65] Grimsby at this point was still a market town and it was not until after mid-century that the maritime missions developed their work in the port.

In the meantime other developments took place, including a revival on the Thames in 1814, which became the genesis of the later *Bethel Movement*. This movement derived its name from the Bethel flag designed by Wesleyans at Rotherhithe and eventually adopted by various maritime mission societies. Copies of the flag were presented to ship's captains who hoisted them on the Sabbath day to invite seamen to attend religious meetings.[66] The Bethel Movement declined after mid-century when much of the maritime mission work became dominated by a small number of national societies, although some of the smaller independent organisations, such as the Port of Hull Society, survived although undergoing several changes of name.[67]

The early nineteenth century also saw the broader development of social and welfare support for fishermen and their families along the Yorkshire coast. Among the earliest institutions was the use of Scarborough's old Town Hall building as a chapel c.1800, which served both Tindall's workmen and the local fishermen.[68] At Flamborough a Fisherman's Fund was established in 1809; the Scarborough British and Foreign Seamen's Friend and Bethel Union which was formed in 1822; and a

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[65] G. Young, *A History of Whitby and Streoneshalh Abbey* (Whitby, Young, 1817), Vol. 2, p. 631; and G. Young, *A Picture of Whitby and its Environs*, Second Edition, 1840 (Horn and Richardson), p. 242; George Young was a secretary to various of these societies and contributed annual reports on their work to *The Sailor's Magazine and Naval Miscellany* (London, W. Simpkin and R Marshall, 1822), See, for example, Vol. III, pp. 351and 407-408; annual reports also appeared in *The Whitby Repository and Monthly Miscellany*, (Whitby, R. Kirby) beginning with Vol. 1, January 1825, p. 26 Kverndal, *Seamen's Missions*, , pp. 135-149.

[66] Kverndal, *Seamen's Missions*, especially Part II: 'The Birth of the Bethel Movement'.

[67] Alston Kennerley, 'British Seamen's Missions in the Nineteenth Century', in Lewis R Fisher, Harald Hamre, Poul Holm & Jaap R. Bruijn, *The North Sea: Twelve Essays on the Social History of Maritime Labour* (Stavanger Maritime Museum/The Association of North Sea Societies, Stavanger, Norway, 1992), p. 83.

[68] J. Rushton, *They Kept Faith* (Scarborough, Rushton, 1967), p 265; Binns, *The History of Scarborough*, p. 168.

Fisherman's Refuge was established in Staithes and Runswick in1834. (At the other

end of the century the Flamborough Fishermen's Coble Insurance Association and

Widows and Orphans' Fund was established in 1884).[69]

   The Port of Hull Society for the Religious Instruction of Seamen, founded on

19 April 1821, developed a range of facilities for seafarers including, on 3 October

1821, the opening of a 'Seamen's Chapel' called the *VALIENT* (see appendix 10b).[70]

Other ports along the Yorkshire and Humberside coasts had insufficient depth of

water to take the hulks, although a number were stationed in the River Humber as

isolation hospitals, prisons and training ships. Practically all the larger British ports

had such 'floating churches', and in 1826 Dr William Scoresby of Whitby moved to

Liverpool to become chaplain to the Liverpool Mariners' Church Society, based on

HMS TEES.[71]

   The hulks (survivals from the Anglo-French wars) refitted as floating churches

and chapels gradually gave way to vessels which began working among the fishing

fleets as sailing churches/chapels and hospital ships. These provided literature,

woollens, and other day-to-day necessities for the fishermen, as well as holding

services on board. On shore the provision of orphanages, reading rooms, help with

letter writing, savings schemes, support for families (especially in times of illness,

accident and loss), and accommodation as an alternative to that provided by crimps

and the more disreputable hostels. The missions were also active in providing

maritime training schools so that men and boys could be encouraged to develop their

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[69] *The Sailor's Magazine and Naval Miscellany*, Vol. IV (April, 1823), p. 197; Robinson, *Trawling*, p. 20; R. Fisher, *Flamborough: Village and Headland* (Wm Andrews & Co, Hull), 1894, pp174-175; G. H. Traves, *Flamborough: A Major Fishing Station* (Traves, Flamborough, 2006, pp181-224; For the *Flamborough Fisherman's Fund* see the document in Beverley County Record Office, reference number PR 2366/6; and for the *Fisherman's Refuge* see the *Yorkshire Gazette*, 18 January 1834.
[70] *The Sailor's Magazine,* Vol. II (1821), pp. 339-340;Vol. III (1822), pp. 36, 490, 496–499; *The First Report of the Port of Hull* Society (Hull), 1822, pp. 12-13.
[71] *The New Sailor's Magazine*, Vol. II, (August 1828), p. 467; also Kverndal, *Seamen's Missions*, pp. 287-291.

maritime skills and thereby rise in their profession. All these innovations influenced developments in fishing ports around the coast and especially in the growing ports along the coasts of Yorkshire and Humberside.

The nineteenth century development of maritime missions was therefore complex, with organisations springing up all around the British coast as well as on canals and inland rivers. Some such missions were lay-led, others were initiated and developed by local clergy, but in all cases maritime missions were a new development that bridged the gap between institutionalised and popular religion and included a range of innovations to achieve their objectives.

While the Wesleyan Methodists were active in helping to develop maritime missions, Kendall's History gives the impression that the Primitive Methodists had little to do with seafarers until their establishment in Hull during early 1819,[72] by which time the Bethel Movement had taken hold and the Wesleyan Methodists had long established themselves in many of the coastal communities. Several references in the early Primitive Methodist magazines suggest, however, that the Primitive Methodists were familiar with the developing work among seafarers. The early Primitive Methodist magazines printed examples of this work taken from the maritime mission literature, hence, there was clearly some cross-fertilisation.[73] Nevertheless, apart from this use of such literature there was very little mention of the maritime missions in either the Primitive Methodist magazines or the diaries of Clowes and other itinerant Primitive Methodist missionaries. As a result it is difficult to gauge the degree of cross-fertilisation with any accuracy.

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[72] Kendal, *The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church*, p. 375.
[73] For example, an article entitled 'Remarkable Conversion of a Sailor', was taken from the *Sailors' Magazine* and reprinted in the *PMM* in 1823, p. 137; and the following year another article from the *Sailors' Magazine* for April 1824, entitled 'A Sailor Carried Overboard' was reprinted in the *PMM*, p. 187.

While the main maritime mission work was initially undertaken by Nonconformists the Anglicans soon became involved and developed the Episcopal Floating Church Society (1825) and the Evangelical Thames Church Mission (1844). The Missions to Seamen, representing the Broad Church, drew together many Anglican initiatives under its wing in 1856; and the St Andrew's Waterside Church Mission, a High Church society, was founded in 1864.[74] During the later years of the nineteenth century the growing professionalism of the clergy in the revitalised Anglican Church provided the opportunity for clergy to become more familiar with the communities they served, and during the 1870s and 1880s a significant number of Anglican clergy in fishing ports gained the respect of their parishioners as a result of their local engagement and commitment. In Filey, for example, Canon Cooper endeared himself to the local fisherfolk at the beginning of his ministry by making a collection of their behalf and subsequently taking an interest in their daily lives.[75] Both the Mission to Seamen and the SAWCM provided chaplains for work at sea and in the harbours during the 1870s. The Vicar of St Thomas' Church in Scarborough became the chaplain of the Missions to Seamen when their premises were opened in 1891, and after the closure of the Missions to Seamen premises in 1938 St Thomas's established the St Thomas' Mission and Seamen's Institute, which provided a range of facilities and services especially for the fishermen and visiting Scottish herring girls.[76]

The SAWCM supported the development of a number of local missions, including the North Sea Church Mission established by the Vicar of Gorleston in 1894. In Grimsby the Revd Meddings visited the fishermen at sea on the specially

[74] L. A. G. Strong, *Flying Angel* (London, Methuen & Co) 1956; John Scarth, *Into All the World* (London, Griffith, Farran, Okeden & Welsh), 1889.
[75] Fearon, *The History of Filey*, p. 100.
[76] *Scarborough Mercury* (Friday 27 January 1956).

adapted vessel, the *GOSHAWK*, which, having been donated to the SAWCM, was loaned for Mr Medding's use. The Grimsby mission also made use of a small vessel, the *WATER KELPIE,* located in the harbour to provide pastoral support for the fishermen. In June 1895, Mr Medding's curate, Mr Best, joined the North Sea Church Mission as a 'sailing curate' attached to two vessels, the *SAPPER* and the *GOSHAWK*; and another Grimsby curate eventually became the vicar of St Thomas' Church in Scarborough, which had been erected as a chapel of ease of St Mary's Church especially for the fishing community. As a result there was a good deal of cross-fertilisation among the various east coast maritime missions.

The link between St Thomas' Church and the SAWCM was established in 1876 when the Revd. W. C. Downing gave his support to the idea, and some 'ladies …established Sunday classes for the fisher lads'.[77] The work continued for a few years although the last reference to the link with the SAWCM appears in the society's Report for 1880. Hence, the Revd. Clissold's criticism of local people for approaching the vicar of St Thomas's Church for welfare support (see page 98) seems to be an implicit reference to this earlier phase of the local work.

Despite constant problems of funding and the lack of a permanent mission vessel, the Grimsby work developed at an accelerating rate with ten members of staff employed in 1892, and a range of buildings being erected to meet the demand:

> Seven hundred and eight smacks were supplied with parcels of reading (between June and December, 1890), their delivery on board giving good opportunity for personal intercourse and intimacy with the crews…. One of our large Day Schools has been used as a Mission Room for Sunday Evening services, and has had a regular congregation of from 100 to 200 people; thus preparing for the new Fishermen's Church which is being built close by.[78]

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[77] SAWCM Report (1876), pp. 16-17.
[78] SAWCM Report (1890), pp. 60-61.

The SAWCM did well during the 1890s but the growing financial demands led to problems in the early twentieth century resulting in the work being taken over by the Missions to Seamen (as was the work of the Thames Church Mission). Other evangelical maritime missions remained independent (especially the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, the British and Foreign Sailors' Society, and the Seamen's Christian Friend Society). The Salvation Army also developed its own 'Salvation Navy', launching the *IOLE* in 1885, and possessed four vessels by 1900, although the heavy costs of the work led to the selling off of most of the vessels in the early twentieth century.[79]

A significant aspect of organised maritime missions is that, like the Primitive Methodists, the initiatives often came from ordinary working men and women. Even so, it was not long before the work came under denominational control and a more general move towards middle-class influence. Is was not until the 1860s -1880s, especially with the growth, for example, of the Salvation Army, that people began to acknowledge that working people were generally more influenced by people from their own class. Many of the missionaries employed by the Primitive Methodists were ordinary working people who had a talent for preaching – although the quality of the preaching was not always high. Similarly, many of the missionaries working for the maritime missions were working people, and this was especially the case with the advent of the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, when ex-fishermen were used to sail the vessels, acting as missionaries when they could. Some such eventually became well-known missionaries in their own right, such as William Smedley, one-time skipper of the RNMDSF vessels and later missionary for the Sailors' Children's

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[79] R. Miller, 'The Salvation Navy', *Mariners' Mirror* (February 19970, pp. 91-94; 'Formation of the Naval Brigade', *The War Cry*, 30 October 1886.

Society of Hull, who established and ran the Smedley Institute in Grimsby during the early twentieth century.[80]

The Roman Catholics were somewhat slow to develop their organised maritime mission work in Britain perhaps because of other more demanding concerns, such as adjusting to the need to fully establish a hierarchy following emancipation in 1829 and the somewhat unfortunate political fall-out from Archbishop Wiseman's attempt to exert the Roman Catholic presence more forcefully in 1850. Yet Roman Catholics had been present in some coastal communities such as Scarborough and held positions of responsibility well before 1829. And in Grimsby St Joseph's Confraternity was established in 1891 with a particular concern for Catholic fishing apprentices. It was presumably not accidental that the establishment of the Confraternity here not only followed in the wake of Archbishop Manning's successful arbitration in the London Dock Strike of 1889, but also Pope Leo XIII's encyclical of 1891, *Rerum Novarum*, in which Catholics were encouraged to become directly involved in helping to improve the living and working conditions of the poor.[81] While the Apostleship of the Sea did not formally come into being until the early 1920s the work here had its genesis much earlier with the brief development of a 'maritime apostolate' in 1895, although this did not survive the ravages of the 1914-1918 war.[82]

At the end of the day the aim of the nineteenth century maritime missions was to support the churches rather than to supplant them – although each mission tended

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[80] *Grimsby Evening Telegraph*, Friday August 21, 1942: 'Great Work of Smedley Institute'; 'Capt. W. H,. Smedley', (*The Helmsman*, the mission magazine of the Port of Hull Society, Vol. 15, No. 65, May 1933, pp. 50-51); also correspondence between Stephen Friend and Mr Smedley's daughter, Mrs Doris L. Rippon, 25 June, 1985.

[81] G. P. Connolly, 'The Transubstantiation of Myth: towards a new popular history of nineteenth-century Catholicism in England' (*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 1984, Vol. 35, pp. 78-104). Connolly argues that the social work of the Catholics in England began well before the mid-nineteenth century. Also, J. McCarthy, *The Great Dock Strike 1889* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson), 1988, p. 127, provides a quote from Ben Tillett in which he praises the Cardinal for his work in helping to bring about a resolution to the strike (*The Times*, Saturday 31 August 1889).

[82] Letter by Father Gérard Tronche, dated 31 January 1997, reprinted in the International Association for the Study of Maritime Mission, (*IASMM Newsletter,* Spring 1998), p. 8.

to have its own particular theological slant and churchmanship whether this was High

Church, Broad Church, Evangelical or Roman Catholic.

Chapter 5:   The People and the Churches

5.1   Introduction

Unfortunately, membership records for the religious institutions along the Yorkshire coast during the 1820s are incomplete, but Filey histories make much of the revival that took place there in 1823 and had a long-term impact on the village, including a significant influence on the identity of the community and its inhabitants. Revivals are important in that they embrace both institutional and popular religion. They have also been the focus of a significant amount of research by scholars such as Thompson, Gilbert, Luker and Morrell.[1] There appears to be a fairly general agreement on the link between social conditions and the nature of revivals although the actual mechanics have been hotly debated. There is also the problem that much of the nineteenth century comment on revivals tended to be made by those with a strong sympathy for the movement. Thus, while George Shaw commented that the Filey Revival of 1823 brought religion to the village, Valenze pointed to much earlier religious activity there.[2]

The following discussion therefore pays particular attention to the Filey Revival and examines the extant evidence, including written accounts (although these tend to be somewhat subjective), and the more objective material found in membership statistics and baptismal records. As such, the chapter provides a link between the discussion in chapter four on institutionalised religion and that in chapter six on the nature and impact of popular religion. We will also examine the influence

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[1] Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*; Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England*; Luker, 'Revivalism in Theory and Practice'; Morrell, D. J. 'Some Aspects of Revivalist Charismatic Movements in England, 1800-1862' (unpublished MPhil thesis, Manchester University, 1987).
[2] Howcroft, 'The Work of God at Filey'; Shaw, *Our Filey Fishermen*; p. 18; Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters,* Chapter 11.

of revivalism on fishing communities more generally, especially during the early nineteenth century, making comparisons between revivals in Cornwall and those among the Yorkshire and Humber fishing communities.

The concept of 'revivalism' refers to a movement within the Christian tradition that places a particular emphasis on emotional and subjective experience. The phenomenon has a long history although its modern expression is embedded within the Puritan and Pietistic reaction to Enlightenment rationalism and tends to be associated with American evangelical religion. Eighteenth and nineteenth century influences were particularly associated with Theodore J. Frelinghuysen (New Jersey, 1725), Jonathan Edwards (New England, late 1730s), George Whitefield (American colonies and Britain, 1738), John Wesley (Britain), Charles Grandison Finney (especially during the 1820s and 1830s) and Dwight L, Moody and Ira D. Sankey who had an important influence on British evangelical and revivalist religion during the1870s and 1880s. There were also a number of influential female preachers working with the various revival movements in Britain and America. Significant among the early women here was Ann Cutler who was cited by William Bramwell as 'the principal instrument in the beginning of the late revival of the work if God in Yorkshire and Lancashire.'[3]

5.2   The Influence of Revivalism

The numerous religious revivals during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had a major influence on religion internationally, although revivalism in Britain never achieved the respectability it had in America and it tended to be seen as

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[3] W. Bramwell, *A Short Account of the Life and Death of Ann Cutler*, (Sheffield, 1796); also Memoir of the life and Ministry of the Rev. William Bramwell, by members of his family (London, 1848); see also Baxter 'The Great Yorkshire Revival', p. 49; Valenze, *Propetic Sons and Daughters*, pp. 52-55; Carwardine, *Transatlantic Revivalism*, pp. 187-188.

a peripheral aspect of British religious life although very much at the heart of evangelical spirituality. At the same time concern was expressed about the physical effects encountered, which involved not only singing and dancing, but jumping, shouting, falling, jerking, rolling and making animal noises. Alongside these manifestations there were many other charismatic phenomena such as glossolalia, healing, prophecy and visions along with a strong emphasis on millenarianism. Old superstitions and folk beliefs and practices also tended to be incorporated into the faith world of the revivalist adherents, hence revivalism was closely inked to personal (popular) rather than orthodox institutionalised religion.[4] While some religious traditions, especially those closely allied with evangelicalism, were sympathetic, others were not happy with this situation nor with the emotional excess that characterised some revivalist meetings. Hobsbawm commented that revivalism was

> Totally untheological, unintellectual and emotional. It is characteristic of working-class sects that they were designed for the uneducated, so that passion and morality, in which the most ignorant can compete on equal terms, were the exclusive criteria of faith and salvation.[5]

Yet such emotionalism was evident well into the nineteenth century and beyond.[6]

Following the death of John Wesley in 1791 there was a fragmentation of Wesleyan Methodism that led, on the one hand, to a conservative, bureaucratic and middle-class emphasis in the parent organisation, and, on the other hand, to the emergence of a number of Methodist sects that placed a much greater emphasis on emotional experience and on relating to the working classes. Such movements included the Primitive Methodists, Magic Methodists, Band Room Methodists and, in the South West, the Bible Christians. Of these the Primitive Methodists became the

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[4] W. Johnson, 'Between Nature and Grace: the Folk Religion of Dissident Methodism in the North Midlands, 1780-1820', *Staffordshire Studies*, Vol. 5 (1993), pp. 73-76.
[5] Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels,* p. 127.
[6] Extracts from a Methodist journal kept during the period 1874-1875 in the Methodist Recorder, XXXIX (1898), No. 2044, pp. 92-93.

more prominent and were especially influential among traditional working class communities.[7] Open-air and camp meetings were popular, and American preachers, such as Lorenzo Dow, visited Britain to help and advise on the running of such meetings. Despite the early opposition that he faced from the Wesleyans, the Primitive Methodists quickly warmed to him and adopted his methods. Such was the impact that these meetings became a popular form of Christian mission well into the twentieth century.[8] Wesleyan Methodism also experienced a number of internal breakaway movements such as the Wesleyan Reform Union and the United Methodist Free Church, reacting to the bureaucratization of the parent body.

Until the early nineteenth century revival was thought of as essentially spontaneous, with God's spirit moving where it willed. Then between 1825 and 1830 the American, Charles Finney, popularised a range of techniques, which he called the "New Measures". His success in a spectacular series of revivals, especially in the cities, brought his ideas to the attention of a wide audience.[9] The innovations included the introduction of lengthy evening services, prayer meetings, publicity, well-organised and coordinated meetings and the introduction of an 'anxious bench' at the front of the meeting to which ardent enquirers were invited during the service for counselling and support.[10] His success ensured that his approach was taken seriously.

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[7] Some scholars view the concept of 'traditional communities' as problematic. M. Estelle Smith, for example, says 'There is, of course, no such thing as a traditional culture, if by that we imply "long standing, unchanging, and somehow more authentic than what will be tomorrow." Such traditional innovative contrast is a heuristic fiction of historical analysis.' *Those Who Live From the Sea,* p. 14.
[8] Carwardine, *Transatlantic Revivalism*, pp. 206-7.
[9] C. G. Finney, *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*, Fifth edn. (London, 1838).
[10] The use of lengthy services became common in the1840s, and the Rev Henry Woodcock described just such a revival meeting in Bridlington during the mid-1840s: Woodcock, *Piety Among the Peasantry*, 1889, p. 51.

5.3   Factors Influencing Revivals

Much of the research on religious revivals has tended to concentrate on the mechanisms involved and the social, economic and political environment in which revivals are said to be likely to occur. Such conditions have been variously noted especially by Halévy, Hobsbawm, Thompson and Gilbert.[11] Baxter, in his work on the Great Yorkshire Revival of 1792-6, pointed out that this revival occurred during a period of political repression. But he went on to say that while periods of social, economic or political unrest could be important factors in periods of revival, other factors could be equally relevant such as a large movement of population, for example, urbanization or emigration – such as resulted from the collapse of copper mining in mid-1860s Cornwall, or the widespread onset of a particularly virulent disease such as Cholera.[12] At the same time, Baxter (anticipating the work of later researchers) went on to argue that religious revivals have an internal psychological dynamic of their own.[13]

Despite a few exceptions, then, there was until recently a generally undue emphasis on the external conditions. But this can be very misleading and a later generation of researchers, such as David Luker, John Rule, Julia Stewart Werner and David Hempton argued for a different emphasis.[14] Luker, in particular (perhaps drawing on the work of Baxter and Werner) pointed out that 'there are very real pitfalls in approaching revivals essentially from the outside and attempting to explain

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[11] E. Halévy, *A History of the English People in 1815* (London, Penguin, 1938); Hobsbawm, 'Methodism and the Threat of Revolution in Britain', pp. 115-123; Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class.* pp. 411-440; Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England*, pp. 23-46.
[12] Luker, 'Revivalism in Theory and Practice' p. 610; also J. Rule, 'Explaining Revivalism: The Case of Cornish Methodism', *Southern History*, Vols. 20-21, (1998-99), p. 182-183. See also J. Holmes, *Religious Revivals in Britain and Ireland, 1859-1905*, (Dublin, Irish Academic Press, 2000).
[13] Baxter, 'The Great Yorkshire Revival, 1792-96', p. 58.
[14] Luker, 'Revivalism in Theory and Practice', p. 603-619; J. Rule, 'Explaining Revivalism'; J. S. Werner, *The Primitive Methodists Connection – Its Background and Early History* (Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin Press, 1984); D. Hempton, *Religion and Political Culture in Ireland* (Cambridge, CUP, 1996).

their occurrence merely or primarily by reference to secular trends or preoccupations', and he went on to say that in the case of Cornish revivals 'the actual mechanism of revival was initially internal. Cornish revivals universally had their origins within the Methodist Societies'.[15]

Rule supported Luker's thesis, maintaining that 'revivalism in Cornwall is best understood in terms of a dynamic internal to the local religious culture'.[16] But despite Rule's claim that revival was not always linked to outside problems he did point out on several occasions that revival in Cornwall took place during times of difficulty. For example, 'The 1826 revival at Mousehole broke out at a time when there had been no fish caught for some time. That of 1848, like that of 1821-2 was at least intensified by outbreaks of cholera.'[17]

Drawing upon the work of Finney,[18] Werner clearly supported the argument that revivalism has an inner dynamic of its own. Discussing the Wesleyan revivals of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries she moved the discussion on by clearly articulating important elements of the internal dynamic. This includes a dependence on four factors: (1) a *network* of preachers, (2) a *desire* for revival, (3) acceptance of *innovations*, and (4) a means of *communicating* revival experiences in the circuits.[19] These factors also embrace a degree of heightened *expectation*. Nevertheless, a situation reflecting these factors alone may be insufficient to bring about revival. At the same time it is important to note that these factors indicate a good deal of internal harmony within the churches and chapels concerned with the expectation of revival. Taking account of the earlier research, Janice Holmes has recently pointed out that 'New interpretations of revivalism are at pains to stress the

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[15] Luker, 'Revivalism in Theory and Practice', p. 604
[16] Rule, 'Explaining Revivalism', p. 185.
[17] Ibid, p. 182.
[18] Especially Finney, *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*.
[19] Werner, *The Primitive Methodist Connection*, pp. 33-34.

importance of community, regional identities and social factors like the threat of cholera, mining disasters or the influential American revivalists'. Even so, she pointed out that 'Most historians now recognise that there is no direct correlation between the outbreak of a revival and either economic depression or the failure of political radicalism.'[20] Other scholars have been more willing to accept that it is not helpful to reject the external factors completely. David Hempton, for example, offered a more balanced view, arguing that

> Although there is some evidence to link revivalism to economic dislocation and political repression, there is a general acknowledgement that religious revivals had internal social and psychological dynamic regardless of external circumstances.[21]

He then went on to argue for the importance of two fundamental factors within Methodist communities – a *desire for revival* and a *sense of expectancy*. Luker, too, reinforced this need to take internal factors into account:

> The case of Cornish revivals suggests a general need to delineate with greater care the mechanisms of revivals and to focus on internal developments within the churches just as much as on external circumstances which might help or hinder their progress.[22]

If an emphasis is placed on both the internal and external factors, it would be helpful to identify those situations that were conducive to a revival. But such a strategy is by no means a simple option, as the various theories put forward indicate. Indeed, as Hempton pointed out, linking Methodist growth to national periods of social, political and economic change and trying to impose inflexible models is fraught with difficulties. As with Rule, Hempton argued strongly for an emphasis on regional and chronological interpretations.[23]

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[20] Holmes, *Religious Revivals in Britain and Ireland, 1859-1905*, p. xv.
[21] Hempton, *Religion and Political Culture in Ireland*; p. 30.
[22] Luker, 'Revivalism in Theory and Practice', p. 619.
[23] Hempton, *Religion and Political Culture in Ireland*, p. 27.

Perhaps the most we can argue is that given certain favourable internal and external conditions a revival is a possibility, although this presupposes a culture in which revival is an accepted form of religious experience. And whether it remains local or expands to a wider community also depends on a range of conducive factors. Prior to c.1840 such revivals may well have appeared to be miraculous, but as evangelical leaders moved towards embracing 'organised revivals' the situation was no longer clear-cut. Some organised revivals would work in the face of difficult social, economic and political conditions because the internal and external conditions were right, others had little or no effect despite the internal and external conditions being favourable. There must also have been many instances of apparent revival where the enthusiasm of those involved simply caught on with local people, and then petered out with little lasting effect.

The sense of heightened tension resulting from the incongruity present between the internal and external conditions of a religious group may result in a sense of anxiety which can achieve some relief via the experience of revival. Indeed the inner state of the individuals concerned was such that a resolution of the increasing anxiety was actively sought and embraced. And while there may have been no conscious acknowledgement of this, the resulting experience of revival was expressed in physical and intellectual ways that indicate a release of anxiety. If no resolution was achieved then the group may well have found itself faced with members drifting away from the faith – not because they had merely lost their faith but because the sustained stress and anxiety was too much to bear and could quickly turn from a positive into a negative experience. This situation has been observed and analysed, though in different situations, by numerous people, including Leon Festinger and Jane Nadel-Klein.

131

In analysing group dynamics of millenarial cults, Festinger argued that disconfirmation of a group's strongly held belief (given certain preconditions) will result not in an admission of failure but in more active prosletyzing.[24] Thus with more people believing the message the psychological need for reinforcement is applied and the members of the committed group continue to believe, but with increased conviction. A response to the disconfirming event, Festinger argued, is therefore a *motivating* factor that seeks some form of resolution, just as hunger impels us to seek food. The expectation of revival, while not meeting all of Festinger's criteria (although it may well have done with those groups experiencing a millennial fervour), does nevertheless, bear some similarities to his general point that the experience of tension and anxiety clearly needs some form of resolution. Jane Nadel-Klein approached the problem from a different perspective.[25] Her research during the 1970s concentrated upon the experience of the small Scottish fishing community of Ferryden when a major oil base was established close to the village. Small fishing communities tend to be very inward-looking and self-sufficient, not least because they have low status in the wider community, hence with the threat of destruction of the traditional way of life for the fishing community by an oil giant members became more introspective and allied themselves to the Calvinistic Methodist chapel. Nadel-Klein argued that in doing this they were choosing a religious perspective that reassured the people of their equality with others before God, and thereby gave them status that was not otherwise available or obtainable. The Ferryden revival may therefore be seen as a short-term response to a particularly difficult situation.[26]

What can be said of revivals is that the nature of the experience was intense, creating anxiety and the need for some form of resolution, and, as such, its creative

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[24] Leon Festinger, *When Prophecy Fails* (London, Harper, 1956).
[25] Nadel-Klein, *Fishing for Heritage* (Ch. 4: Ferryden: Place, Power and Identity).
[26] Nadel, 'Stigma and Separation', pp. 101-115.

output has limitations. The tension between inner state and outer conditions cannot last, not least because social and economic conditions are in a constant state of change, and when a major factor creating the tension (be this the perception or the reality) is removed the creative aspect tends to dissipate. This seems to be true for any period of intense social creativity, with such periods lasting from just a few weeks to about five years.[27] Revivals in Yorkshire clearly followed this pattern, for example, the Great Yorkshire Revival of 1792-96 (as illustrated in table 7 below) and the Halifax Revival of Feb/Mar of 1875.[28]

Table 8: Membership of Methodist Circuits, 1790-1797

	1790	1791	1792	1793	1794	1795	1796	1797
Bridlington			350	354	450	450	500	477
Hull	665	664	663	640	1,200	1,280	1,290	1,200
Scarborough	652	621	607	683	800	500	530	550
Whitby	482	545	514	517	515	530	526	513

Source: Methodist Returns to July Conference (figures cited in J. Baxter, 'The Great Yorkshire Revival', p. 69.

Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that such events are not restricted to a single narrow cause, as pointed out by Thompson.[29] This may well apply to all intense periods of creative and religious experience, although the actual dynamics and mechanisms of religious revival can take various forms. There are, therefore, perhaps different models of revival that can be applied: local, national, international, ripple effect, and so on. Baxter's article (The Great Yorkshire Revival of 1792-96), for example, shows that new ripples of revival appeared on the outer rings of earlier ripples, until the whole eventually gradually died away following 1796 (Appendix

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[27] The Great Yorkshire Revival lasted four years from 1792 to 1796; the Filey Revival of 1823 lasted two years; others lasted from a few days to a few weeks.
[28] S. J. D. Green, *Religion in the Age of Decline: Organisation and Experience in Industrial Yorkshire, 1870-1920* (Cambridge, CUP,1996), p. 266.
[29] Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, pp. 919-920.

8e).[30] While they were some distance away from the centre of the Revival in Dewsbury, Grimsby and Cleethorpes were also influenced by the ripples and experienced a short-term Revival in 1794.[31] However, it was to be another generation later before Filey was influenced by a revival, this time initiated by the Primitive Methodists.

5.4   The Filey Revival of 1823

In the case of the Filey Revival of 1823, Valenze argued that not only did revivalism occur during a period of rapid social and political change, but the Primitive Methodists, with their embracing of local customs, festivals and superstitions, provided a link between orthodox religion and popular religion – thereby inculcating a sense of security and stability for the local population as the old culture moved towards the new.[32] The Wesleyans had by this period moved much closer to religious orthodoxy and there was resistance to popular religion. The Anglican Church during this period had no resident clergy in Filey, and no other denomination had a wide appeal. Valenze has summed up the local situation with the observation that 'The fisherfolk had religion in "three layers"… they were ardent Primitive Methodists, they gave the local church its due, and they were steadfastly superstitious.'[33]

Perhaps the localness of the 1823 Filey Revival was a result of the isolated nature of the village, although it should be noted that early nineteenth fishing communities were not necessarily as isolated as some inland communities, the

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[30] Baxter, 'The Great Yorkshire Revival 1792-96'.
[31] Frank Baker, *The Story of Cleethorpes and the Contribution of Methodism through two hundred years* (Grimsby, Trinity Methodist Church, 1953), p. 39.
[32] Details of the Filey Revival of 1823 are found in a number of sources, beginning with Howcroft, 'The Work of God at Filey', pp. 255-258. Later reports are to be found in J. Petty, *The History of the Primitive Methodist Connexion* (Updated by the Rev James Macpherson, London, J. Dickenson, 1880), p. 187-188; and Kendall, *The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church,* Vol. 2, pp 102-107; See also Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters*, p. 247.
[33] *Yorkshire Post,* 26 October, 1961; Valenze, Ibid, p. 247.

fishermen regularly meeting with other people in fishing ports around the coast and further afield. The women, too, were not as isolated as may be thought. 'Flithergirls' collected bait along the coast between Flamborough and Scarborough, sold fish in the surrounding villages – as far away as Pickering, and during the herring season women visited from Scottish fishing ports. [34] With all this movement inter-marriage was inevitable and the network of families stretched around the coast. The actual events of the revival, therefore, depended on the nature of the internal structures relative to the town and of the external conditions as well as the relationship between them.

Several people have noted that revivals performed a necessary function in sustaining church membership. Green, for example, observed that the Keighley Wesleyan Circuit in 1897 needed to recruit at least 10 per cent new members annually if it was to offset natural wastage. Other mission-oriented churches and chapels suffered a similar loss, and periodic revivals may therefore have been seen as a practical necessity. Even so, the nature of the new recruits was variable, as Green observed when he pointed out that the Harrison Road Congregation Church in Halifax lost 40 per cent of its members between 1876 and 1881.[35]

The complexity of social environments, however, means that it is very difficult to anticipate the actual appearance and development of a revival, although an *inner sense of harmony* in the face of rapidly changing external factors, and a *desire for* change would seem to be paramount. Other elements in the Filey Revival of 1823 can also be identified. The aggressive evangelism of the Primitive Methodists, embraced a range of approaches: the penitent seat in services, open-air meetings, parades, festivals, camp meetings, home visiting, cottage meetings, outings and teas.

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[34] It is not known when the 'flithergirls' began collecting bait along the Yorkshire coast, although in his diaries Arthur J. Munby referred to their well-established work during the 1860s (*The Diaries and Letters of Arthur J. Munby,* 1828-1910, Cambridge, Trinity College), especially Vols. 33, 35, 38 and 39. The 1861 census also identified twenty bait gatherers in Filey (Appendix 5c).
[35] Green, *Religion in the Age of Decline,* pp. 267-9.

Of the Oldham Primitive Methodists in 1839, Mark Smith has observed that they 'introduced a new revivalist technique to their connexion – a systematic series of "protracted meetings"'. Hence, there would appear to be a clear link here with the ideas of Finney.[36] A particular attraction for the Primitive Methodists in the early Victorian period must also have been the female preachers, at a time when other denominations including the Wesleyans were dissuading females from preaching.

Whilst the Primitive Methodist literature refers to numerous revivals in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire fishing communities during the 1820s, including Grimsby and Scarborough, special attention is often given to the Filey Revival of 1823.[37] But this particular revival presents us with a number of questions: what kind of revival was it, were the conditions as outlined by Werner met? What were the outside conditions of social and economic disharmony, and how long did the revival last?

While a good deal has been written in general terms about the Filey Revival, empirical evidence is sparse. The Primitive Methodist membership and baptismal records for the 1820s have not survived (although later records help to identify longer-term changes), and the baptismal records for St Oswald's show no significant change during the 1820s and 1830s.[38] Hence, it would appear that there was no immediate significant change of allegiance from the Anglicans to the Methodists, although there seems to have been some disillusionment with the Anglican curate with responsibility for Filey, the Rev Evan Williams, who was somewhat eccentric and had a number of clashes with the Filey population.[39] Mr Williams' curacy covered the period 1809 to 1833, so his eccentricities may well have had an important

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[36] Smith, *Religion in Industrial Society,* p. 183.

[37] Petty, Ibid, pp. 133-134, for example, says that Scarborough saw a in the society's numbers in January, 1821.

[38] The surviving records are tabulated in Appendix 8c3: the Primitive Methodists, March quarterly Schedules, R/M/Fil/1/1/6-8 (North Yorkshire County Record Office, Northallerton); St Oswald's baptisms, PE 142/5-7 (1813-1936), (East Riding Archives, Beverley).

[39] Fearon, *Filey*, pp. 71-73.

affect on local growing disillusionment with the institutionalised religious status quo.

Local economic problems at Scarborough may also have affected Filey. Binns has

noted that following Napoleon's blockade of British trade with the continent this had

an affect of Scarborough and the port never recovered.[40] Referring to Hinderwell's

history, Binns also pointed out that during the early nineteenth century the

Scarborough men failed to take advantage of the rich North Sea fishing grounds, and

the local fishing industry suffered a decline with a reduction from approximately 100

fishermen in 1803 to 60 in 1811, and even fewer by 1832.[41] At the time of the Filey

Revival of 1823 Baines' directory for Yorkshire stated that 'Scarborough's 'fisheries'

were 'not on a large scale'.[42] Further along the coast the Greenland whale fishery at

Whitby began to experience difficulties during the 1820s and the trade was curtailed

in 1837 following the return of several ships with no catches - the result of

overfishing.[43] This situation reflected the national economic problems in which,

following 1815, the price of fish fell, like other food, and did not recover until the

1830s.[44] Such economic problems impacted on all fishing communities including

Filey, and the Revival of 1823 may well have reflected some disillusionment with this

wider situation. Unfortunately, John Cole in his *History of Filey*, published in 1828,

does not mention the Revival, and there were very few contemporary publications

dealing with the events during this period.

At the same time as the economic situation affected the local coastal

populations allegiance was changing between religious groups, and the New Dissent

was rapidly gaining support. The Wesleyan Methodists had been slowly gaining

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[40] Binns, *The History of Scarborough*, p. 191.

[41] T. Hinderwell, *The History and Antiquities of Scarborough and the Vicinity*, second edition, (York, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme & Brown), 1811, pp. 242, 245; Binns, Ibid, p. 191.

[42] E. Baines (ed), *History, Directory and Gazetter of the County of York*, II (1823).

[43] J. Tindale, Fishing Out of Whitby, Dalesman Books, 1987, p. 25

[44] R. Robinson, 'The Line and Trawl Fisheries in the Age of Sail' (in Starkey, et al, *England's Sea Fisheries*, p. 74); also *Trawling*, pp. 18-19.

ground in Filey as membership had grown from 14 in 1810 to 28 in 1822, and from 26 to 66 between 1823 and 1825 – although two years later this number dropped to 16 members (Appendix 8c2).[45] There had also been a number of unsuccessful visits to the town by Primitive Methodists prior to John Oxtoby's visit in 1823. So there was a certain amount of preparation, and the expectation of revival on behalf of the Primitive Methodists coupled with the social, economic and political changes in the early 1820s was perhaps fertile ground for a revival event.

Kendall, drawing on Petty's work, suggested that the expansion of the Primitive Methodists during the early 1820s happened too quickly for the existing structures to assimilate, with the result that the quality of travelling preachers was not maintained.[46] As a result even Bourne expected Primitive Methodism to implode. Perhaps it was Filey's isolation that prevented significant difficulties here, although following the revival of 1823 there appears to have been a further increase in numbers up to about 100 members in 1824, followed by a sharp decrease to fifty the following year (Appendix 8c3).[47] During a period when there were less than 800 people living in the village the increase in Primitive Methodist membership represented a significant proportion of the local population. This situation also suggests that the revival for the Primitive Methodists (along with increased membership for the Wesleyans and the stability of the Anglican figures) was not a shifting of allegiance, but a revival in the sense of attracting new members to Nonconformist churches from Filey's wider fishing community – a situation that was maintained and confirmed by the increase in numbers evident in the 1851 Religious Census.

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[45] East Riding Archives, Beverley, Bridlington Circuit, MRQ/1/36 (1796-1838).
[46] Kendall, *The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church*, p. 434.
[47] Scarborough Primitive Methodist March Quarterly figures: R/M/Sc/1/2/1-4 (North Yorkshire County Record Office, Northallerton); Woodcock, *Primitive Methodism on the Yorkshire Wolds*, 1889, p. 36; Petty, *The History of the Primitive Methodist Connexion*, p. 188 says forty; Howcroft, in 'The Work of God at Filey', p. 255, says that within for or five weeks the numbers rose to 100.

Were the conditions outlined by Werner met? With regard to the internal conditions several points can be made: Oxtoby was a travelling Primitive Methodist preacher with a personal vision, who strongly desired revival and had developed a clear support network of preachers (factors one, two and four of Werner's thesis). Primitive Methodist innovations were also evident (factor three: open-air preaching and experiential meetings). As to the external conditions, 1823 was not long after the Anglo-French wars in which all seafaring communities around the British coast had been involved to a greater or lesser degree. The immediate euphoria following the victory subsequently gave way to disillusionment when the expected benefits failed to accrue. There was also a perceptible rise in the Filey population during the early 1800s (Appendix 4c) although there is little clear evidence as to why expansion should take place at this time. There was later a more significant increase by 1871 that reflected the growing importance of the leisure industry and saw the emergence of new Filey to the south of old Filey.[48] General changes in the fishing industry also affected the town, as did the growing demand for food by the rising urban population (met to some extent by the increasing importance of the herring industry).

When Oxtoby entered Filey in 1823 he claimed that the town had been noted for 'Drunkenness, swearing, Sabbath breaking, cock fighting, card playing and dancing.'[49] But such comments could have been levelled at most towns, and, indeed, such views are not uncommon in Methodist literature. George Lester, for example, discussing Grimsby prior to the advent of Methodism there, said

> (in 1743) the only places of worship were at St James Church, and a small meeting house in Silver Street. There was a general deadness to religion, rudeness, drunkenness, and Sabbath desecration prevailed. Bull-baiting had ceased to be a pastime, but other sports, scarcely less brutal and demoralising, were followed with avidity. Traditions touching certain of these, recall scenes

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[48] Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters*, pp. 259 ff.
[49] *PMM* 1823, p. 255; Such views were common in Primitive Methodist literature. See, for example, Woodcock, *Piety Among the Peasantry*, p. 62.

which would be amusing, but that they indicate the deplorable condition of the people morally.[50]

In contrast to these views, the historian Thomas Hinderwell, wrote in 1811:

> The inhabitants of Filey, consisting principally of fishermen and their families, are remarkable for their sobriety and industry, their cordiality as neighbours, and their intermarriages with each other.[51]

Having previously encountered little success in winning converts in Filey, Oxtoby pleaded with the Bridlington Branch for one more attempt. He later reported that after several hours of prayer outside the town he became convinced that his prayers had been answered and that the town was about to experience a revival and he expected eighty converts.[52] In the event there were initially forty converts although some appear to have left their new found faith within a short time and others joined the meetings over the following year.[53]

The 1823 *PMM* report stated that between March and June 1823 there was an increase of 36 members for the Bridlington Branch, although not all of these would have been for Filey. This figure should perhaps be balanced against the loss of 101 members between June 1823 and March 1825[54] (hence, Green's observation that at least 10 per cent new annual membership was required to offset natural wastage). Nevertheless, membership does not equate with attendance, and it is likely that many more people attended the meetings following March 1823 (the extant membership details for Filey start in 1835). Indeed for each fisherman who became a member there would have been several family members who thereafter attended Sunday services and children who attended the Sunday School. The numbers gradually

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[50] George Lester, *Grimsby Methodism, 1743-1889, and the Wesleys in Lincolnshire* (London, Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1890).

[51] Hinderwell, *The History and Antiquities of Scarborough*, 1811, p. 259.

[52] Woodcock, *Piety Among the Peasantry,* p. 36.

[53] Howcroft, 'The work of God at Filey'; Petty, *The History of the Primitive Methodism Connexion* , p. 188.

[54] Hatcher, 'The Origin and Expansion of Primitive Methodism in the Hull Circuit', p. 519

recovered following c.1862, and by 1881 membership reached a peak of 353 (Appendix 8c3).[55]

However, given the problems associated with personal accounts by those involved in the revival of 1823, and the gaps in the membership statistics for the Wesleyan and Primitive Methodists during the early 1800s, we must look to other sources for help. We can, for example, look to the baptismal figures for the early 1800s in order to supplement the membership figures surrounding 1823, and thereby hint at the longer term effect of the 1823 revival.

5.5   Baptismal Records

Baptismal records may not be the most helpful guide to membership or attendance at church services but they can be helpful as supporting evidence of allegiance, and in this sense some researchers have made good use of them, including Alan Gilbert and Stephen Hatcher.[56] For Hatcher the baptismal figures in the Hull circuit for the Primitive Methodists can be used as 'an index of expansion' (perhaps reflecting increased membership following a revival), and it is in this sense that the present data will be used. Unfortunately, the Wesleyan baptismal records for Filey do not begin until 1859, and the Primitive Methodist figures do not commence until 1863. In Grimsby and Scarborough the baptismal figures are available from an earlier date – but nothing from the 1820s. So while the Methodists' figures help to supplement membership figures after mid-century they are of little help in directly examining developments during the 1820s. On the other hand it should be

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[55] Filey Primitive Methodist Membership (March quarterly figures), R/M/Fil/1/1/6-8 (North Yorkshire County Record Office, Northallerton).
[56] Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England*; Hatcher, 'The Origin and Expansion of Primitive Methodism', pp. 390-405; See also, John Gay, *The Geography of Religion in England*, (London, Duckworth, 1971), who had earlier pointed out that baptized members of the Church of England represent 66 per cent of the total population, but that only 6 per cent attended Easter Communion, an obligatory act for Anglicans.

remembered that many Methodists continued to baptise their children at the local parish church, and the baptismal figures for Filey and Scarborough are available from a much earlier date. The baptisms for St Oswald's in Filey show a slight increase for 1824 (from 16 in 1823 to 21 in 1824), followed by a drop to 6 in 1825 before stabilizing again in 1825. This increase and decrease is similar for Scarborough, and are in any case fairly insignificant, hence we cannot link the Filey baptisms at St Oswald's with the Filey Revival.[57]

While the baptismal registers for the Primitive Methodists are incomplete with several missing for the first fifty years in Grimsby and Filey, the records for the years following 1860 provide an interesting insight into institutional allegiance. The results of the baptismal statistics for Grimsby, Scarborough and Filey are given in chart form in Appendices 9a-9d, where the figures present a surprisingly consistent pattern across the three towns.[58] It would appear, for example, that the Primitive Methodists did quite well in attracting local people during the period 1865 to the late 1880s in all three communities, while the Anglicans suffered a decline of baptisms during the same period.[59] The subsequent decline in Primitive Methodist baptisms may also indicate a sudden loss of members, although there is a related rise in the baptisms for the established churches. How can we explain this development? In terms of allegiance the records here suggest that both groups benefited at different times at the expense of each other. While this could be a fairly straight-forward relationship in Filey where there was no major development of dissenting religious institutions, there could nevertheless be an impact from the numerous new religious institutions during

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[57] Appendices 9c and 9d.

[58] Baptisms in Grimsby, Filey and Scarborough Churches (Northallerton, Lincolnshire and Beverley Archives – See Bibliography and Appendices for references); C. Field, 'The Social Structure of English Methodism: eighteenth-twentieth centuries', *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 28, No. 2. (June 1977), pp. 199-225.

[59] Appendix 9d (Comparative Baptisms: Grimsby, Scarborough and Filey).

this period in Grimsby and Scarborough. It should also be noted that the 1870s was the period when the nineteenth century fishing industry was at its height, although entering a period of economic uncertainty. It may also be the case that this period was significant for the Primitive Methodists in that we can see third generation baptisms. It may also have been a period of revival in the fishing communities resulting from the impact of maritime missions established specifically for fishing communities during this period, which first affected the Nonconformists and later the Anglicans?

5.6   Conclusion

Rites of passage associated with baptism provide us with some useful indicators as to why people place such importance on the event (and some of the relevant practices will be discussed in chapter six). The rites may also explain why the Anglican church continued to play an important role in the daily life of fishing communities. But they are not sufficient of themselves to explain the rise or fall of membership associated with this allegiance. For this we need to call upon the theoretical perspectives offered by a range of scholars. At first it seems that the baptismal statistics from Grimsby, Scarborough and Filey contradict the views advocated by E. P. Thompson.[60] But on closer examination it appears that we need to consider the changing nature of revival, in particular between the first and second halves of the nineteenth century. Thompson's claim that his theory could only be said to hold true for the period between 1790 and 1840 makes sense in the light of the findings of the present study. But we need to take note of the changes in the churches' understanding of 'revival' during the period after 1840, and recognise that we are dealing more with 'renewal' during this period rather than 'revival'. If the changes here are taken into account then Thompson and Hobsbawm still have much of value

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[60] Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, pp. 411-440.

to offer in their recognition of the importance of external factors. At the same time we also need to recognise the equal importance of internal factors and local conditions.

Hobsbawm has pointed out that there were several periods of Methodist expansion between 1793 and 1850. Then in the 1850s there was a 'net decline in their numbers' – years that also saw the decline of Chartism and radicalism.[61] If church and chapel membership is reflected by the improved material conditions then the improved economic situation in the year 1850 may well have reflected a low point for Nonconformist recruitment. During the 1860s the Primitive Methodists moved on from an accent on revivalism and became introspective, concerned with chapel building, ministerial training and a growing amount of liberality regarding entertainment.

In the light of this, the baptismal statistics obtained from Anglican churches and Primitive Methodist chapels in Grimsby, Scarborough and Filey (Appendix 9d)[62] are indeed a little puzzling. Given the sustained increase in population throughout the nineteenth century we might expect to see a gradual increase in baptisms across the board, with occasional small peaks and troughs reflecting changing allegiances from time to time, and larger peaks and troughs depending on the occurrence of revivals. It could even be the case that a major change of allegiance in one port could identify a period of revival in a particular institution. We would normally expect to see these peaks and troughs at different periods in the different towns. Perhaps with two towns close together (Scarborough and Filey) it should not be too surprising to find a similar trend. But when a distant town (Grimsby) is brought into the equation, and it, too, displays a similar general trend, we are left wondering why this should be the case.

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[61] Hobsbawm *Primitive Rebels*, pp. 129-130.
[62] The comparative baptismal data here has been compiled from the baptismal data for Filey, Scarborough and Grimsby (tabulated in appendices 9a-9c).

The statistics for the three towns do indeed display a remarkably similar trend. In each case the Primitive Methodist baptisms suddenly surge ahead, c.1870, at the expense of the Anglicans, and when the numbers decline, c.1889, the Anglicans appear to reap the benefits. What are we observing here? Do the records show two significant revivals, first for the Primitive Methodists and then for the Anglicans? But this depends on how we use the term 'revival'. However, one common factor is evident – the rise in Primitive Methodist baptisms occurred at the same time as the North Sea fishing industry achieved its peak. When the Anglican baptisms rose this reflected the increased involvement of Anglican clergy with the fishing community. Perhaps the changing nature of church leadership here played an important role in the situation. The census statistics show a general decline in numbers of fishermen and apprentices from c.1880 (a situation common to other fishing ports in Britain). Filey, however, as a small fishing port was to some extent sheltered from the economic problems of the larger towns, and we see a more stable situation – even a slight rise in numbers of fishermen (see Appendix 5c).[63] Many Filey fishermen also worked from Scarborough, so perhaps some returned to work from Filey during a difficult economic period. With the return to prosperity during the 1890's we see the Methodist baptisms take a downturn in favour of the Anglicans. Presumably this was a national trend as Owen Chadwick has pointed out that there was a steady rise in Anglican baptisms during the later years of the nineteenth century, the numbers rising 'relatively and absolutely'. By way of explanation, Chadwick has observed 'No doubt this increase of baptisms reflected a rising Anglican population. It is likely also

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[63] The Filey fishing labour force, compiled form census data for 1841-1901.

to be a sign of the energy and efficiency which marked the later Victorian clergyman.'[64]

The dedication of clergy is evident, too, in Filey, Scarborough and Grimsby. In Filey, Canon Cooper, the incumbent of St Oswald's Church from 1880 to 1935, was indeed very popular and generally remains so in the oral recollections of Filonians. His arrival in Filey coincided with a sudden rise in baptisms for the Anglicans, which suggests that he had a significant initial impact. In Grimsby St Andrew's Church was opened in the heart of the fishing community (Freeman Street) in 1870 and became known as 'The Fisherman's Church'. This was later supported by the opening of St John's in Cleethorpe Road in 1877, which also adopted the title of 'Fisherman's Church'. The clergy initiated various forms of social welfare and the incumbent regularly visited the fishing grounds to spend time with the fishermen and to conduct services at sea. Likewise, in Scarborough St Thomas' Church was opened in East Sandsend in 1840 specifically for the fishing community. Both St Thomas' and St Andrews' had good links with national maritime missions and this provided access to resources that enhanced the standing of the churches within the fishing communities. This picture could be reproduced for churches and clergy around the coast. Hence, there was a good deal of activity within maritime communities that brought the Christian community into closer contact with the local community, and to some extent replaced the need for occasional revivals.

Nevertheless, there remained a number of problems. Ambler, for example, has pointed out that Anglican clergymen sometimes refused a full funeral to those who had been baptised by Nonconformist ministers.[65] And there was some competition between the various denominations for the souls of the fishermen, especially when,

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[64] Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, Part II, p. 222.
[65] Ambler, *Churches, Chapels and the Parish Communities of Lincolnshire*, p. 192.

during the 1890s, the High Church launched a number of initiatives, including 'sailing churches' equipped with altars and all the paraphernalia familiar to High Church members on shore. Even so, the expense incurred here ensured that such competition was short-lived with many of the societies experiencing economic problems.

That many working people thought the Anglican service of baptism more potent than that in Nonconformist churches would seem to be the case. Ambler makes this point,[66] and the oral tradition in Filey reinforces it. Primitive Methodists, on the other hand, tended to reflect better the views of the fisherfolk, with services that were less reliant on a prescribed liturgy and offered the congregation more opportunity to participate in the services. But the more direct involvement of Anglican clergymen in the local communities must have been a significant factor in attracting back those who wavered in their allegiance to Methodism. While many people continued to look for revival in the churches and chapels, the attractions offered in the late nineteenth century by those religious groups involved in maritime mission (reading rooms, welfare support, innovations in worship, emotionally charged services at sea, medical support onshore and at sea, etc.) must have been a significant factor in off-setting the problems faced by the communities, especially during times of economic and social difficulty.

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[66] Ibid, pp. 186-7.

Ch 6.   Popular Religion in Fishing Communities

6.1   Introduction

The concept of popular religion has become common usage for religious belief
and practice which is integral to the daily life and culture of people - yet it resists
clear definition.[1] Popular religion embodies a complex matrix of beliefs and practices
which include folklore, magic, superstitions, customs, traditions, festivals, language,
symbols and material culture. In some cases the beliefs and practices have their
origins within the Christian tradition and have been reinterpreted in mythical terms,
others have developed outside the religious institutions and have later been embraced
by the churches and given a Christian interpretation. Nevertheless, many aspects of
popular religion continue to be seen from the perspective of institutionalised religion
as at the opposite extreme of a dualistic pole (Christian and pagan, sacred and secular,
religious and irreligious, orthodox and non-orthodox, formal and informal,
institutional and non-institutional, official and unofficial).[2] By making such
distinctions western societies have not only tended to separate the natural from the
supernatural but have sought to identify some societies, communities and cultures as
essentially primitive – with all the negative connotations of that term. Yet, in reality
the distinction between popular and institutionalised religion is very fluid with a
considerable overlap between the two, although the term 'popular religion' does tend
to suggest a polarity: 'popular' as opposed to institutionalised ('unpopular') religion.

The variety of terms used to describe non-institutionalised forms of religion
can be very confusing with scholars referring to folk religion, popular religion,
common religion, unofficial religion, and so on. Sarah Williams has been careful to

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[1] Hempton, *The Religion of the People*, pp. 49. Also Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters,* p. 246.
[2] Hempton, *Religion of the People*, p. 71; Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture in Southwark,* p. 10.

distinguish *popular religion* from *folk religion* by using the former term to apply to

the more abstract concept of how we give life meaning and purpose (including both

orthodox and non-orthodox forms of religious belief and practice), while applying

folk religion to the 'common' beliefs and practices that people engage in, especially

those not formally sanctioned by the churches, although there is some overlap here.[3]

Williams' use of the term popular religion to refer to a 'generally shared

understanding of religious meaning' is very helpful. Nevertheless, there is no

commonly used term in Britain that embraces both the various forms of

institutionalised and non-institutionalised religion, although there is a growing

familiarity with the concept of *lived religion*.

　　　'Lived religion' is not a term which appears regularly in British publications,

although it is gaining a supportive following in the USA, especially through the work

of Robert A Orsi and David D Hall.[4] Orsi says that lived religion is

> Religious practice and imagination in ongoing, dynamic relation with the
> realities and structures of everyday life in particular times and places…
>
> The study of lived religion explores how religion is shaped by and shapes the
> ways family life is organized, for instance: how the dead are buried, children
> disciplined, the past and future imagined, moral boundaries established and
> challenged, homes constructed, maintained, and destroyed, the gods and spirits
> worshipped and importuned, and so on. Religion is approached in its place
> within a more broadly conceived and described lifeworld, the domain of
> everyday existence, practical activity, and shared understandings, with all its
> crises, surprises, satisfactions, frustrations, joys, desires, hopes, fears and
> limitations.[5]

'Lived religion', therefore, links institutionalised and non-institutionalised religion by

referring to the broader framework of everyday life and experience and implies that

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[3] Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*, p. 11. See also William's article, 'Urban Popular Religion and Rites of Passage', in Hugh McLeod, *European Religion in the Age of Great Cities 1830-1930* (London and NY: Routledge, 1995), p. 218.
[4] See especially Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street;* David D. Hall, Editor, *Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice* (New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1997).
[5] Orsi, *Madonna of 115th Street,* p. xxi.

this is how most people attempt to give life meaning and purpose. In this sense the term appears to be very close to William's use of the concept of popular religion.[6] We will, however, continue to use the latter term in order to explore how it has been used by a number of scholars.

The approach taken in this chapter draws especially upon the work of Williams, who adopted the use of autobiographical, folklore and oral history material in her research.[7] In order to explore the issues here we will draw upon a range of beliefs and practices common in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The oral history research of scholars such as Thea Vigne; David Clark; Paul Thompson, Tony Wailey, Trevor Lummis; and Elizabeth Roberts has provided an insight into the remembered experiences of interviewees going back to the 1880s.[8] There is, however, no electronically recorded oral history material for the period preceding the 1880s although there are many other records that have been left by working class people especially in recollected accounts reported by others, including novels, interviews for official reports such as the British Parliamentary Papers and the reports of Rowntree and Booth. In addition there are books and pamphlets, church records, newspaper reports, church magazines, letters and even some working-class biographies. It is, nevertheless, important to remember that the earliest electronically recorded interviews often reflect a long tradition perhaps centuries preceding the birth of the interviewee. This is no less true for oral history material recorded today, hence, when it is pertinent to the discussion, we will draw upon the work of the Women's Voices

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[6] When contacted about this possible link, Williams said that she was not familiar with Orsi's work.
[7] Williams, 'Religious Belief and Popular Culture', see especially Ch. 3.
[8] Thea Vigne, 'Parents and Children', *Oral History Journal,* 5 (1977), 6-13; Clark*, Between Pulpit and Pew*; Thompson,Wailey and Lummis, *Living the Fishing*; Elizabeth Roberts, A *Woman's Place: An Oral History of Working-Class Women, 1890-1940* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1984); Lummis, *Occupation and Society.*

Project (a current oral history project that is exploring the women's perspectives of life in fishing communities during the mid to late twentieth century.)[9]

While scholars have tended to distinguish institutionalised religion from popular/folk religion, superstition and magic, such an approach has created artificial boundaries which impart status qualities to institutionalised religion at the expense of these other areas of popular belief and practice. A more fruitful approach is to identify the various areas as overlapping spheres of discourse 'within a single understanding of religious meaning'.[10] The approach takes the languages of the various discourses equally seriously while at the same time raising important questions about the nature of some significant theoretical developments such as the secularisation thesis – a thesis that depends very heavily upon the institutionalised religious perspective. Hence, while working-class people have been averse to attending church services on a weekly basis it would be wrong to deduce from this that they were irreligious. Even so, it should be noted that research by Smith, Sykes and others suggests that attendance was not always as poor as many orthodox historians and theologians have suggested. [11] The present chapter therefore begins with a historical overview of the theoretical foundations before going on to examine 'popular religion' in fishing communities with particular reference to Filey, Scarborough and Grimsby. This will be followed by an examination of the relationship between religion, magic, folk-lore and superstition in fishing communities.

6.2   Theoretical Perspectives

For the ordinary members of nineteenth century fishing communities the church provided an important frame of reference for their contact with the

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[9] Friend, 'Women's Voices Project'.

[10] Williams, *Urban Popular Religion*, p. 218.

[11] Smith, *Religion in Industrial Society;* Sykes, 'Popular Religion in Dudley and the Gornals',

supernatural although this was by no means the only perspective, nor in many cases the most important one. Ritual practices, including magic, superstitions, folk customs and traditions, and a long-standing reliance on local wise men, wise women, healers and fortune-tellers, have all been important aspects of community life.[12] A similar point was made by Williams when she stated that 'the inhabitants of Southwark both talked about the world and saw the world through a combination of theoretically competing discursive worlds', such as family, community, group, work and church.[13]

While the concept of popular religion has often been used to refer to non-orthodox religious beliefs and practices, social historians have until recently tended to ignore its role and significance.[14] Yet even during the Victorian era some voices were heard protesting about the limited view of what constituted religiosity. Thomas Wright responded to Horace Mann's report on the 1851 Religious Census by arguing forcefully that the religion of working class people was more subtle than Mann had allowed, and could not simply be measured by statistics of church attendance.[15] Scholars have from time-to-time taken up Wright's argument and expanded on this although much of the research and social commentary has assumed an understanding of religious belief and practice based on class distinctions. But despite occasional important insights (not least the work of William James whose classic text concentrated on personal spirituality)[16] it was not until almost a hundred years after Wright's published comments that scholars began to explore the implications of his view more earnestly.

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[12] J. B. Baker, *The History of Scarborough from the Earliest Date* (London, Longman, 1882), pp. 480-483.

[13] Williams, *Urban Popular Religion*, p. 218.

[14] Hempton, *Religion of the People*, p. 52.

[15] Wright 'The Working Classes and the Church'; Religious Worship (England and Wales), *Parliamentary Papers*, 1852-3, Vol. 89, p. clvii.

[16] William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1982).

In 1967 Brian Harrison noted that 'Church historians tend to look out at the masses from the deanery window; they seldom enquire how the deanery appeared from outside'.[17] During the same year Thomas Luckmann (in the English edition of his book) argued even more forcefully for an abandonment of the traditionally orthodox perspectives of what constitutes religious belief and practice. In particular he argued against those scholars who identified religion with the religious institutions and he pointed out that their approach offers a 'highly inadequate scheme for the understanding of the relation between individual, religion and society'.[18] Using an anthropological perspective, he pointed out that the problem of individual identity in modern society as essentially a 'religious' one in which individual existence derives its meaning from a transcendent world view. The stability of the latter makes it possible for the individual to grasp a sequence of originally disjointed situations as a significant biographical whole. The world view as a historical matrix of meaning also spans the life of the individual and the life of generations. We may therefore say, in sum, that the historical priority of a world view provides the empirical basis for the 'successful' transcendence of biological nature by human organisms, detaching the latter from their immediate life context and integrating them, as persons, into the context of a tradition of meaning. We may conclude, therefore, that the world view, as an 'objective' and historical social reality, performs an essentially religious function and defines it as an elementary social form of religion. This social form may be perceived as universal in human society.[19] For Luckmann, therefore, people are able to achieve a sense of the self by creating an 'objective' and moral universe of

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[17] Harrison, 'Religion and Recreation', p. 98.
[18] Luckmann, *The Invisible Religion*, p. 24. The English translation was of Luckmann's work published in German in 1963. He also published an article in German during 1960 dealing with similar issues.
[19] Ibid, pp. 52-3.

meaning in which the social processes that enable the construction of identity are religious and an integral aspect of the human condition.[20]

In developing this view Luckmann drew upon the work of Durkheim, and thereby helped to usher in a phase of 'late Durkheimian sociology of culture', a term used by Kenneth Thompson where he quotes Durkheim as saying 'In the present study as much as in the past, we see society constantly creating sacred things out of ordinary ones.'[21] Durkheim's approach was to define religion in terms of its relation to the sacred, but his definition of religion tended to restrict it to the ecclesiastical institutions.[22] Bearing this in mind Thompson argued that Durkheim was 'concerned not with the decline of the sacred (secularisation), but with changes in its cultural manifestations'.[23] Clearly, there is a developing line of thought from Durkheim via Luckmann to the later revisionists, which began by chipping away the division between the sacred and the secular, and ultimately accepted that the barrier is an illusion, seeming only to reinforce the viewpoint and security of the institutionally committed.

Luckmann's viewpoint bears similarities to Paul Tillich's identification of religious and spiritual significance as being embedded in that which concerns us ultimately (although he does not mention Tillich by name).[24] For Luckmann, ultimate meaning, embedded in people's ultimate concerns, is very much a part of the private sphere: family, home and sexuality, and as such is a clear rejection of the ecclesiastical monopoly.[25] This approach became widely influential and scholars slowly began to tackle the issues. Machalek and Martin (1976), for example, tested

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[20] Ibid, p. 48 f.
[21] Kenneth Thompson, 'Durkheim, Ideology and the Sacred', *Social Compass*, 40, 3, (1993), p. 457.
[22] Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, p. 47.
[23] Thompson, 'Durkheim', p. 457.
[24] Paul Tillich, *The Courage to Be* (London and New York, Yale UP, 1980), p. 47.
[25] Luckmann, *The Invisible Religion*, pp. 84-99.

Luckmann's thesis on an urban neighbourhood in the American Deep South and concluded that 'the data generated by this study help to support the contention that people's perceptions of life's ultimate concerns and accompanying coping strategies are not limited to an institutionalised religious context'.[26] But most scholars, while accepting Luckmann's concern with ultimate meaning,[27] were initially unwilling to embrace his more radical ideas. Peter Berger, for example, preferred to argue that the main area of religion had become privatised and a matter of choice.[28] But change was in the air and some scholars were beginning to question the status quo. For example, A. W. Smith (1969) pointed out that

> Even the most superficial look at popular religion reveals a striking contradiction: widespread involvement in a selection of orthodox rites and equally widespread resistance to Church doctrine which clashes with popular mores. Occasional and distinctly conditional conformity would seem to be the norm.[29]

Smith was able to acknowledge the diversity of popular religion inside as well as outside the religious institutions, but, like other scholars, he still saw popular religion and institutionalised religion as at best different spheres of influence, and at worst as two conflicting world views.

Another significant step forward was made in 1971 when Keith Thomas published his work on *Religion and the Decline of Magic,* in which he explored the nature of the relationship between orthodox religion and magic in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. He pointed out that the sphere loosely termed 'magic' 'seemed to be discharging a role very close to that of the established

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[26] R. Machalek & R. Martin, 'Invisible Religions: some Preliminary Evidence', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 15, 4, (1976), p. 311.
[27] Sykes, 'Popular Religion in Dudley and the Gornals', pp. 5-6.
[28] Peter Berger, *A Rumour of Angels: Modern Society and the Rediscovery of the Supernatural* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1969), pp. 132-3.
[29] A. W. Smith, 'Popular Religion', *Past and Present*, No. 40, (July 1969), pp. 181-186.

Church and its rivals', thus indicating a narrowing of the gap between that which

is generally considered orthodox and that which is not.[30]

Just five years later, Obelkevich published his important study on popular

religion in rural south Lincolnshire, in which he anticipated later research

developments in his argument that if "'the stronger influence on the individual in his

everyday life' was pagan not Christian" then the traditional view that "Christianity

(was) at its centre and paganism at the fringes - will need to undergo a 'Copernican

revolution'".[31] Even so, Obelkevich (1976) viewed popular religion as a

predominantly working-class phenomenon and defined it within such terms as 'the

non-institutional religious beliefs and practices, including unorthodox conceptions of

Christian doctrine and ritual prevalent in the lower ranks of rural society'.[32]

Writing and researching at the same time as Obelkevich, David Clark, during

the mid-1970s, undertook a field study in the North Yorkshire fishing village of

Staithes. Commenting on the methodological issues, Clark, who was influenced by

the work of Robert Towler,[33] observed that

> By abandoning the assumption that it is official religion and the churches
> which determine the totality of religious life in a society, we allow ourselves a
> broader conception of religious belief and practice and begin to see the
> possibility of religious items existing at a number of theoretical and
> organisational levels.[34]

(Clark anticipated Williams' work here with her references to overlapping spheres of

discourse.) Nevertheless, he still sought to distinguish between folk religion (his term

for popular religion) and institutionalised religion, although he acknowledged that

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[30] K. Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicholson: 1971), Foreword.
[31] Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society,* pp. 305-6.
[32]Ibid, p. 261.
[33] Towler*, Homo Religiosus*.
[34] Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew,* p. 9.

'the highly complex inter-connectedness between these two spheres reflected their symbiotic relationship'.[35]

On the other hand Deborah Valenze (1985) took a broader view and acknowledged the diversity of such beliefs and practices, pointing out that 'Popular religion adheres to no one definition; in different settings, in the hands of different people, the amalgam of belief that makes up its theology constantly changes'.[36] This situation has been compounded by the many concepts that have been developed to identify specific kinds of popular religious belief and practice, including 'diffusive Christianity', 'folk religion', 'unofficial religion', 'common religion', 'civil religion', 'invisible religion' and 'implicit religion'.

In the book, *Inner City God*, published in 1987, by Grace Davie and Geoffrey Ahern, Davie provided a copy of the grid of 'Dimensions of the definition of religion', based on Richard Toon's work for the Leeds study on conventional and common religion, undertaken during the 1970s (See Appendix 10a).[37] While the grid proved helpful, the more general definition of 'popular religion' still remained vague. Indeed the concept of 'common religion', as defined by Robert Towler, the director of the Leeds Study, contrasts with 'organised' religion, and as such is more limited than Williams' broader and inclusive definition. This kind of dualistic approach was generally accepted by historians during the 1950s and 1960s. The views of E. R. Wickham and K. S. Inglis, for example, continued to influence scholars including the revisionists of the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s, such as Jeffery Cox, Alan Bartlett, Jeremy Morris, Mark Smith and Simon Green.[38] Obelkevich, like Cox, tended to

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[35] *Ibid,* p. 166.
[36] Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters*, p. 245.
[37] Aherrn & Davie, *Inner City God*, p. 32.
[38] Wickham, *Church and People*; Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes*); Cox, 'The English Churches in a Secular Society'; Bartlett, 'The Churches in Bermondsey', cited in Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*, p. 5; Jeremy N. Morris, *Religion and Urban Change: Croydon 1840-1914*,

perpetuate an approach that highlighted a distinction between official and unofficial religion, and indeed Thomas has also pointed out that 'it is a weakness in Obelkevich's study that the terms Christianity and paganism are accepted as respective poles with which religious belief and practice should be studied'.[39]

Popular religion, therefore, generally continued to be seen as a hangover from a pagan past and set in contrast to what many perceived to be the 'true', organised, institutionalised and dogmatic religion. Each new term here has attempted to be more precise in its definition and to concentrate on specific aspects of religiosity or intended to replace the earlier terminology in referring to the range of popular religious beliefs and practices. At the end of the day, however, the overall result is a plethora of terms that tend to make the whole area confusing. Catherine Bell faced similar problems in her study of ritual, but she rejected moves to replace the term with innovations such as 'paradigm shift' (advocated by Jack Goody), and argued for a 'continuity with the commonsense notion of ritual while making explicit some of the assumptions and perspectives built into it.'[40]

While the British research tended to focus on fieldwork studies, and continued to advocate a dualistic understanding of institutionalised and popular religion, an important investigation into the nature of empirical religion took place via a study group at the University of Utrecht in the late 1970s.[41] The scholars explored a range of issues, some drawing on the work of Luckmann and Towler, and raised important questions about the nature of the relationship between 'institutionalised' and 'popular' religion, and whether or not the distinction could serve as a useful analytical tool.

(Bury St Edmonds: Royal Historical Society: 1992); Smith, *Religion in Industrial Society*; Green, *Religion in the Age of Decline*.

[39] Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society*, p. 5 (also cited in Thomas, *The British*, p. 186); Hempton, *Religion of the People*, p. 53.

[40] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (Oxford, Oxford UP, 1992), p. 7.

[41] Vrijhof and Waardenburg (eds), *Official and Popular Religion*.

Despite the obvious importance of this study group's findings none of the scholars mentioned in this thesis as researching 'popular religion' makes reference to the development. The net result was that breaking down the dualistic barriers here took another generation.

The continuing polarity between concepts of institutionalised and popular religion in the British research was tackled by David Hempton in 1996, who pointed to the need for a more inclusive definition:

> What is required to penetrate to the heart of popular religiosity is not the crude application of a predominantly middle class definition of religious commitment based on regular churchgoing, but an imaginative grasp of the importance of beliefs, symbols, values and memories in the texture of life in working-class communities.[42]

Hempton's perceptive observation enabled others to move on and Hugh McLeod's work on oral history led him to acknowledge the significant role that religion plays in the everyday lives of working class people.[43] Williams later took the important step of offering a definition that avoids theologically dualistic as well as class distinctions, and embraced both popular religion and orthodox beliefs and practices (see page 43).[44] At this point the argument has moved away from the use of the term popular religion as that which is conceptually opposed to institutionalised religion, and thereby opened up the way for a new analytic approach to the study of religious belief and practice. Williams argued that we need to take popular religion seriously in all its variety and engage in the study from the broader perspectives of culture and community. This argument was an important leap forward and others have begun to pursue their research along similar lines.[45] In her study of religion in the London Borough of Southwark, published in 1999, Williams drew attention to the dualistic

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[42] Hempton, *Religion of the People*, p. 65
[43] McLeod, 'New Perspectives on Victorian Class Religion', p. 37;
[44] Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture,* p. 11.
[45] See especially Sykes, 'Popular Religion in Dudley and the Gornals'.

preconceptions evident in much of the research into working-class religiosity up to the 1980s, in which organised Christianity was set alongside church attendance as the yardstick against which religious commitment was measured.[46] The swelling tide of opinion since the 1960s questioned the traditional model and this has impacted upon closely related theoretical perspectives. Secularisation, in particular, came in for criticism from all sides, and is now seen by many scholars as inadequate, serving mainly as a useful theoretical underpinning of the institutionally focussed model of religious belief and practice. Traditional theoretical perceptions of revivalism have been similarly questioned.[47]

Williams built upon McLeod's work by making use of oral evidence along with the literature on folklore to demonstrate the pervasive influence of religion (both institutionalised and popular) on the lives of ordinary people.[48] And she argued forcefully that rejection of the religious institutions does not mean rejection of religious belief and practice – although such popular beliefs and practices may not always been in agreement with the institutionalised versions. In his study of 'Popular Religion in Dudley and the Gornals', Sykes also made extensive use of oral history and, echoing the words of Brian Harrison, he pointed out that while many scholars have conducted research from the perspective of the *insider* (examining the relationship between churchmen/women and the wider community), historians and sociologists have begun to explore religious belief and practice from the perspective of the *outsider* (those who attend churches and chapels irregularly).[49]

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[46] Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*, p. 10.
[47] See for example Luker, 'Revivalism in Theory and Practice', pp. 603 & 619.
[48] Williams, 'The Problem of Belief, pp. 27-34; Sykes, 'Popular Religion in Dudley and the Gornals', p. 23.
[48] Williams, 'The Problem of Belief, pp. 27-34; Sykes, 'Popular Religion in Dudley and the Gornals', p. 23.
[49] Hugh McLeod, 'Religion in the City', *Urban History Yearbook* (1978), pp. 7-22; Sykes, 'Popular Religion in Dudley and the Gornals', p. 22; Williams, 'Urban Popular Religion', in McLeod (ed), *European Religion (*1995).

Williams and Sykes, supported by McLeod's early work, therefore helped to move on the theoretical perspectives of the revisionists of the1980s and early 1990s, which continued to perpetuate an emphasis on the ecclesiastical perspective. Cox, for example, referred to the pattern of religious belief and practice that embraced orthodox rituals and folk customs as a '*residue* of Christian teaching or practice'.[50] Williams countered this discussion by 'considering more diffuse aspects of belief which extended beyond the sphere of the institutional church and orthodox Christianity'.[51] For her the non-institutionalised form of religious belief and practice 'was a dynamic and vibrant system of belief which retained its own autonomous existence within the urban context',[52] and she pointed out that

> (It) remains the case that a concentration on formal religious behaviour so outweighs a consideration of the more intangible expressions of belief that popular religion continues to elude us as a serious subject of enquiry in its own right[53].

She offered the following summary of her approach:

> Southwark was at this time an area notorious not only for its concentration of working-class life but for low levels of working-class attendance and for what was regarded as lamentable irreligion. In addition, the period roughly from 1880 to 1939 was marked by the consolidation and stabilization of a distinct urban popular culture within the area. The metropolitan borough thus provides an ideal context in which to consider religious sentiment outside the parameters of formal church practice as an integral facet of culture.[54]

Even so, she pointed out that popular religion did not exist exclusive of the churches, but was clearly evident *within* them. The focus is not therefore 'them and us' but a world-view seen from the perspective of the community. In order to do this Williams made extensive use of oral, autobiographical and folklore material, pointing out that

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[50] Williams in McLeod, *European Religion,* p. 233.
[51] Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*, 1999, p. 167.
[52] Williams, 'Urban Popular Religion and the Rites of Passage', in McLeod, *European Religion*, p. 233.
[53] Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*, p. 3.
[54] Williams 'Urban Popular Religion and the Rites of Passage', in McLeod, *European Religion*, p. 217.

'the value of this wider approach has, as yet, to be fully appreciated'; and as to the institutional churches: 'they were considered only insofar as they emerged within the actors' frame of reference.[55]

6.3   Popular Religion in Fishing Communities

6.3.1   Religion and the Community

From the perspective of the institutionalised churches irregular attendance at services has been interpreted as a lack of commitment and questionable religiosity. From the perspective of the working-class community, attendance at church was part of a broader cultural religiosity where morality and religious duty embraced the church but was not restricted to it. Indeed regular attendance at church services has often been seen by working class people as unhealthy and indicative of hypocrisy with a sense in which the participants were seen as trying too hard to prove their virtue. Such a view, still common today, was evident during the early nineteenth century. For example, in George Eliot's *Silas Marner* we are told

> The inhabitants of Raveloe were not severely regular in their churchgoing, and perhaps there was hardly a person in the parish who would not have held that to go to church every Sunday in the calendar would have shown a greedy desire to stand well in heaven… At the same time it was understood to be requisite for all who were not household servants, to take the sacrament at one of the great festivals.[56]

We could add examples from many other novels here, such as Thomas Hardy's, *Under the Greenwood Tree* set in the early years of the nineteenth century, and Flora Thompson's *Lark Rise to Candleford,* set in the 1880s.[57]

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[55] Ibid, p. 217.
[56] George Eliot, *Silas Marner* (London, Blackwood, 1861), p. 68.
[57] Flora Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford*, (London, Penguin, 1973); Thomas Hardy, *Under the Greenwood Tree* (London, Tinsley Bros., 1872).

The rapidly changing early nineteenth century world left many people feeling insecure – the old beliefs and practices were being chipped away, and, despite the later optimism of mid-nineteenth century Britain, change seemed to be the norm for most people. Changing priorities and competing theological influences also reflected a lack of consistency in church leadership that had an impact on the local communities. New clergy did not always follow in the paths of their predecessors - one minister might be down-to-earth and compassionate, another might be dogmatic, judgemental and dismissive. Lack of relevant training for many clergy also impacted on this in that they rarely made the effort, especially during the first half of the nineteenth century, to understand the nature of working-class life. A not uncommon response by nineteenth century working class people to this situation was the embracing of Methodism, especially Primitive Methodism, which was more sympathetic than the established church to the matrix of popular religious beliefs and practices, including magic, folklore, superstitions, and a generally held diffusive Christianity. [58] To the more educated people (including many clergy) such beliefs and practices were often incoherent and abhorrent, but, as Ambler says, 'their lack of coherence should not be allowed to obscure their importance as a series of observances which helped an individual over a difficult period in life.'[59]

Recent interviews in Yorkshire fishing communities support this and suggest a link with beliefs and practices in the early Victorian era. One fisherman's wife interviewed in Filey in June 2005 stated 'I can't honestly say that you saw anybody going… you know, to church regularly… Where I could say to you they honestly believed. I wore a cross for years and I mean years.'[60] A Scarborough fisherman also commented 'I'm not particularly religious, but you still think there comes a time when

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[58] Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters*, p. 267.
[59] Ambler, 'Social Change and Religious Experience', p. 243 ff.
[60] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 09MH05YH (08.06.05).

163

everybody turns to God for help with something.'[61] This sentiment is echoed in another Scarborough interviewee's comments about her father:

> He was quite religious but he wasn't a churchgoer. My dad was a good believer, but he wasn't a churchgoer – he always said anybody who'd been at sea in a gale would know that there was somebody above us.[62]

And a Bridlington fisherman said: 'I'm religious, like. I believe in all that sort of thing – but I'm not a regular church-goer'.[63] Another interviewee in Filey, during May 2005, said that it was common for fishermen to be primitive Methodists, to attend the local Anglican church at times, and to remain deeply superstitious. Such beliefs and practices were evident in the 1940s, in that the fishermen, though Methodists, still liked to have their funeral service at the parish church.[64] This allegiance to both the established and Nonconformist traditions appears to have been common in the Yorkshire fishing communities, as, no doubt, elsewhere, too. An inhabitant of Robin Hood's Bay, when talking about life in the village during the1930s, commented that while the village itself possessed only two Nonconformist chapels (Wesleyan Methodist and Congregationalist), the Anglican church situated some distance away from the village was also attended by community members. At the same time there was a division by status in that the sea captains tended to be members of the Congregationalist chapel, while the Anglican Church was frequented more often by the farming communities.[65]

While Filey retained its traditional fishing methods (see section 3.2.2), Scarborough, despite local opposition, was eventually won over to the new developments such as 'fleeting' and trawling. Other, smaller ports, such as

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[61] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 01aLR04YS (25.11.04).
[62] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 27MC05YS (29.11.05).
[63] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee M02HS07YW (09.05.07).
[64] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 03AW05YF (09.05.05).
[65] 'Women's Voices Project' interviewee 32NW06YW (20.04.06).

Flamborough and Bridlington continued their inshore fishing tradition with three main classes of fishing: line fishing (mid-October to Good Friday), crab and lobster fishing (April to June) and herring fishing (June to November).[66] With the growth of the North Sea fishing industry during the mid-Victorian era there was a good deal of population movement and relocation between the country's fishing ports – mostly in the direction of Scarborough, then later to Hull and Grimsby.[67]

Given the complexity of life in the fishing communities, and the rapid changes taking place, it was important that the clergy and ministers understood the fishing seasons and the nature of the developing industry, as well as the local customs, festivals, beliefs and practices. Valenze pointed out that the customs in Filey relating to the work were long-standing and complex, and that 'wives, widows, sisters, and daughters managed every aspect of work outside the boat'.[68] In Staithes, too, especially during the early nineteenth century, the women were responsible for both landing and launching the vessels. The many artists working along the Yorkshire coast during the nineteenth century, attracted by the isolation and the picturesque quality of the fishing villages, captured such activities on canvas, and a painting by Lionel Townsend Crawshaw of men and women hauling the cobbles ashore in Runswick Bay (now hanging in the Pannett Art Gallery in Whitby), illustrates the point well (See Appendix 10g).[69]

Life for the women was hard, especially in the smaller ports where they were closely involved with the fishing activities. A recent male interviewee in Filey (2006)

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[66] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee M02HS07YW (09.05.07); R. Robinson, *A History of the Yorkshire Coast Fishing Industry 1780-1914* (Hull University Press, 1987), pp. 71-78.
[67] Gerrish, 'Following the Fish to Grimsby', p. 45
[68] Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters*, pp. 251-2.
[69] Lionel T. Crawshaw (1864-1949) 'Hauling the Cobbles, Runswick Bay' (Painting on display in the Pannett Art Gallery, Whitby). While the painting has not been dated it would appear to have been painted during the 1890s.

stated that while the quality of life has improved for both men and women, the hard

work for the women remained a constant:

> I was once told that the arrangement was that the women worked all the time,
> but the man had time off, in the pubs to drink… because… the difference was
> he was risking his life. That was the deal – the woman was safe, but had to
> work all the time.[70]

Nevertheless, there were times of relaxation for all with local festivals. In

Scarborough, throughout the early twentieth century, Boxing Day was considered to

be 'Ladies Day', in which the fishermen's wives were allowed a day off to enjoy

themselves while the men looked after the house and children.[71] In more recent times

this tradition has taken on the form of a festival for everyone, with a charity football

match, local musicians, boat races and other entertainments. The football match has a

long history, which originated as a response to the gales that swept the district in the

early 1890s and the heavy loss of life. A charity football match was organised for

Boxing Day, 1893, with representative teams of fireman and fishermen, and the

money from the match went to the widows and children of men lost from the local

vessels, and the success of the match led to it becoming an annual event.[72]

Grimsby, too, had a number of festival traditions relating to the seasons,

including a Whitsuntide festival during which the 'young people met together (at the

Church House) for sports peculiar to the season, including boating, dancing, shooting

at butts, etc., while the elders sat with their cans of ale before them to watch the

games and settle disputes.'[73] On St Bartholemew's Day (24 August) the mayor,

corporation and burgesses (accompanied by many local people) assembled to parade

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[70] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee M01RH05YH (04.08.2005).

[71] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewees 01aLRO4YS, 02aRJ04YS, 11DN05YH/S.

[72] Notes by C. R. Field kept at the Scarborough Reference Library, dated October 1968; *Scarborough Evening News*, Monday, 27 Dec 1993; *Scarborough Leader*, Wednesday, 23 December 1987.

[73] Gutch and Peacock, *County Folk-Lore Concerning Lincolnshire*, Vol. V, (London, David Nutt, 1908), pp. 194-195.

around the town and fields to 'beat the bounds' of St Mary's parish. During the course

of this procession 'they scourged little boys at the holes where the soil had been

thrown out to mark the boundary line, and then gave them a penny each to sharpen

their memory of the several termini'.[74] As with the Yorkshire towns Frumerty (made

of creed-wheat, milk, currents, raisins and spices) was made for the harvest suppers.

Commenting on Christmas traditions, Gutch and Peacock describe the Christmas

celebrations in Clee when the churches were hung with greenery, a Yule log was

burnt on the fire, waits sang outside the houses, and Morris-dancers visited from

Belton.[75]

As for those fishermen at sea who were deeply committed Christians there was

the opportunity to relax on Sundays, to visit each other's vessels and to hold a service.

Edward Gillett has recounted that

> Thomas Campbell, who was to become one of the most successful owners, as
> early as 1854 had a smack named the *Abstainer* and the vessel which brought
> the Alwards to Grimsby was named the *Sons of Rechab*. Harrison Mudd, one
> of the founders of the North Sea Steam Trawling Co., and chairman of the
> Coal Salt and Tanning Co., was a fervent teetotaller, especially in his youth.
> When he was fishing in the Faroes in 1860, each Sunday he was in harbour, he
> hoisted what he described as the Bethel flag on his smack, and held Primitive
> Methodist services on board her, in which denunciation of strong drink was an
> important part of the doctrine preached. Three other vessels had Bethel flags,
> but twenty-seven had no praying man on board.[76]

While such Grimsby owners and skippers were in the minority, unlike those in Filey,

they did in time become influential and respected local dignitaries. By the 1870s the

rapid growth of Grimsby's religious groups began to have a significant effect upon

the local community (See Appendix 8a), with new festivals linked to the activities of

churches, chapels, Sunday Schools and Friendly and Temperance societies.

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[74] Gutch & Peacock, *County Folk-Lore*, Vol. V, pp. 207-208.
[75] Ibid, p. 218.
[76] Gillett, *A History of Grimsby*, pp. 233-234.

While fishing ports, like other traditional communities, such as mining and farming, are noted for their folk customs, traditions and superstitions, yet, strangely, with a few notable exceptions, there has been relatively little academic study in the area of fishing communities.[77] Even so, most serious studies about fishing communities have tended to concentrate on aspects of the life and work of the *fishermen*, and we look in vain for serious studies of the lives of women in nineteenth century fishing communities. Religion, too, has received little mention, and even in more recent sociological studies any such discussion tends to be with reference to the institutional aspects of religious life. Without the in-depth studies on religious practice it is perhaps not surprising that the focus of attention with regard to religion has tended to concentrate upon institutional allegiance, with the focus solidly on the religious institutions rather than the community.[78]

Perhaps the underlying common denominator here is a concern with ritual. The performance of ritual has a significant function in the daily lives of working people, and such rituals are at their most potent in rites of passage. In the following we will explore some examples of rites of passage in fishing communities before going on to examine the 'threshold rites' more generally with reference to a range of rites and symbolism within popular religion, magic, superstition and folklore.

6.3.2   Ritual in the daily life of Yorkshire and Humber fishing communities.
6.3.2.1 Rites of Passage

Arnold van Gennep's analysis of rites of passage, and his identification of the three stages of separation, transition and reincorporation, has been important for

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[77]Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*; Thompson, et al *Living the Fishing*; Lummis, *Occupation and Society*.
[78] Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture,* pp. 8-9.

168

scholars who have sought to understand the nature and significance of these rites.[79]

Building on Gennep's work Victor Turner explored the nature of liminality, referring

to the stage of *transition* as 'betwixt and between'. He was especially interested in the

symbolism present within ritual and provided scholars with an important extension of

Gennep's framework for the analysis of threshold rites and ritual in a wide range of

social activities, especially in performance.[80] Even so, as Clark pointed out,

sociologists have not made as much use of the concepts here as anthropologists,

although there were the two notable exceptions of Robert Bocock (1974) and Diana

Leonard (1980).[81] While Leonard concentrated on courtship and weddings, Bocock

applied the concept of ritual to a wide range of experiences in his book *Ritual in*

Industrial Society (one of the first such analyses of ritual from a sociological

perspective). Clark followed this with a 'detailed description of the rites of birth and

death in Staithes'[82]

For the purpose of the present study we will adopt Bocock's definition of

ritual as 'the symbolic use of bodily movement and gesture in a social situation to

express and articulate meaning'.[83] Hence, the term is being used here in a broader

sense than merely with reference to institutionalised religion, and embraces an

integration of feelings, emotion and rationality. Rituals, therefore, help us to express

our feelings and emotions in a rational way. The area where ritual is most evident is in

the significant rites associated with birth, marriage and death, and it is often at these

points in our lives that the interplay between spirituality and materiality is made most

explicit. For the ordinary person there is no sharp distinction here between sacred and

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[79] A van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960).
[80] Victor. W. Turner, *The Ritual Process* (Hamondsworth: Penguin, 1974); and Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*. See also Driver, *Liberating Rites*.
[81] Robert Bocock, *Ritual in Industrial Society: a sociological analysis of ritualism in modern England* (London: George, Allen & Unwin, 1974); D. Leonard, *Sex and Generation* (London: Tavistock, 1980).
[82] Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew,* Chapter 7.
[83] Bocock, *Ritual in Industrial Society*, p. 37.

secular – rather there is a general acknowledgement of the specialness of such ceremonies being performed by a priest in the presence of the couple's relatives and friends. There is, however, a danger that the stylisation of these rites of passage can have the negative effect of emphasising and celebrating the supernatural and downplaying the natural, but this is often subverted by the integrated beliefs and practices of the participants and the local community. On the other hand, rituals can become so culture-bound that they drive a wedge between natural processes and idealised expectations. Bocock makes just this point when he says

> In the phase of the marriage service, when the man puts a ring on the fourth finger of the woman's hand, 'With my body I thee worship'. This phrase is the voice of 'authentic' ritual, and should aid the lovers to enjoy their sexuality. Yet in English churches it sounds out of place to many of them – sexuality in a church? Oh dear no![84]

With the migration of fishing families to east coast ports during the nineteenth century some beliefs and practices common in the home communities became part of each community's religious identity as the immigrants sought to maintain links with their own diverse heritages (see Appendix 7 where the origin of immigrants has been tabulated according to their English county and their country). This would have been especially so in the new fishing community of Grimsby. The comparative chart lists the birthplaces of fishermen from Grimsby, Scarborough and Filey for the years 1851, 1871 and 1891 and as can be seen here fishermen moved to Yorkshire and North East Lincolnshire from practically every county in England as well as from Ireland, Scotland, Wales and the Shetland Islands, and countries as far apart as Australia, the East Indies, France, Norway and the United States of America.

Nineteenth century fishing families, like most working-class people, attended church services for the three major rites of passage (birth, marriage and death), even if

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[84] Ibid, p. 38.

they rarely attended otherwise. It should nevertheless, be noted at this point that the working-class has never been a coherent whole. Lambert (quoting from a letter by a Welsh collier in the *Merthyr Express* of 5th Sept 1885) observed that there were at least three major working class groups which he loosely referred to as the reprobates, the radicals and the respectable,[85] although the traditional working class groups in fishing communities do not sit easily with any one group here. Some members of fishing communities would attend church and chapel services regularly (especially those who were Methodists), while others were only irregular attendees. It was however, common, well into the twentieth century, for fisherfolk in Filey to hold such rites of passage in the parish church, while continuing to attend services at the Methodist churches even after it became possible for such rites to take place in Nonconformist buildings (marriages, for example, could take place in licensed Nonconformist buildings following the passing of the Dissenting Marriages Act of 1836). At the same time the burial ground in Filey was attached to the Anglican Church whose clergy held the monopoly on the conduct of services in churchyards up until 1880 (when the Burials Law Amendment Act was passed). Nevertheless, families naturally wished to continue burying their dead close to deceased relatives.

Despite occasional revivals, such as that at Filey in 1823, there was no general sustained swing away from Anglican to Nonconformist allegiance in the fishing ports (although see Appendix 8a, which suggests a period of sympathy for the Primitive Methodists in baptisms during the 1870s, before a return to Anglican practice). In Robin Hood's Bay, Filey and Staithes there was indeed a strong attachment to the Methodists. But in Scarborough many of the fisherfolk initially attended St Mary's Church for their rites of passage, and later attended St Thomas' Church (opened in

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[85] W. R. Lambert, 'Some Working-class Attitudes Towards Organised Religion in Nineteenth Century Wales', Chapter 5 in G. Parsons (ed), *Religion in Victorian Britain*, Vol. IV (Manchester, MUP, 1988), p. 100.

1840), which had been built especially for the members of the fishing community.[86] Grimsby was a more complex situation although many fisherfolk held their family celebrations at St Andrew's Church or St John's Church – which had been built respectively in 1870 and 1877 specifically for the rapidly expanding fishing community, and were known as 'Fishermen's Churches'.[87] In each of these communities, despite the preference for Nonconformity, the Anglican churches played a significant role. Even so, Scarborough and Grimsby, along with Whitby and Hull were well endowed with a wide range of religious institutions and organisations, including Bethels and Missions, that served the needs of the fishing community.

There is, especially in the case of Filey, an element of superstition involved in attendance for a rite of passage in that the formal and ritualised service at the parish church may have appeared to be more potent than that offered by the Nonconformist chapels. There was also a sense of continuity in that it was the older established churches in which ancestors had been married, children baptised and funeral services held. Nevertheless, whether church or chapel, attendance for many was restricted to rites of passage and the occasional festival or memorial service. This practice is still evident in that a recent interviewee in Scarborough stated 'I'm just a births, deaths and christenings and things'[88] The 'and things' apparently refers to other special occasions.

Marriage

Marriages were subject to numerous traditions and customs in which the liminal aspects were reinforced, and of all the major rites of passage the marriage ceremony

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[86] St Thomas' Church, Scarborough, Baptisms: PE 166 (1844-1914), (East Riding Archives, Beverley).
[87] St Andrews' Church, Grimsby, Baptisms: 09-16-001-01A/007-29 (1870-1914), and St John's Church, New Clee, Baptisms: 09-03-001-01A/006-04A (1873-1914) (Lincolnshire Archives, Lincolnshire).
[88] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 22MP05YS (5 Oct 2005).

and associated traditions is perhaps the most complete as a performance. Gutch tells us that sailors weddings in Grimsby were the setting for much show, and after the wedding the party would parade through the town. The sailor's ship was decorated with flags and a garland of ribbons at the topmast (the garland having been made by the bridesmaids).[89] These were occasions for readjustments in family relationships as well as being important symbolic occasions for the community.

The normal pattern in marriage involves the bride and groom separating the day before the marriage, and dressing in special clothes for the marriage service. With the families of the bride and groom separated on different sides of the church, the bride enters holding her father's hand until she is symbolically handed over to the bridegroom. The bride's veil is lifted and the marriage ceremony is conducted by a priest. Following the ceremony the newly married couple walk back out of the church followed by relatives of both families walking side by side. The transitionary stage is almost complete, although there are often local customs that symbolise the incorporation of both families. From a Freudian perspective the whole of this liminal event (the entering and leaving the church) might be seen as a symbolic enactment of the anticipated sexual act, and the celebrative meal usually has relatives making reference to the anticipated conception of children (as does the marriage service). This implied and symbolic act is made more explicit at the wedding meal when relatives use the opportunity to make suitable (or unsuitable) comments to the newly married couple as they prepare for their honeymoon. At the time of the marriage, therefore, there was much scope for revelry and ribaldry. Once the formalities had been completed order gradually broke down, as Shaw described in his example from Filey in the mid-nineteenth century:

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[89] Gutch & Peacock, *County Folk-Lore*, Vol. V, p. 231.

Weddings, and funerals especially, were the occasions when large numbers attended, and all got 'something to drink.' On their way home from church, the wedding party were usually beset by invitations to drink at door after door as they passed, and jugs of strong liquor were bravely drained and the whole company joined in the revelry which followed.[90]

Another common nineteenth century practice on the occasion of a marriage in Filey was for young people to race down Queen St (the main street in the fishing community), for a ribbon, silk handkerchief or the bride's garter.[91] Many young married couple's lived with the parents until they could afford to purchase, or more likely rent, their own house. Yet there were exceptions. In Robin Hood's Bay money from each fishing trip handed over to by the young man to his fiancée. The young lady would then visit the local quarry, purchase some stones and carry these back to the parent's garden where they were used to build the future couple's house.[92] But this close association in preparing for the wedding between the young couple and their families was not always present. During the early 1800s marriages of political expediency in Grimsby between Freemen and non-Freemen's children were arranged without consulting the daughters. Bates provides some examples, including the following anecdote:

> On Nundy going home one afternoon, he said to (the daughter of his housekeeper) 'Mary, I am told you are to be married to-morrow morning?' She replied: 'I'se sure I don't know, maister, but I'll ask old Molly Wharton, she'll know.' After an interview with Molly, she told Nundy, 'sure enitt maister, it's true, Molly Wharton says I am to be married to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.[93]

For most members of nineteenth and early twentieth century fishing families there was little opportunity to have a honeymoon away from the town, and the young couple would, initially at least, have to share the family home, usually with the

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[90] Shaw, *Our Filey Fishermen* (1867), p. 8.
[91] R. Blakeborough, *Yorkshire Wit, Character, Folklore and Customs*, (Saltburn, W. Rapp & Sons), 1898 (second edn. 1911), pp. 91 and 94
[92] Crosby, Fylingdales, interviewed June 2006.
[93] Bates, *A Gossip About Old Grimsby,* p. 56.

bridegroom's parents. This was also an opportunity for the girl to quickly adjust to the demands of being a fisherman's wife, guided by her mother-in-law, although fishermen tended to marry local girls from fishing families who were familiar with the demands of the fisherman's work and life. The fishing families were strongly opposed to their children marrying outside the fishing community, although brides from other fishing communities were acceptable. A fisher's life was so hard that few were prepared to take the risk of bringing someone new into the community with the expectation that they should adapt quickly to the life. Fishermen's wives had learned from an early age to skein (prise limpets, known in Yorkshire as 'flithers' from the rocks and then prepare them as bait for the fishing lines), and the new wife was expected to slip into her new role easily and quickly.

Birth, Churching, Baptism and Naming

It was considered unlucky for the bride to remove the wedding ring before the birth of a child, and if she should do so inadvertently it was the husband who was expected to replace it.[94] Following the birth of the child, and prior to its baptism, visitors were offered 'pepper cake, cheese and wine or some other cordial'.[95]

Like all rites of passage, baptism embraces a range of superstitious beliefs and practices, and practically all the writers on early nineteenth century Filey referred to the superstitious nature of the people.[96] While Filey and Scarborough had a long history of cultural development that included superstitions and customs, Grimsby's development as a fishing town did not take place until the 1850s, when numerous immigrants brought their customs and superstitious beliefs and practices with them.

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[94] Blackeborough, *Yorkshire Wit, Character, Folklore and Custom*, p. 100.
[95] Ibid, p. 103.
[96] Cole, *History*, p. 136-7; Cooper, *Across the Broad Acres*, pp. 22-29; Shaw, *Our Filey Fishermen*, p. 13.

Although in several cases these were mixed up with religious beliefs and practices.

Fishermen and their families form Norfolk, London and Cornwall were ardent

Primitive Methodists, although some had their rites of passage conducted at the

Anglican churches. The baptismal records for the 1870s clearly show a significant, if

puzzling, increase (and later a decrease) in such practices.[97] Immigrants from Europe

also included Jews who brought with them their own practices such as the Bar

Mitzvah.[98]

Some parents feared that an un-baptised child, should s/he die young, would

be refused entry to heaven. Presents would often sit in a cupboard or on a shelf on

display only to be used again following the birth of a grandchild. A special baptismal

dress would also be used, and passed on from parent to child through the generations.

Bates recalled that it was customary that newly elected MPs, if requested, should

sponsor all the then unchristened children of the Borough, and he gave the following

example:

> At Mr Tennyson's election in 1818, there were 92 children christened for
> whom he was the sponsor and at his election in 1820, the number had
> increased to 100, on whom the rite was performed.[99]

Such rites of passage were important social occasions and were also associated

with a wide range of folk beliefs and practices, many of which were incorporated into

church practices, as Clark (1982), Williams (1999) and Sykes (1999) have

observed.[100] Among the various beliefs associated with birth was the use of the caul

as a token (the gossamer covering found on a new-born baby, sometimes known as a

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[97] Primitive Methodists: METH B/Grimsby, 33/9-10 (Lincolnshire Archives, Lincoln); St Andrew's
Church, Grimsby, 09-16-001-01A/007-2A (1870-1914) and St John's Church, Grimsby, 09-03-001-
01A/006-04A (1873-1914) (Lincolnshire Archives, Lincoln).
[98] Gerlis, *The Story of the Grimsby Jewish Community*, pp. 32 and 64.
[99] Bates, *A Gossip About Old Grimsby*, pp. 57-58.
[100] Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew;* Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture,* p. 88; Sykes,
'Popular Religion'.

'kell', a 'smear' and in Lincolnshire a 'sillyhood').[101] There was a strong element of sympathetic magic here in that it was supposed that if the caul had protected the child in the womb it was equally likely to protect the owner at sea, and as such it was highly prized by the fishermen, changing hands for large sums of money.[102] Alec Gill has provided a picture of one such caul, while discussing the folk-lore and superstition in Yorkshire surrounding this token.[103]

Following the birth of a child the mother expected to be 'churched' and was not allowed contact with other people until after the ceremony.[104] This liminal event, while often considered a folk practice, has been a Christian purification rite and an act of thanksgiving for the child and the safety of the mother since the early days of Christianity. It remains an important part of church liturgy with the Anglican prayer-book emphasising the thanksgiving aspect and referring to the ceremony as 'The Thanksgiving of Women after Child-Birth commonly called Churching of Women'. A variety of superstitions were associated with the ceremony, such as not allowing people to enter the home until the mother had been churched, and simply entering the church building to let people know that the mother could again be approached. It was believed that to come into social contact with an unchurched mother or for her to be allowed back into the house prior to the ritual would result in bad luck for the family.[105] Although the service was usually performed quietly during the week a witness was often required, especially if the child was baptised at the same time.[106] In other cases the woman was 'churched on the first occasion that she attended chapel

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[101] Gutch, *Country Folk-Lore*, Vol. 11, p. 51; Gutch & Peacock, *County Folk-Lore*, Vol. V, concerning Lincolnshire, pp. 226-228; Blakeborough, *Yorkshire Wit, Character and Custom*, p. 104.
[102] Blakeborough, *Yorkshire Wit, Character and Custom*, p105.
[103] Gill, *Superstitions*, Chapter 2.
[104] Blakeborough, *Yorkshire Wit, Character and Custom*, p. 112.
[105] Ibid; Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*, p. 115.
[106] Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*, p. 90.

after the birth of a child'.[107] In Grimsby, when the women were free to visit homes with their new baby the child was given something 'at every house it entered, either a penny, an egg, a piece of cake, or the like'.[108] Churching is, of course, not specific to fishing communities - Obelkevich has demonstrated its importance in rural areas during the 1800s and Williams has discussed a number of related superstitions in the inner-city suburb of Southwark from the early twentieth century.[109] The closeness of fishing community contacts, however, ensured the survival of the practice until at least the 1970s, and recent interviews along the Yorkshire coast have recorded a number of instances where the women either remembered their mothers being churched in the 1930s or were subjected to the practice themselves.[110] Clark also pointed out that while for the clergy the service was seen as an opportunity for thanksgiving on the birth of a child the women were more concerned with the issue of purification, and Obelkevich has pointed to the close links between churching and superstitious beliefs.[111] This ambivalent attitude seems to have led to the gradual rejection of the practice by the churches, so much so that by the 1970s some ministers and clergy (Clark cites an example in Staithes) were either ignorant of the practice or openly hostile, with the Church of England being the only denomination continuing to include churching as an official rite.[112]

The baptism of the child was (and is) usually referred to as Christening, a practice that highlights the giving of a Christian name to the child. [113] Naming is an important aspect of life in all communities. Apart from the need to provide individuals

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[107] Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*, p. 119.
[108] Gutch & Peacock, *County Folk-Lore*, Vol. V, p. 230.
[109] Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society*, p. 273; Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture,* pp. 88-91 and 96-97.
[110] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewees O2aRJ04YS (25.11.04) and 11DN05YS (23.06.05) at Scarborough; and 09MH05YH (08.06.05) at Hull.
[111] Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society*, p. 273.
[112] Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*, p. 119.
[113] Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society*, p. 272.

with a sense of personal identity, the names also help to give the individuals and community a sense of place. So not surprisingly some names, such as nicknames (often referred to as *by-names* in Filey and Grimsby), may be kept from outsiders. The custom of baptism was thought to be of physical and spiritual benefit to a sick child,[114] and the giving of a name in this manner gave it a special sacred dimension, not least because the child was often named after the parents and grandparents – a practice that caused problems in small fishing communities where a number of people might end up with the same name. Hence, the giving of nick-names was intended to help distinguish individuals.[115] The naming of a child was an especially important event and took place not only in the church but also included a celebration in the local pub where it was referred to as 'wetting the baby's head'(although the 'wetting' here referred to 'drinking' and raising a toast to the baby's health).

Nick-names clearly fulfil an important function. Until recently people in fishing communities were reticent to tell their nick-names to outsiders, a practice that suggests a superstitious element in that the individual's real identity was kept from the spirits so that they could not easily claim the living, a particular concern when the community was engaged in dangerous tasks such as fishing.[116] Today, however, there is less reticence and nick-names even appear on gravestones. That fishermen's nicknames are now appearing on their gravestones all around the British coast indicates their importance, as individuals can be clearly identified in death as well as in life. Nicknames also often describe some characteristic of the individual or family. This became evident in a recent interview where the interviewee recalled a fisherman

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[114] Smith, 'Popular Religion', p. 183.

[115] The giving of nick-names was important in most nineteenth century communities, as is evidenced in Flora Thompson's novel, *Lark Rise to Candleford*, p. 54. It still remains important for young people. When working with some primary school children in Filey, during July 2007, the author asked the children if they had nick-names and was inundated with these. As was the case in the nineteenth century the children's nick-names represented something about their characters.

[116] Ibid, p. 66.

with the name 'Tint'. The individual was recalled as regularly saying 'ti'n't', as a further abbreviation of 'It isn't' or It ain't'.[117]

Names were also used in a variety of other situations. Some 'yards' and streets were often named after local fishing families, such as 'Jenks Yard' in Filey and 'Baxtergate' in Whitby; and many fishing vessels were named after religious leaders, saints, biblical characters or were religious words and phrases;[118] The naming traditions here give a sense of continuity between individuals, place, objects and traditions, which is an important factor in the identity of close-knit fishing communities – not least because the names of objects, vessels, places and buildings often outlive the lives of individuals and generations.

Familiar names (recalling local people and events) given to inanimate objects such as streets, buildings, geographical features and houses, and local names for flowers, fruit and animals, are common to all communities. Fishing communities have names for boats, gansey patterns, fishing grounds, and local versions of rhymes were used as 'maps' to guide the fisherman – such as the names of lighthouses:

	An alternative version:
First the Dungeon, then the Spurn,	
Flamburgh Head comes next on turn;	Flamboro' lights you see ahead;
Hartlepool lay in a bight,	Pack your gear,
We'll be home before dark tonight.	And dump your bed.[119]

Such rhymes were of course useful mnemonics for nineteenth century fishermen during a period when few could read or write, and 'apprenticeships' (during the early rise of the North Sea fishing industry at least) were extended periods of picking up expertise by experience. For the smaller and long-established communities like Filey and Scarborough the learning of traditions, names, rhymes and so on, was part of the

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[117] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 03AW05YF (09.05.05) in Filey.
[118] James Slater, *Fishing Boat Names of the UK: Bible-wise and other-wise* (Aberdeen, Scottish Cultural Press, 1997).
[119] Information provided by Filey resident, Jim Haxby, 24 July, 2004.

local landscape of enculturation, hence, by the time the boy went to sea for his first

trip at around the age of ten years he would have already been familiar with a great

body of sea-lore.

Death

With the death of a loved one it was commonly held important to tell the bees

of the death. Referring to this custom in Grimsby, Gutch says that the belief was that

'if they (the bees) were not informed of (the death) they will either all go away, or

else will die'.[120] Loss of life was (and remains) very high among fishermen, and it

was (is) believed that the lost souls would seek to return home. This belief is evident

in the various tales told by women who have lost relatives. One interviewee in Filey

recalled her encounter as a child with a woman whose husband had recently been lost

at sea:

> It was the (woman) next door but one to granny who lost her husband and two
> sons, and it was often talked about. We used to go to the house … and this
> lady used to burn a candle in her upstairs window.... The theory was that when
> they (the souls of the lost men) turned up they'd know where the house was.
> As children we used to ask what the candle was for…. But that's what they
> used to do, you see… believed that… when you haven't got a body, I suppose,
> you never completely lose hope.[121]

The candle partly symbolised Christ's presence in the home, but also acted as

a beacon to guide the soul of the deceased and to ward off evil spirits.[122] With no

body to bury, and the possibility of the missing relative still being alive, there could

be no formal funeral service – a situation that naturally increased the sense of loss for

the relatives. The exception here was when several lives were lost, for example in a

storm, a formal service was held to commemorate those lost and missing. Such loss of

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[120] Gutch & Peacock, *County Folk-Lore*, Vol. V, p. 243.
[121] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 16MT05YF (22.07.05).
[122] Gutch & Peacock, *County Folk-Lore*, Vol. V, p. 247.

life was all too common in the larger fishing towns of Hull and Grimsby, where curtains were closed and the door of the house was left open for the soul's return. Anson reports that such practices were common in coastal communities during the 1870s when the doors and windows were opened to allow the soul the opportunity to depart without it being stopped by evil spirits. Clocks were stopped, the body was laid out by the local 'nurse' or wise woman, and a saucer of salt was laid on the breast of the deceased to keep evil spirits away.[123] These practices also had their counterpart in churches and chapels, such as at Filey Primitive Methodist chapel where a window was left open during the service (when a body was present) so that the soul could depart.[124] In Grimsby it was common for the house-door to be left open so that 'if the spirit should wish to return to the old house it might not find itself shut out.'[125] In Scottish fishing communities a silver coin was placed in the coffin on the head or breast to enable the deceased to pay the fare to whatever state they should find theirself in.[126] This practice was not an isolated one, as the Rev J. Atkinson writing of his life on the North Yorkshire moors in 1891 stated that a correspondent had written to him saying

> 'I heard some rustics talking about an odd old man who had been buried somewhere up your way (that is in North Yorkshire) a few years ago with a candle, a penny, and a bottle of port; and, as they explained it, the candle was to light the way to Jerusalem, the penny to pay the ferry, and the port to sustain him on the journey'. And professor George Stephens of Copenhagen about the same time gave me the following quotation: 'Within the coffin, along with herself she got a pair of new brogues, a penny candle, and a hammer, with an Irish sixpenny-piece to pay her passage at the gate'.[127]

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[123] Anson, *Fisher Folk-Lore*, pp. 158-159.
[124] *PMM* (1909), pp. 238-239.
[125] Gutch & Peacock, *County Folk-Lore*, Vol. V, p. 243.
[126] Anson, *Fisher Folk-Lore*, p. 161.
[127] Rev. J. Atkinson, *Forty Years in a Moorland Parish* (1891, reprinted by Smith Settle., Otley, 1992), p. 215.

Clearly, there are similarities with the ancient Roman custom of paying the ferryman a fare for travel over the river Styx to the realm of the dead; although the reference to Jerusalem here suggests that the contact considered himself to be a Christian.

For those lost at sea there was always the hope, when all optimism for the return of the loved one had gone, that the body would eventually be washed up on a beach or caught in a trawl net. Were this the case the decomposed body could be identified by the pattern, and sometimes the initials, on the fisherman's gansey.[128] The remains would then be returned to the relatives so that the various local rites could be performed. Once a body was available there were various means of commemorating the dead, some symbolic and some practical. One important practical response to increasing numbers of losses at sea was to establish a fund to help those family members left without any effective means of support. These funds were usually established by the local vicar who acted as a trustee. With no welfare system to protect them each fishing community was encouraged to establish a local 'fishermen's fund'. Increasing numbers of such funds began to appear from the 1830s when the fishing industry began to expand and when the increasing numbers of fishermen lost at sea became evident. One especially early fishermen's fund was referred to by Thomas Hawkshead, a visitor to Filey in May 1809. Mr Hawkshead's diary is kept in Lancaster Archives although a copy of some sections has been placed with Filey Archives. At the later date of 1884 the Flamborough 'Fisherman's Coble Insurance Association' was formed for families who lost loved ones at sea or those who suffered damage to their vessels whilst at sea. The many funds were gradually amalgamated into national welfare systems for fishermen and their families; and the numerous Friendly Societies (Robin Hood's Bay had four, established in 1784, 1800,

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[128] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 33WC07YSt (14.03.07), in Staithes.

1839 and 1840) provided support for families during times of loss, as well as mutual support for all who were members.[129]

Funerals, like weddings, were often occasions not only for a readjustment in family relationships, but also important symbolic occasions for the community.[130] Such a loss of life was very much a tragedy for the whole village or town, and a messenger was sent out to invite people to join the funeral procession to the church.[131] A recent interviewee in Staithes, who recalled events from the early years of the twentieth century, said

> If somebody died in the village then there used to be people come round 'bidding', what they called 'bidding'. Women were given a shilling or something like that to come round to every house and say that so and so requests the pleasure of your company at such a funeral'.[132]

The Revd. Atkinson also offered the following anecdote, which suggests that the practice was common in the North of England:

> Within a day of the person dying 'the person whose professional name was "the bidder", went round from house to house among those who were to be "bidden to t'funeral", to warn them that the burial was fixed for such and such a day, and to add, " and so and so" - naming the principal friend or friends of the deceased - "expect you at ten o'clock in the morning." The "minister" was always among the first to be bidden.'[133]

Individual fishermen were also expected to make some preparation for their own death and often purchased a gold ring when they were young. This was worn in the left ear so that there was something to pay for the funeral with should the need arise.

While the men carried the deceased fisherman's body to church for the funeral service, it was common for the women to act as pallbearers on behalf of deceased

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[129] Dennis Crosby, *The Friendly Societies of Robin Hood's Bay* (Whitby, 2001). A copy is kept in the Robin Hood's Bay Archives at the Methodist Church.
[130] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 33WC07YSt (14.03.07) at Staithes.
[131] Gutch and Peacock, *County Folk-Lore*, Vol. V., p. 242.
[132] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 32WC07YSt (14.03.07) at Staithes.
[133] Atkinson, *Forty Yeas in a Moorland Parish*, p. 226; a similar practice was common in Clee and Grimsby: see Gutch and Peacock, County Folk-Lore, Vol. V, p. 242.

females.[134] The act of having same sex pallbearers appears to have been widely

practised as Obelkevich makes the same point about funerals in South Lindsey.[135] It

was also common for the fishermen (although not the women) to be carried shoulder

high by the pallbearers. Such an act, according to Obelkevich, emphasised the status

of the deceased, hence, in South Lindsey only those of high status were carried

shoulder high.[136]

A means of commemorating the death of an unmarried female was the

tradition of suspending 'maidens' garlands' over the seat she had occupied in the local

church. Gereth Spriggs has drawn attention to the many examples of this practice,

including fishing communities such as Old Church (St Stephen's) in Fylingdales near

Robin Hood's Bay (where five such garlands can still be seen), and at Flamborough

and Filey.[137] A variation on this was reported by Robert Fisher in 1894, in that

following the death of a young wife a pair of white paper gloves were carried at the

head of the procession and later hung in the church to commemorate her passing.[138]

Such practices were not confined to fishing communities although there were local

expressions of the practice. An example of an early nineteenth century custom at

Filey is provided by Cole:

> But still greater respect is usually paid to the memory of unmarried females at
> their funerals, especially in the retired villages and dales of Yorkshire and
> other neighbouring counties. It is the encircling a ring or hoop (in some places
> two hoops crossing each other) with wreaths of white paper, which is hung up
> in the Church over the pew or seat of one who had been recently interred. A
> custom of this sort was formally observed at Filey, and here and in some other
> places the form of a hand, cut in white paper, is inserted in the middle of the
> hoop or hoops, upon which is fairly written the name of the deceased maiden,
> with her age.[139]

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[134] Memoir of Jenkinson Haxby, *Primitive Methodist Magazine,* (1909), pp.238-239.
[135] Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society*, p. 297.
[136] Ibid, p. 297.
[137] Gereth M. Spriggs, 'Maidens' Garlands', (*Folk Life A Journal of Ethnological Studies,* Vol. 21, 1982-83).
[138] Fisher, *Flamborough:* p. 147.
[139] Cole, *History and Antiquities of Filey*, p. 149.

As Cole was writing in 1828 and Fisher in 1894 these practices were clearly evident right throughout the nineteenth century. Other references by Spriggs suggest that the practices were also present during the eighteenth century and until at least 1950.

There was an equally rich symbolism present in funerals of the men, as Michael Fearon has observed in his account of a funeral procession in Filey in 1908 :

> Looking in the direction from which the music came, which was towards the old town, I saw a solid mass of people coming at a foot pace down the slope towards the other end of the bridge from where I stood. In front was a group of thirty or forty fishermen, four abreast, all in their spotless dark blue knitted jerseys, all slowly stepping on, and all joining in Dr Watt's well-known hymn, 'There's a land of pure delight'… Behind them the coffin with one or two wreaths of flowers upon it, was carried by six stalwart brother toilers of the deep, and it was followed by the widow and the more distant relatives of the deceased, while closing the procession came the wives and sisters of the fishermen, and other sympathising friends….[140]

Filey ravine separates Yorkshire's North and East Ridings, with St Oswald's Church (Anglican) on the north side and the fishing community on the east. The church may be reached by the bridge mentioned in the above account. As with other rites of passage, funerals were often held at St Oswald's church even though many of the fishermen were Methodists. One recent interviewee provided an insight into the fishing community's full awareness of the symbolism of the ravine:

> The fishermen, if there were any funerals or anything, they used to carry the coffin across the bridge, … they wouldn't have a hearse … and they all had their own saying, … If you said 'how's Mr so-and-so today?' or called them by their name, they would say 'oh, he's about ready for t' North riding'.[141]

In Grimsby, too, processions were part of the funeral practice. Gutch has commented that. 'A funeral had generally a long train of mourners, preceded by a company of singers, singing hymns on the way to the church.'[142]

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[140] Fearon, *Filey,* pp. 125-6.
[141] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 18aW05YS (09.05.05) at Scarborough.
[142] Gutch & Pearson, *County Folk-Lore*, Vol. V, p. 243.

The very great loss of life in fishing communities during the second half of the nineteenth century has been commemorated in stories, songs and memorials. In 1899, for example, the Filey fishermen sought to commemorate their lost colleagues by placing a memorial window in the parish church; and in Grimsby the Sailors' Children's Society opened a Bethel Chapel during the 1870s, and their Seamen's Memorial was eventually relocated to the Central Hall Grimsby. In more recent years fishing communities have created tapestries that commemorate fishing tragedies (see the example in Appendix 10d).

6.3.2.2 Rituals, Customs and Festivals

Although many traditional rituals, customs and festivals were abandoned with the demise of local confraternities during the period of the English Reformation, some remained, especially in the more isolated communities. And this was also the case with many traditional customs and festivals in fishing communities although traces of the old customs have managed to survive into the twenty-first century. At the same time new customs and festivals began to appear during the nineteenth century, not least because of the influx of many thousands of people from other national and international fishing communities who sought to take advantage of the prosperity of the mid-Victorian era. It is not always easy, however, to separate out the new from the old. One such custom was identified by Cole in the 1820s. Some weeks before the Christmas holiday the women of Filey anticipated the Spring fishery by indulging in what Valenze has called a form of ritualised begging, which was an important opportunity to provide for their families during the winter months when fishing was confined to less lucrative opportunities:

> The lower order of females (carry) from door to door little square boxes of pasteboard, in which is placed a wax doll, as an image of Christ, surrounded

by evergreens, with apples and oranges. The boxes are called Vessel cups. The women sing a carol, and are rewarded with a few halfpence: to send them away empty is to forfeit the luck of the whole year.[143]

In Grimsby the children participated in mumping – parading through the streets with a wax doll laid in cotton wool inside a box while they sang carols as the locals dropped pence into an oyster shell held out by the children.[144] That such 'mumping' also took place on St Thomas' Day (21 December) in rural areas suggests that the practice had been long established, preceding the nineteenth century.

George Shaw, writing in the 1860s, recorded other customs, such as that at the start of the herring season (June) fishermen would send a piece of sea-beef to the public houses and wished 'weel-tee-a' to their non-fishermen friends (a phrase that would appear to translate as 'well to you' meaning 'good health to you'). This was followed by a communal supper, which was held so that those leaving for the fishing grounds could meet with non-fishing friends who would wish them a good voyage.[145]

With the changes in the nature of fishing, and the growth of new fishing communities, especially in Grimsby, during the mid-nineteenth century, new customs and festivals began to emerge, such as the Blessing of the sea/boats/nets. This was a new innovation in Britain, although such festivals are of long standing in Europe, as Peter Anson has noted.[146] The late nineteenth century innovation of Harvest Festivals was quickly adapted by fishing communities into festivals known as the 'Harvest of the Sea' where local churches and chapels were fitted out with nets, floats, models of ships and fish, and other items relevant to fishing communities. Such festivals continue to be celebrated today, evidenced by the Blessing of the Boats in Whitby held in July, the Blessing of the Fish Harvest in St Oswald's Church at Flamborough

[143] Cole, *History and Antiquities* (1828), p. 136; Valenze, *Prophetic Sons and Daughters*, p. 255.
[144] Gutch & Peacock, *County Folk-Lore*, Vol. V, p. 214.
[145] Shaw, *Our Filey Fishermen*, 1867, p. 8.
[146] Peter F. Anson, *Fishermen and Fishing Ways* (London: G. Harrap & Co., 1931) , p. 77.

Head, and a Fish Dock Carnival that raised funds for the Fisherman's Mission was until recently held during August on Grimsby Docks (but has recently been replaced by a 'Lost Trawlermen's Day' service at the parish church); and another innovation has been developed by a Whitby woman, Deb Gillanders, with the 'Gansey Service', at Old St Stephen's Church in Fylingdales close to Robin Hood's Bay. Scarborough's Boxing Day celebration was originally a special day for the wives of fishermen to celebrate together, and this has now become a wider community festival, which raises funds for the Scarborough Lifeboat. And in Staithes there is a Nightgown Parade during what is now the 'lifeboat festival' in August.

While these modern-day festivals have a clear link with the religious institutions, with formal services being held at some point in the proceedings, there are some traditions that contain elements of sympathetic magic. Such is the case with the mid-nineteenth century custom in relating to the herring fishery in Filey. George Shaw, recalled that on the third Saturday night after the boats had sailed the youngsters seized all the carts they could find and dragged them through the streets to the cliff top where they were left to be collected by their respective owners the following day. It was believed that the practice (almost a rite) would drive the herrings into the nets.[147] In Flamborough, too, there was a local custom called 'Raising the Herring'. The custom was obviously practised during the later years of the nineteenth century as Robert Fisher mentions the practice in 1894 although no further details are provided about its origins.[148] After the men set off for the herring grounds, the women would dress in their husband's clothes and visited each other's homes to chat, sing and provide mutual support (a photo illustrating this activity can

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[147] Shaw, *Our Filey Fishermen* (1867).
[148] Fisher, *Flamborough: Village and Headland*, p. 143.

be seen in Appendix 10f).[149] And at Staithes it was the custom, on June 29th, St

Peter's Day, for the fishermen to decorate their cobles and to perform certain

traditional rites, after which a festive meal took place.[150] Such examples of local

customs show strong psychological links between those on shore and those at sea. The

fishermen were familiar with the customs and would have them in mind when fishing

for the herring. This strong sense of empathy was also no-doubt an encouragement for

the men as they faced the difficult days ahead.

The study of performance and ritual tends to focus on rites of passage and the

religious sacraments although examples can also be found in what might at first

appear to be more mundane activities. These include setting off for sea, visiting the

pub following a trip to sea, the wives of fishermen gathering at the company's office

on Fridays to collect payment (deducted from their husband's settlings), washdays,

the telling of stories by the men (yarning) during quiet periods on board the vessel and

in the pubs (it was normal in trawler towns for many fishermen to visit the local pub

before returning home), and of course there were the innumerable superstitions. Alec

Gill has provided an example of a 'leaving ritual' performed by a fisherman's

daughter, who, as a child, would throw her father's slippers at the front door after he

had left – to 'ensure that he'd come back safely to wear them again'.[151]

Newly married women in Hull, Grimsby and Scarborough were encouraged to

join other women outside their terraced homes in the street during the evenings where

they 'gossiped'.[152] This initiation into the world of the local women symbolised

acceptance by the community and provided on-going support for the fisherman's

wife. One variation on this was related to the author: when a Whitby inhabitant first

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[149] Ibid; Traves, *Flamborough A Major Fishing Station,* p. 75.
[150] Anson, *Fisher Folk-Lore*, p. 75.
[151] Alec Gill, *Hull's Fishing Heritage: Aspects of Life in the Hessle Road Fishing Community* (Barnsley: Wharncliffe Books, 2003), p. 151.
[152] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 02bRJ05YS (09.12.05) at Scarborough.

arrived in the local fishing community (possibly during the 1930s) she was told that she had to take it in turn to scrub the steps leading to the harbour between the houses. The next morning she arrived at the steps and began to scrub – only to have a bucket of cold water thrown over her. The neighbour said this was her initiation into the community and she was now accepted by all.[153]

The performance of such rituals embraces a concept of time as cyclical in nature. In her study of women in maritime communities on the Åland Islands, Hannah Hagmark has identified four distinct phases of the seafaring life: *preparation for the seafarer's departure* and his actual departure, *life without the seafarer*, *preparation for the seafarer's return* and his reception, and finally *life with the seafarer at home*. Hagmark has further pointed out that

> The preparation for the seafarer's departure was both a physical and mental exercise, which involved the entire seafaring family. The seafarer's departure was followed by a period of adjustment, during which the wife and children settled back into the routines that they had devised for day-to-day life while the seafarer was absent.[154]

Such an approach to life bears many similarities to the cyclical nature of the religious year and such rituals in fishing communities have a similar function to those rituals performed in church services. Indeed many such rituals have been embraced and adopted into the liturgical calendar. But more can be said about the nature of the similarities. In the Eucharist, for example, and in 'yarning', an important focus is found in the symbolic act of communicating and the presence of interest from others, as well as a sense of empathy resulting from the unburdening experienced by the story-teller. Robert Orsi made a similar point when he referred to the 'favours bestowed by the Virgin' told by correspondents from great distances, and reproduced

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[153] Verbal account to the author's research assistant by a Whitby resident (April 2007).
[154] Hagmark, 'Women in Maritime Communities'.

in the parish bulletins of the church at Mount Carmel in Harlem.[155] In other words, the events are important primarily for the communicators where 'hope' also plays an important role. This is not to demean the nature of the Eucharist, indeed, it should be remembered that the present-day symbolic and stylized rite has its foundation in a meal shared by Jesus and his friends where conversation, no doubt, centred on the group's experiences. The importance of ritual has been discussed by Roy Rappaporrt, who has defined it as 'The performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances which are not entirely encoded by the performers.'[156] He has also acknowledged that not all ritual is religious, although a wide range of ritual can have an important spiritual dimension for the individual. All this, while merely scratching the surface, indicates a wide range of beliefs and practices, many of which are not normally considered to be aspects of religious activities.

6.5   Material Culture

We have already identified a number of aspects of material culture in nineteenth century fishing communities, including objects associated with birth, marriage and death, festivals and customs. Nineteenth century pictures of fishing families homes also display a range of objects with extrinsically motivated religious themes, such as paintings based on gospel stories or of the Christ figure, illustrated texts, crosses made out of shells, and so on. Some even possessed organs around which the family would gather on Sundays to sing songs from the Moody and Sankey hymnbook – regardless of whether or not the family held any specific orthodox religious beliefs. Other aspects of material culture also display a spiritual dimension, including buildings, dress and rag-rugs.

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[155] Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street* , p. 166.
[156] Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion*, p. 24.

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With the building of the Florentine-influenced Dock Tower in 1854 it was quickly established as a symbol for the town and has since featured on innumerable post-cards, in books and on posters, and there have been models for sale to tourists. However, as a means of working the lock gates it quickly became redundant, although for the fishermen returning from their fishing trip the sight of the Dock Tower must have been a very welcome one. Other towns also had their own local established symbols which towered over the towns, such as St Hilda's Abbey in Whitby and the castle in Scarborough. Unfortunately, the very pleasing vision of the Dock Tower was not readily repeated throughout the town and the poor, cramped inadequate housing quickly became the focus of much criticism.[157] It was, however, the everyday items that tended to act as symbols for the fishing communities, not least the clothes worn by men, women and children.

Anson recorded that: 'There was a feeling, not always clearly defined, that they (the clothes) lost their efficacy to withstand the forces of evil if they did not conform to traditional patterns, handed down for generations.'[158] The patterns found in ganseys are a good example here each being unique to individuals (initials were often incorporated), to the family (some particular aspects of the pattern) and to the community (a local pattern). The pattern contained many symbolic elements such as ropes, nets, fish, ladders, marriage lines and stair steps. Classic patterns include the 'Betty Martin' (used in Filey, Whitby and Scotland), 'Flag and Rig', 'Print o' the hoof' (hoof marks in the sand) and a Filey design known as the 'Lizzie Hunter' that consisted of repeated stair steps, diamonds and ropes. The diamonds were of two kinds – empty and filled with small bobbles. The empty diamonds represented empty

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[157] However, a few buildings were built in grand style: the Town Hall (1863) followed the Italian Style, The Temperance Hall (1871) was built in the Grecian Style, and the Baptist Tabernacle (1878) was erected in the Romanesque style.
[158] Anson, *Fisher Folk-Lore*, p. 26.

fishing nets, while the full diamonds represented nets full of fish. The top half of the gansey pattern in Scarborough was filled with small bobbles – representing the beach or fish; and so on.[159] While Grimsby and Hull fishing communities did not have their own unique patterns – presumably because of the late development of the fishing communities in these towns, the fishermen from other towns around the coast wore ganseys with their own unique designs. Other uses of the gansey were also very practical, such as in Robin Hood's Bay where the fishermen adopted the expedient of turning up the bottom of the gansey to signify that they were looking for work – a practice that must have taken the embarrassment out of enquiring after employment.[160]

Alongside the very functional use of ganseys (pronounced 'gainsey' in Filey, and sometimes 'guernsey' in other places) as a source of warmth and as a means of enabling the identification of fishermen lost at sea, there were also ways in which ganseys were integrated with the religious life of the community. The men, and many of the women, kept one gansey for Sunday best (these could be of various colours such as grey for Robin Hood's Bay), and along the Yorkshire coast it was common for the men to wear a white silk neck warmer on Sundays rather than the normally coloured one worn throughout the rest of the week.[161] The aesthetic quality of the pattern in the gansey was thus integrated with the religious life of the community. They were important, too, as significant elements in rites of passage, not just in death, as indicated on page 177, but also for children as they received their first gansey at just a few years old, with their own unique identifier; and the girls were introduced to the skills of knitting ganseys as soon as they could hold a needle (the patterns were

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[159] The information here was provided by Margaret Taylor of Filey and Shirley Oakes of Scarborough; and a number of patterns are mentioned in G. Thompson, *Guernsey and Jersey Patterns* (London, Batsford, 1955), pp. 27-28.
[160] Information provided by Deb Gillanders of Whitby, May 2008.
[161] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 33WC07YSt (14.03.07) at Staithes.

not written down until recent years). Ganseys were also knitted as a single thread, with no separate parts sewn in – perhaps suggesting a continuing link between the women on shore and the men at sea. The garment was thus an important aspect of individual and communal identity. Children were encouraged to emulate their parents, hence one contact in Scarborough commented:

> 'When Tom were a young lad his mam always had him a fishermen's jersey knit, maybe in double knitting wool, but all little boys were encouraged to do what their dads were doing, so you got the minature smocks.'[162]

 In such ways the children followed the example of their parents and thereby developed a local identity.

As a part of the knitting process the women would wear a knitting sheath, either a leather one tied around the waist or a wooden one that tucked into the skirt. The wooden sheaths were often carded by boyfriends with patterns from the very simple to the very complex. Thompson provides a picture of some in the collection of Whitby Museum, and says of the symbols: 'They were usually given as betrothal presents, and the combined initials and date are often found carved on the sheaths; sometimes crosses are added for kisses, and a key-hole, denoting the door of their future home.'[163]

The women, too, in the older fishing ports along the Yorkshire coast, as elsewhere, had their own styles of dress, such as the 'Staithes' bonnet' made with seven sewn grooves at the front. While this was an important symbol of local style there was also a practical function in that the grooves helped to avoid rain dripping down into the face. Different coloured bonnets were worn for different occasions – white ones especially on Sundays, and black ones by widows. But there was some variety here. Arthur J. Munby referred to 'Molly's lilac hood-bonnet' at Flamborough

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[162] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 01bRJ05YS (09.12.05) Scarborough.
[163] Thompson, *Guernsey and Jersey Patterns*, pp. 79-80.

c.1870,[164] and Anson tells us that lilac was popular in that about 1890 the Staithes women 'usually wore lilac print aprons and sunbonnets'.[165]

The use of the colour red to ward off evil was also common in fishing ports (see below regarding the use of the colour red in Kings Lynn rag rugs), and it was common for Yorkshire fishwives to wear red petticoats. Again, Anson offers the following comment: 'Their overskirts were turned up over red petticoats. Down the back the pinned-up drapery hung in folds. Over their shoulders a little plaid shawl was drawn. Arms were left bare to the elbow.' [166] We also find the use of red petticoats around the coast as Arthur J. Munby, writing in October 1870, described the dress of fisherwomen at Haverfordwest as

> At work in their traditional costume – "the black wideawake, the white kerchief beneath it covering the hair and neck and bosom; the brown or dark blue sleeveless bodice, laced in front; the blue or white jersey sleeves; the short scarlet skirt'.[167]

While in the older Yorkshire fishing communities the traditions of dress were long established, such traditions as did exist in the newer fishing ports of Grimsby and Hull were the result of relocated individuals and groups that tended to bring their traditional styles of dress with them from their home ports, and photographs of Grimsby and Hull fishermen show them wearing gansies with a variety of patterns. Knitting tended to be the preserve of the women, although it was not unusual for some men to knit. The responsibility for producing clothes rested with the women who, through this and other tasks, tried to ensure a sense of security and protection for the men.

It should also be noted here that the women were the main attendees at religious services, and they were of course the main carriers of tradition in the

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[164] Munby, *Diaries,* Thursday 15 October, 1868.
[165] Anson, *Fisher Folk-Lore,* p. 27.
[166] Anson, *Fisher Folk-Lore*, p. 27.
[167] Munby, *Diaries,* 4 October, 1870.

community. Williams has also pointed out that some women were regarded as 'fountains of folk wisdom' who passed on their practices and beliefs from generation to generation.[168] In this way traditions were passed on by the many differing groups that established themselves along the Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire coasts. As such, this makes the women implicitly a very powerful group, although, as others have noted, the value of women as social providers has rarely been acknowledged.[169] Paul Thompson is an important exception here. In his article on 'Women and the Fishing' he pointed out that with the men away at the sea they were especially dependent upon their womenfolk on the shore.[170] The roles of the women were many and various, including responsibilities for the more mundane activities relating to material culture – although these activities, such as dress, ganseys and rag-rugs were often imbued with magical and superstitious qualities.

The making of rag-rugs was an activity often engaged in by all the members of the community, but especially the women. Examples of rag-rugs from the various Yorkshire fishing ports show a wide variety of patterns, although there were some commonalities. For example, an elderly interviewee who grew up in Robin Hood's Bay during the early twentieth century stated that when making rag rugs for the home the local fisher-folk always began with a blue diamond in the centre.[171] While she was unable to give a reason for this it seems likely that the diamond represented the fishing nets, similar to the use of the symbol in the Filey and Flamborough ganseys, although there may be other reasons. Richard Hoggart, for example, has also referred to the use of such a pattern in Leeds (he calls them 'clip rugs') when he says: 'Patterns are traditional and simple, usually a centre circle or diamond with the

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[168] Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*, p. 85.
[169] Dube, L, & Palriwala, R, *Structures and Strategies – Women, Work and Family* (London, Sage, 1990).
[170] Thompson, 'Women in the Fishing', pp. 3-32.
[171] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 32NW06YW (20.04.06) in Whitby.

remainder an unrelieved navy blue except for the edging, or that greyish-blue….'[172]

This ubiquitous use of pattern has overtones of sympathetic magic alongside the superstitious beliefs. This is made more explicit in the use of a red diamond in the King's Lynn rag-rugs, which was supposed to prevent evil spirits from entering the house. Such activity may be written off as 'mere superstition' but to do so disregards the fundamental spiritual importance of material culture to the community. Once again, there were no examples of unique patterns in use in Grimsby, although making rag-rugs was a common practice, and fishing families from other ports would no doubt have brought with them their own traditional designs.

Grimsby, like Hull, has a long tradition of painting. Self-taught fishermen artists, usually concentrating on scenes of fishing vessels, passed on their paintings to family members for display in their homes. Later some paintings were displayed in the local museums although these museums, such as the Welholme Galleries, have now closed and many of the paintings and other artefacts have been put into storage. The paintings were often naïve in style and used materials ready to hand – such as that provided by a Grimsby resident who sent me a copy of a picture painted by his grandfather, on what appears to be the lid of a cigar box.[173] Such paintings were naïve in style but fairly accurate in their portrayal of the details of the vessels. Some fishermen also enjoyed making models of boats, and sailed these on the newly built pond in Sydney Park. This was a popular pastime for the fishermen who no doubt regaled their children and grand-children with tales of life at sea thereby passing on local stories and traditions and continued to inculcate a culture that perpetuated the beliefs and practices of superstitions.

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[172] R. Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy* (Chatto & Windus, 1957), p. 36
[173] Personal letter to S. Friend, June 2007.

6.4   Religion, Magic, Folklore and Superstition

6.4.1   Religion, Magic and Folk-Lore

The established churches have learned to embrace a range of customs and practices that they had previously disapproved of, yet the churches have long struggled with the pervasiveness of these popular customs.[174] Wesleyan Methodism, for example, had, by the nineteenth century, become more respectable and disapproved of 'superstitious practices'.[175] But Wesley himself had been accused of dabbling in magic when he approved the visions and trances of members. The Primitive Methodists, and other offshoots from the Wesleyans, especially the 'Magic Methodists' led by James Crawfoot, were initially supportive of the range of popular beliefs and practices, including 'some elements of folk culture, such as visions, dreams, omens, magic, faith healing and even witchcraft and exorcism'.[176] Even the joint founders of the Primitive Methodism, Hugh Bourne and William Clowes, embraced folk beliefs and practices, and Bourne travelled to London to visit Joanna Southcott where he was impressed with her medicines and cures; and Clowes performed an exorcism in Harriseahead.[177] Not surprisingly, therefore, the Primitive Methodists found themselves welcomed by the fishing communities, which were steeped in religion, superstition, magic and folk-lore.

When the fishermen met for a meal with their family and friends before departing for the fishing grounds – from which some would not return - there was a real sense of the origin of the 'Last Supper' here. The religious overtones were also reinforced by a service held on 'Boat Sunday'. The use of sympathetic magic (such as the use of the caul already mentioned), and the common use of talismans, continued

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[174] Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, pp. 27, 51, 79.
[175] O. Davies, 'Methodism, the Clergy, and the Popular Belief in Witchcraft and Magic', *History*, Vol. 82, No. 226, pp. 252-265 (April 1997), p. 258.
[176] Johnson, 'Between Nature and Grace', p. 73-6.
[177] Ibid, p. 73-6.

throughout the twentieth century. For example, during the 1970s a Hull trawlerman cut off the top of a broom handle and carved the head of his fishing vessel's skipper with a snake wound around his neck slowly strangling him. The skipper was not popular with the men and the 'artist' made the point more explicit by painting a red mark, symbolising blood, around the skipper's neck (see Appendix 10e).

Not only the practice but also the terminology of magic and religion was and remains very fluid and academics have argued over the relationship. James Frazer, for example, argued that religion involves action via an intermediate figure and is therefore to be distinguished from magic as this involves direct action;[178] Durkheim said that religion and magic have different social functions: religion serves the group, while magic serves the individual;[179] and Malinowski pointed out that the psychological function of religion was paramount in that religion was concerned with the present, while magic was concerned with the future.[180] But such attempts to distinguish magic from religion have not been very successful, and if we look at religion and magic from a functional perspective rites and rituals take on a significant role, suggesting a good deal of overlap. Owen Davies has also pointed out that especially during the early nineteenth century 'it was, in fact, the rites and the fabric of the churches and churchyards of the Anglican faith which continued to act as a powerful focus of popular magic.'[181] This is especially the case if we reflect upon the bargaining that often goes on in prayer, with such requests as 'I will do X if you give me Y'. There were numerous examples within fishing communities of such bargaining: the fishermen would often throw any lose change into the sea before

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[178]Sir James Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, (Wordsworth Reference), 1993, p 711; see also Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, p. 32; and, B. Malinowski, *A Scientific Theory of Culture and Other Essays* (Oxford, OUP, 1944), p. 200.
[179] Ibid, p. 43.
[180] B. Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion*, (London, Souvenir Press, 1974), p. 88.
[181] Davies, 'Methodism', p. 252. See also Smith, 'Popular Religion' (1969), p. 184.

setting off to the fishing grounds, or would place a coin in the cork floats before casting the net 'to pay for the fish'.[182] The more conventionally religious would bargain in a more subtle manner by shouting 'Praise the Lord' before casting the net, in the hope of a good catch.[183] Others would sing hymns or recite the twenty-third psalm. One Scottish writer recalled that during the 1860s,

> away out to sea could be heard the voices of the men as they were shooting their nets, singing *Jesu, Lover of my Soul* and *Rock of Ages, cleft for me*, and the custom was started at this time by many skippers of kneeling down in the cabin for prayer together before they would let down the net.[184]

It was commonly believed that witches caused bad luck. In the fishermen's belief that their vessel had been cursed (evident in a series of poor voyages) the skipper would walk around the vessel with a lighted taper to burn out the witches and demons.[185] Surprisingly, perhaps, this belief and practice has continued into the present, as is evidenced by recent interviews.[186] Among the tokens used to keep such witches at bay was a copy of the New Testament provided by the Fishermen's Mission, which was fixed to cabins in fishing vessels. Engagement with the scriptures was often restricted to simply touching the book when they left the cabin to cast or haul the nets. The Mission staff no doubt intended that it should be read, but the fishermen while glad to see it there treat it simply like any other charm.[187] Such tokens of good luck were also mixed with practical concerns such as the wearing of a gold ring in the left ear to pay for the funeral should the need arise. As a circle of gold the ear-ring also acted as an amulet and was believed to 'protect the wearer from

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[182] Gutch, *Country Folk-Lore*, Vol. II, p. 47.
[183] Lummis, *Occupation and Society*, p. 158.
[184] Anson, *Fisher Folk-Lore*, p. 119.
[185] Ibid, p. 120; An example can also be seen in the Amber Films, *In Fading Light* (Northumberland, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1989).
[186] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 01aLR04YS (25.11.04) at Scarborough.
[187] The author worked for the Fishermen's Mission in Grimsby during the 1960s and fitted numerous New Testaments in their holders to the vessels.

drowning, preserve the eye-sight, and cure rheumatism'.[188] But among the most

potent forms of protection was the caul (mentioned above).

During the nineteenth century the term 'folk' was understood to refer to

peasant society, and was often used in a negative sense (a connotation which has also

often been retained in modern times). The nineteenth century folklorists tended to

dismiss the beliefs of folk cultures as magic and superstition rather than religion. But,

as Patrick Mullen has pointed out, such 'folk beliefs often functioned in ways similar

to organised religion'.[189] And for Alan Dundes 'folk religion' and 'popular religion'

can be seen as synonymous, while the concepts of 'folklore' and 'popular religion'

have a significant overlap. Given this close relationship Dundes has argued that

folklore can be used of any group that shares at least one common factor.[190]

The commonly perceived idea that superstition, magic and religion are part of

the life of pre-scientific and primitive societies, in which there was no sharp

distinction between the sacred and the secular, gradually gave way to a more

rationalistic perception in which the concept 'primitive' was contrasted sharply with

'modern'. In today's world we tend to reinforce such ideas in subtle (and non too

subtle) ways such as with the heritage industry in which earlier communities and

societies have been idealised and made attractive for the tourist. Jane Nadel-Klein has

made just this point with reference to fishing communities.[191]

Fisherfolk are 'folk' by the nature of their calling, and this implies all that

follows – language, occupation, customs, traditions, religion and so on. The

following instances provide examples here. Many local traditions serve to account for

the origins of geological and geographical features. It is said, for example, that the

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[188] Anson, *Fisher Folk-Lore*, p. 33.
[189] Patrick B Mullen, 'Folklore', in *the Enclyclopedia of Religion*, 2nd edn., Vol. 5, (2005), p. 314.
[190] Alan Dundes, *Folklore Matters* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989), p. 11.
[191] Nadel-Klein*, Fishing For Heritage*.

ammonites (sometimes called 'St Hilda's stones') found along the Yorkshire coast,

especially at Whitby and Robin Hood's Bay, are fossils of snakes that St Hilda

banished from the surrounding land.[192] In Filey it is said that in order to cause the

destruction of ships and the death of sailors, the devil set about building the

promontory known as Filey Brigg (called Filey Bridge by some early authors).[193] In

the process he dropped his hammer and when retrieving it caught a haddock, making

what looks like a thumb print that is still evident today. When his work was

completed he flew over the parish church and dropped the haddock over the tower

where it still survives as a weather vane. The story draws upon a number of traditions,

not least the concept of the fish as an early Christian symbol. Hence, the story links

the local trade with a Christian symbol and provides the community with an important

aspect of its identity. While such tales provide explanations of geographical features

others provide an example of Margaret Mead's point that we define ourselves by

defining others.[194] For example, one tale says that should a Filey resident lead a

dissolute life the devil would arrive in his carriage to collect the soul of the deceased

person - and deliver it to Scarborough.[195]

Such concepts that distinguish groups, towns and villages were also reinforced

with the application of names to different groups, counties and towns, such as

'yellow-bellies' for those from Lincolnshire including Grimsby fishermen (evoking

the yellow waist-coats of the Lincolnshire soldiers) or 'Grimmies'; 'Yorkies' to those

fishermen from Hull; Dough Boys' for Great Yarmouth fishermen; Puds' for

Lowestoft fishermen; 'Bucca' for Newlyn men, which refers to a left-over sea spirit to

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[192] Gutch, *Country Folk-Lore*, Vol. II, pp. 13-14.
[193] Cole, *History and Antiquities*.
[194] Margaret Mead, 'Israel and Problems of Identity' (Herzl Institute Pamphlets, 3, New York, Theodore Herzl Foundation, 1958), 12, cited in Dundes, *Folklore Matters,* p. 6.
[195] Old tale retold to the author by a Filey resident (July 2005).

whom the fishermen made a small offering'[196]. The gangs of dockworkers in

Grimsby were called 'lumpers' while in Hull they were known as 'bobbers'. These

terms along with many other beliefs and practices that developed during the

nineteenth century helped to forge local identities out of a very diverse group of

immigrants.

6.4.2   Superstition

While much that goes under the heading of superstition could equally well be

applied to religion, folk-lore and magic, many have nevertheless tended to refer to

popular religion as 'mere superstition'.[197] Hence, superstition is generally defined

with reference to what is perceived to be an irrational belief, although this attitude

seems to owe more to a biased subjectivity rather than to a scholarly objectivity.

Indeed, as Abercrombie, et al, have commented 'religious belief, when not associated

with active membership of a church, tends to be associated with superstitious belief

while church attendance tends to be antithetical to superstition'. Yet for ordinary

people the distinction is not so clear, and the Abercrombie research observed

> For those people who do not go to church but yet say they are religious and
> pray often, religious belief has moved quite far from the orthodox church
> position and is really much closer to what would normally be called
> superstition. [198]

Given the pervasiveness nature of such beliefs some clergy and ministers

accepted these beliefs and practices long-ingrained in the lives of fishing community

members, others were more critical. The colour green, for example is not popular with

fisherfolk, although there are interesting exceptions such as the fisherman's wife in

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[196] J. Corin, *Fishermen's Conflict: The Story of Newlyn* (London, Tops'l Books, 1988), p. 70.
[197] Abercrombie, N, Baker, J, Brett, S, & Foster, J, 'Superstition and Religion: the God of the Gaps', *Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain*, No. 3 (1970), p. 93. See also, Jarvis, P, 'Towards a Sociological Understanding of Superstition', *Social Compass*, XXVII (1980/2-3), pp. 285-295.
[198] Abercrombie et al, 'Superstition and Religion'.

Scarborough who painted her family fishing boat green – 'because it's my favourite colour and in any case it has been lucky for us!'[199] Such exceptions show the paradoxical nature of superstitions. Should the vessel in this case sink or have a number of poor catches, the family would no doubt blame the colour of the boat on bad luck. At the other extreme the Revd Thomas Tardrew, a Hull clergyman in the early twentieth century, objected so strongly to the local superstitions that he painted his church pews green – much to the horror of the local fishing community.[200]

Given that such views were not uncommon, some scholars, such as Williams, have argued that while the local community's perspective on such beliefs and practices was different from that of the more critical clergy, it was no less sincere.[201] There was a broader perspective here, and the intimate connection between orthodox ritual, superstition and folk customs was far more subtle than many scholars have previously allowed.

In his study of superstition from a sociological perspective, Peter Jarvis has pointed out that folk religion and superstition have been neglected areas of study in preference to the institutionalised and sectarian forms of religion, and that '"superstition", like many other words, is employed in common speech with its meaning assumed rather than defined.'[202] The problem of definition has been noted by other scholars such as Gustav Jahoda who offered a somewhat tautological definition from the psychological perspective: 'the kind of belief and action a reasonable man in present day Western society would regard as being "superstitious"'.[203] Unfortunately, when Jarvis offered his own definition he placed it within the sphere of 'folk religion'

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[199] 'Women's Voices Project', interviewee 01bRJ05YS (09.12.05) in Scarborough.
[200] Gill, *Superstitions*, p. 100.
[201] Williams, in McLeod, *European Religion*, p. 218.
[202] Jarvis, 'Towards a Sociological Understanding of Superstition,' p. 285.
[203] G. Jahoda, *The Psychology of Superstition* (London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1969), p. 10.

and then went on to distinguish folk religion from institutionalised belief systems. It is this distinction that is being called into question here.

In the following discussion I am not going to offer a new definition of superstition. Rather, I intend to show that the tendency, in fishing communities at least, to disassociate organised orthodox religion from superstition, no less than magic and folk-lore, is misconceived, not least because the essence of much superstition relies on ritual activity that provides a close link with institutionalised religious beliefs and practices. The failure of modern scholarship to take superstition seriously has tended to reinforce the isolation and otherness of orthodoxy. It is also difficult to demonstrate a chronological development in superstitious beliefs and practices. Many superstitions have been around since well before the advent of Christianity, and they continue to maintain a strong hold on present-day fishing communities, although there is often a reticence to admit that this is the case to outsiders, although practically everyone interviewed for the Women's Voices Project made reference to superstitions.[204] Given the persistence of such beliefs and practices it is perhaps not surprising that some have been incorporated into Christianity, although usually reinterpreted within a Christian framework. Such beliefs and practices, which were a significant aspect of pre-Reformation Roman Catholicism, were rejected by the Puritans. But in the nineteenth century such practices began to creep into Protestant Christianity and were of course evident in Anglican ritualism and Roman Catholic Ultramontanism.

The intricate link between religion, magic and superstition is evident in the following incident recorded by Mrs Gutch in her work on folk-lore of 1899. She

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[204] See especially the film (DVD): *Women's Voices: Reflections of Women in Yorkshire Fishing Communities* (York St John University, 2006) in which several of the women talk about their knowledge of superstitions. One participant is visibly uncomfortable as she mentions some taboo animals in order to get her point across.

quotes from Schofield's work of c.1787, where he spoke of a 'rite performed secretly' on Scarborough pier asking for calm weather and a prosperous voyage:

> (The woman) proceeds unaccompanied about forty paces along the pier. Here a small circular cavity among the stones, which compose that huge mass of rocky fragments, receives a saline and tepid libation, which is poured into it while the sacrificer, muttering the tenderest wishes, looks towards that quarter, from whence the object of her anxiety, is expected to arrive.[205]

That the 'actor' in this instance is a woman is important. Many of the superstitions in fishing communities relate to either the male or female spheres, and it is the wives of the fishermen who often act as protectors of the men, rather than the other way around. The author of an article on 'Superstitions of Yorkshire Fisherfolk' in 1885 (referring to an article in *The Times*), said that the Staithes fisherfolk 'have a firm belief in witchcraft…', although the custom was at that date only 'secretly maintained'. An example is offered. Referring to this same custom, Anson recorded the same incident (possibly originally collected during the 1870s by Paul Sébillot, but having its roots well back in time):

> … if a coble had had a spell of bad luck for a long time, (the locals) used a grim method of exorcism. The wives of the crew met after dark, killed a pigeon, took out its heart, and pricked it with pins. They roasted the heart on a brazier. This ritual attracted the witch who was supposed to have cast a spell on the coble. When the women thought she had arrived they offered her presents.[206]

On other occasions should the Staithes men fail to catch anything for many nights the first fish caught would be taken ashore and sacrificed as a burnt offering to the Fates.[207]

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[205] Gutch, *County Folk-Lore*, Vol. II, p. 52.
[206] Sébillot, P, *Traditions et superstitions de la Haute-Bretagne*, Vol II, (Paris, 1882), p. 218, quoted in Notes and Queries, *The Folk-Lore Journal*, Vol. 3, No 4 (1885), p. 378; and in Anson, *Fisher Folk-Lore*, p. 120.
[207] Notes and Queries, *The Folk-Lore Journal*, Vol 3, No 4 (1885), p. 378; Gutch, *County Folk-Lore*, Vol II, p. 49

It has to be remembered here that boats are referred to as 'she', and the fisherman trusts the vessel with his life. On leaving home (the domestic sphere of his wife) the fisherman enters the sphere of the boat (his 'mistress'), and he is hardly likely to upset the latter if she is going to take care of him at sea. It is important, therefore, to keep the domestic and work spheres separate, and a number of superstitions are associated with this attitude. Women were generally not encouraged to wave the men off to sea, nor are they usually allowed on the fishing vessels. There were few exceptions to this separation of roles in the nineteenth century although there were some such as those women on the Yorkshire coast who were smack owners and had taken on this role following their husband's death. Jane Witty of Hull, for example, owned several smacks during the 1850s and 1860s.[208] Those women who fished at sea were even rarer, such as the eccentric Milcha Lawrence of Flamborough who worked as a fisherman during the mid-nineteenth century, and was known as 'Milkey' (she died c.1880). Apart from fishing she was renowned for sitting in the church on St Marks' Eve 'and declared she saw all those of her neighbours who were to die during the year pass in procession before the alter'. Not surprisingly she was considered to be a witch by the locals. Other witches were also common in fishing communities, including Mary Gibson and Betty Creaeser of Flamborough and Margery Ffish of Scarborough.[209] Dora Walker is reputed to have been the first female fishing boat skipper on the North East coast of England, and during the post-Second World War period she became a popular writer about life at sea. But such exceptions are very rare. Indeed, at Staithes, it was considered unlucky for the men to see the women on their way to the harbour where their cobles were berthed, and

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[208] Robinson, *Trawling*, p. 44.
[209] Fisher, Flamborough, p. 146; C. Wilson, *Flamborough Through the Ages* (Flamborough Headland Heritage Coast Project, ND), page 27. On Dora Walker see *Yorkshire Illustrated*, (January 1949) and the *Whitby Gazette* (12 December 1980 and 23 January 1981); Baker, *The History of Scarborough*, 1882, p. 481.

should the women see a fisherman approaching they would turn their backs on them.[210] In a variation of this practice at Flamborough the fisherman would not go to sea if he met a woman on the way to his coble unless her name was Anne or Mary. Given that these were among the most common nineteenth century female names there is a sense in which the men were hedging their bets. Such superstitious practices have overtones of magic and there are also clear psychological implications for the well-being of the fisherfolk, in that should the ritual be ignored the resulting tension and stress emanating from feelings of guilt could have dire effects on the family and community.

Religion, magic and superstition overlap and the issues only become a problem when we try to make a sharp distinction between these different worlds of discourse. The ritual aspects of these practices play an important role in the life of the community. This view has been supported by Colin Campbell who pointed out that modern superstitious acts 'fulfil a ritual rather than a magical function', with the essence of the acts lying in their symbolism – and as such they have intimate links with institutionalised religious beliefs and practices.[211] In support of this argument he has pointed to the sense of unease a person feels when the ritual has not been properly conducted. Even so, he does admit that some superstitious acts are engaged in not for the symbolism and ritual alone, but for the results people desire – hence, the overlap with magic.

Superstition was (and remains) an important aspect of the fisherfolk's religious belief system, although nineteenth century Christians (historians and anthropologists) have not always acknowledged this relationship. As a result, when

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[210] Notes and Queries, *The Folk-Lore Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (1885), p378. Anson, *Fisher Folk-lore*, p. 104.
[211] C. Campbell, 'Half-belief and the paradox of ritual instrumental activism: a theory of modern superstition', *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (March 1996), pp. 151-166.

Christian missionaries visited the North Sea fishing fleets during the 1870s they

expected to see a God-forsaken, pagan race of men who wanted nothing to do with

orthodox religion. The visitors could not have been more mistaken. All who took the

trouble to visit the fleets recorded their surprise and pleasure at being made to feel

welcome, and at the fishermen's enthusiasm for lively and long religious services –

one visitor recorded attending a six-hour service, which was only broken off at

intervals for refreshments.[212]

Nevertheless, the failure to recognise the close link between superstition and

religion led many to exclude fishermen (and seamen generally) from the Christian

fold. Even the Primitive Methodists, who had more sympathy than other groups for

the old customs, sometimes thought it advantageous to distinguish between the old

superstitions and the new situation. The following account, recorded by the Rev.

George Shaw in Filey, makes just this point:

> At the commencement of the (nineteenth) century the fishermen of this place
> were … exceeding superstitious. This was especially the case respecting
> ghosts, hobgoblings (sic), witches and wizards. I remember going some time
> ago to visit a sick girl, and on asking the mother the cause of her complaint, I
> was gravely assured that she was 'wronged, poor thing'. Not comprehending
> her at the moment, I enquired what that was, and a neighbour replied with a
> frightened look, 'Bewitched, sir'. While I was trying to show them the folly of
> entertaining such notions, the poor child exclaimed 'you're right, sir, I am sure
> nobody has wronged me unless my mother has, for she won't pray for me,
> though I have asked her again and again.'[213]

The belief that residents of Filey were exceedingly superstitious continues

down to the present. A note in the Filey Archives records that a local woman who

worked for the Salvation Army said that 'she knew Filey had an evil past and a strong

connection with the devil'. But her recipient noted that 'It was quite a surreal

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[212] Mather, *Nor'ard of the Dogger*, Chapter XVII deals with 'An Experience Meeting'.
[213] Shaw, *Our Filey Fishermen*, pp. 7-8.

experience to hear a person talking in such old fashioned terms, and more to the point taking it so seriously'.[214]

Despite these links between religion and superstition, the latter was, and is, often seen negatively as pre-scientific and irrational, something that stretches credulity, and is sometimes used in a derogatory sense of non-orthodox religious practices (although orthodoxy here depends on the point of view of the observer). But as a coping mechanism, superstitions may nevertheless be seen as having a positive and constructive function, a point made by Lummis based on Malinowski's theory of magic 'which proposes that the economic uncertainties and personal risks inherent in fishing will lead to attempts to control and influence irrational and unpredictable forces'.[215] In other words Lummis observed that superstition reduces anxiety, although this point has been played down by later researchers who have tended to concentrate upon more instrumental factors. Researchers in recent times have noted that there does not appear to have been any diminution of superstitious practice.[216] At the same time some have noted that superstition is more prevalent where the risk of failure is higher. In his research among the Trobriand Island fishermen (1915-20) Malinowski observed that superstition was more prevalent where the risk was greater, and he argued that risk here was directly correlated to magic ritual:

> It is significant that in the lagoon fishing, where man can rely completely upon his knowledge and skill, magic does not exist, while in the open-sea fishing, full of danger and uncertainly, there is extensive magical ritual to secure safety and good results.[217]

Later researchers questioned whether the function of taboos in reducing anxiety is essentially correlated with a *lack of economic security* or with a *fear of personal*

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[214] Notes in the Filey Archives on 'Folklore and Belief' – not dated or indexed.
[215] Lummis, *Occupation and Society*, p. 152. See also, B. Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion*, (Illinois, Glencoe, 1948), p. 31.
[216] Campbell, *Half-belief* , p. 152.
[217] Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion*, p. 31.

danger? But researchers found it difficult to reach a consensus. Mullen's 1969 study of Texas coastal fishermen,[218] for example, concluded that the correlation is basically with the need for *economic security*; while Poggie, et al, in 1976,[219] argued for *personal danger* being the predominant factor.

Lummis applied these various theories in his study of British East Anglian fishermen, 1880-1914, conducted via oral interviews in 1981. Of the three main types of fishing engaged in there (trawling, drifting and inshore fishing) it was the driftermen who proved to be the most superstitious, followed by the trawlermen and then the inshore fishermen.[220] This observation raised the issue that given that trawlermen are more likely to face personal danger than driftermen, one would expect (on the basis of Poggie's research) to find that trawlermen were the more superstitious. On the other hand, if superstition is directly correlated to both personal risk (Poggie, et al) and economic insecurity (Mullen), one would expect superstitious practice to be equally prevalent in both situations – but this was not the case. We might also ask why the women and children should also be superstitious? On the basis of the above we might expect superstition to be more prevalent in Grimsby with its deep sea fishing fleet than in Filey (and to a lesser extent in Scarborough). But on the basis of recorded evidence this seems not to have been the case.

According to Lummis, the situation is far better explained with reference to *economic uncertainly* than to *personal risk*. The driftermen were the most economically precarious group in the past, largely because they did not understand the movements or breeding habits of the herring, upon which they mainly depended for a

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[218] Patrick B. Mullen, 'The Function of Magic Folk Belief Among the Texas Coastal Fishermen', *Journal of American Folklore,* No. 82 *(*1969), pp. 214-225.
[219] J. J. Poggie, Jr, R. B. Pollnac & Carl Gersuny, 'Risk as a Basis for Taboos among Fishermen in Southern New England', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 15, 3, pp. 257-260 (1976), p. 258, footnote.
[220] Lummis, *Occupation & Society,* Chapter 12.

livelihood. This explanation could also therefore be usefully applied to the women

and children who shared the economic risk of the men at sea. But where economic

security is the norm it seems likely that anxiety-reducing superstitious practices will

be directly correlated with *personal risk*. It would seem reasonable, therefore, to

suggest that inshore fishermen are less superstitious than trawlermen and driftermen

(i.e., the degree of personal risk is smaller, and there is less economic uncertainty).

Modern fishing communities are also less likely to be superstitious than earlier

communities given the prevalence of modern life-saving equipment, ship-to-shore

radio, radar, computers. Lummis confirms this last point when he says that the most

superstitious fishers are those who work alone, far out at sea:

> But when these village inshoremen talk about work superstitions, one has
> the impression that they know about rather than believe in them. Not one of
> the purely inshore fishermen told a story about work superstition. This
> contrasts sharply with the smacksmen and still more with the driftermen,
> whose accounts are extensive.[221]

Lummis has shown that most interviewees said that they were not as superstitious as

the older generation. Two factors are important here. Given that modern fishing

techniques and safety methods are vastly improved over that of the previous

generation, we should perhaps expect to find a less superstitious younger generation –

in that there is less economic risk. Fishermen and fishing communities are also less

isolated and a less self-perpetuating group than formerly. At the same time there may

also be a certain degree of scepticism and embarrassment in admitting to an active

belief in superstition in the face of a sceptical world.[222] This point also seems to be

borne out in Lummis' research when a fisherman of the older generation would not

admit to being personally superstitious:

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[221] Ibid, p. 187.
[222] Poggie, et al, 'Risk as a Basis for Taboos among Fishermen', p. 260.

It might be noted that that respondent was born in 1888 and that men twenty years his junior gave full accounts of superstition at work, so his ascription of superstition to the older generation is an inaccurate generalisation.[223]

Good catches during the nineteenth century were ascribed either to God's whim when the fishermen exclaimed: *'The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord'*, or to good luck:

> As all the men involved in the industry were agreed that luck determined economic prosperity the beliefs of the fishermen not only allowed them to cope with an extremely unpredictable occupation but also served a function in muting potential conflict and dissention within the family and community.[224]

That superstition is an important part of the fishing community's religious belief system has been emphasised by a number of researchers. Poggie Jr., Pollnac and Gersuny, for example, argued that superstition 'is the term used by the fishermen themselves when making reference to rituals of avoidance.'[225]

Superstitious beliefs and practices, by their nature, may be irrational (as is much religion) and speaking about them brings them into a foreign realm, although the associated ritual provides a sense of grounding the beliefs. They cannot therefore be easily studied by asking questions, but rather by long association with, and initiation into the community, as Peter Anson discovered when working among Scottish fishermen during the early 1920s:

> My instruction continued for the next two months. More than one elderly fisherman confided to me that he believed in the powers for good and evil held by 'wise-women', that is, witches. Hints were conveyed of the existence of fairies and sea-devils. Living among fisher folk on the North east Coast of Scotland, so I soon realised, involved much forethought and tact. It was so easy to do the wrong thing, or refer to the wrong persons or animals. Taken all round, the rules and observations of this close-knit maritime community, composed mainly of Presbyterians, were more elaborate than those of the Benedictine monks with whom I had lived for the past eleven years. But they

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[223] Lummis, *Occupation & Society*, p. 156.
[224] Ibid, p. 160.
[225] Poggie, et al, 'Risk as a Basis for Taboos among Fishermen', p. 260.

were not written down, and one had to rely on oral instruction. There were no printed Constitutions to consult![226]

Superstitions therefore helped to provide a sense of security and a sense of control over the unknown, which helped in turn to give meaning and purpose to life and as such acted as a complement to the more orthodox forms of religious belief and practice.

6.5   Conclusion

Perhaps ultimately, it does not matter whether superstition is true or false. With a pervasive superstitious practice there will in any case be enough positive outcomes to ensure continued belief (or enough negative outcomes to raise questions of doubt). The same may be said about institutionalised religion (and perhaps magic). While a certain number of positive results are inevitable, the value of the belief has more to do with *hope* than with the provable validity of the belief. People need a framework that gives meaning and purpose to life, and a sense that they have some control over their lives. As analytic categories, therefore, and despite the plethora of definitions, there is a good deal of overlap between 'religion', 'magic', 'folklore' and 'superstition'. All are concerned with individual and group concerns over meaning and purpose; all embrace ritual (which provides a sense of security, hope and control over the environment; and all interact in the everyday lives of people in fishing (and other) communities.

Indeed, as far as the daily life of people in fishing communities is concerned, attendance at church services and special events such as rites of passage are occasions for putting on the best clothes and acting in the best manner, thereby making a

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[226] Anson, *Fisher Folk-Lore*, pp. 10-11, quoting from P. Sébillot, *Traditions et superstitions de la Haute-Bretagne*, Paris (1882), p. 218.

statement about respectability and moral standards. To put more weight on allegiance to the churches was (and is) often seen as vanity, especially by the working classes. The influence of organised religion in the everyday lives of the members of fishing communities is often minimal – certainly a great deal less than the customs, traditions and superstitions that determine daily behaviour. Attendance at church is seen as merely one activity among many in this all-embracing acknowledgement that people are in a constant state of bargaining with the transcendent power, however this is perceived. Even participation in the sacraments is seen as an active part of this bargaining process.

While we have only touched upon the nature of the very diverse range of beliefs and practices in fishing communities, it is very evident that attendance at church services played a relatively minor, if important, role in the life of the community members. Even so, there is clearly a big overlap between the formal and informal religious beliefs and practices, which may be considered aspects of a lived religious experience.[227] Williams' concept of a range of a 'generally shared understanding of religious meaning' is very pertinent, as is her reference to overlapping spheres of discourse, each with its own language.[228] It is when we look at the diverse beliefs and practices as part of the totality that has made up life in fishing communities, we can see that the relationship between religion and identity is more complex that a simple identification with the orthodox religious denominations. The next chapter of this thesis therefore argues that in order to understand the nature of identity in such communities we need to explore this broader picture.

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[227] Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street.*
[228] Williams, *Urban Popular Religion*, p. 218.

Ch. 7: The Construction and Maintenance of Identity in Fishing Communities

7.1   Introduction

The roots of identity as a philosophical concept have a long history although the concept has of course also long been used as a lay term. As a conceptual tool in the social sciences, 'identity' derives its historical, psychological and anthropological lineage especially from the work of Erik Erikson, and its sociological roots from the work of George Herbert Mead.[1] Erikson's work dealt with the particularly relevant issue of identity in the aftermath of a wave of immigrants who entered the United States between the two World Wars and had to struggle with their own newly emerging identities. During the 1940s and 1950s he helped to define the modern concept of identity with his emphasis on 'ego-identity' seen as the means of individual continuity. He later clarified his view in the publication of his 1956 journal article, 'The Problem of Ego Identity', where he presented his eight-stage model of 'identity and the life cycle', a concept that he later developed as a social psycho-history, a combination of historical, social and psychological biography.[2] Erikson's interdisciplinary approach led to reverberations in a wide range of disciplines and gave birth to a number of different but complementary perspectives.

Nevertheless, the concept had earlier been developed by the sociologist, George Herbert Mead (1934) (although he preferred the term *self*), who helped to pioneer the work of the Symbolic Interactionist school. Mead argued that our understanding of the self is derived and constructed from our social interactions – our constructed sense of the self tends therefore to reflect the society we live in - our

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[1] George Herbert Mead, *Mind, Self and Society* (Chicago University Press, 1934), Ch. 18, but especially pp. 186-192.
[2] Erik Erikson, 'The Problem of Ego Identity', *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, No. 4 (1956), pp. 56-121.

perception of our self is derived from seeing ourselves as others see us, and an important element here is our engagement with the shared meanings of symbols.[3] This concept was further developed by Anselm Strauss (1959) in his work *Mirrors and Masks: The Search for Identity*.[4] During the same year the social psychologist, Erving Goffman proposed that we *act* out roles; and in 1985 the anthropologist, Anthony P. Cohen, made us aware of the importance of *symbolism* in the life of individuals and their communities.[5] These views, while pioneering, have not gone without criticism. For example, Mead has been criticised for neglecting to include the influence of power and culture on identity; and Goffman's perspective, while equally influential, has been questioned, especially by Cohen who argued that 'Goffman's legacy to identity studies was intellectually seductive and profoundly damaging' and the idea that individuals and groups can control their destinies has been overstated while the nature of culture has been understated and self-consciousness ignored. But Cohen, has urged us to be wary of absolutes here, and, despite the criticisms, these scholars have had a profound influence on modern perceptions of identity and have provided helpful insights into the debate.[6] Even so, as Weigert, Teitge & Teitge have pointed out, the terminology here has been somewhat ambiguous with some scholars using the terms *self* and *identity* 'without clear theoretical distinction'.[7]

The concept of *identity*, therefore, has a range of meanings and it has also often been qualified by an adjective: *personal* identity, *social* identity and *cultural* identity, although Richard Jenkins has argued that it is less confusing to talk simply of

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[3] Mead. *Mind, Self and Society*. 1934, p. 202.
[4] Anselm Strauss, *Mirrors and Masks: The Search for Identity* (Glencoe, IL, Free Press, 1959).
[5] Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (London, Doubleday Anchor, 1959); Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*; Cohen, *Whalsey*.
[6] Anthony P. Cohen, *Signifying Identities, Anthropological perspectives on boundaries and contested values* (London, Routledge, 2000), p. 5.
[7] Andrew J. Weigert, J. Smith Teitge & Dennis W. Teitge, *Society and Identity* (Cambridge, CUP, 1986), p. 11.

'identity' and not to make distinctions between the various terms.[8] In the introduction to Zygmunt Bauman's book on the subject Benedetto Vecchi, who, clearly aware of the earlier debate, pointed out that identity is 'by its very nature elusive and ambivalent.'[9] It is easy, therefore, in our modern-day nostalgic search for community and identity in the past, to romanticise the concepts while bemoaning their loss. At the same time identity is a dynamic process and, as such, the developing sense of belonging is only really meaningful within a social and cultural context.[10] Hence, avoiding a convoluted definition, and bearing in mind the views of the Social Interactionist school, we may for simplicity say that identity is essentially *a socially and culturally constructed process, negotiated by the individual and underpinned by historical and cultural contingency*. This definition is in sharp contrast to the modern desire for pre-constructed or 'canned' (off-the-peg) identities available especially via the internet where 'social, cultural and sexual identities (have become) uncertain and transient'.[11] The process is ongoing in that identity changes to a greater or lesser extent depending on a wide range of personal and social factors; and the individual's perception of identity is an important factor in the ways in which s/he copes with change. It has, for example, been argued that identities become especially important when they are under threat.[12] Prior to this development there is usually little local discussion about the concept.

In the following discussion we will examine how identity has been constructed and maintained via community, change and culture during the period 1815-1914

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[8] Jenkins, *Social Identity,* p. 4.
[9] Zygmunt Bauman, *Identity* (Cambridge, Polity, 2004), p. 2.
[10] Jenkins, *Social Identity*, p. 4; E. Wenger, *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity* (Cambridge, CUP, 1998), p. 215.
[11] Vecchi, in Bauman, I*dentity*, p. 7.
[12] Anthony P. Cohen, A (ed), *Belonging: Identity and social organisation in British Rural Cultures* (ManchesterUP, 1982), p. 3.

before going on to examine further the nature of the relationship between religion and identity in fishing communities.

7.2   The Construction and Maintenance of Identity in Fishing Communities

7.2.1   Community, Change and Identity

Delanty has argued for four main perspectives evident within the present-day debates on community: that evident within cultural sociology and anthropology, which is concerned with 'the search for belonging where the emphasis is on cultural issues of identity'; the community studies approach, which is concerned with 'disadvantaged and urban localities'; 'community in terms of political consciousness and collective action'; and a concern with globalization, transnational movement and the internet, which identifies community as being 'constituted in new relations of proximity and distance'.[13] In exploring the issues here Delanty has adopted an interdisciplinary approach, and while some aspects of these perspectives are clearly modern (such as the internet and globalisation), other aspects were evident in nineteenth and early twentieth century fishing communities, although the emphasis was essentially on community as a sense of place and a sense of belonging. Hence, it is this approach that forms the main focus of the present chapter, although other perspectives will be evident at times.

Communities dependent on living marine resources will have a number of factors in common, although it is a mistake to assume that they are all the same. To talk of the 'British fishing community' is a gross over-generalisation that says more about our perceptions of fishing communities than it does about their social, economic and political nature. Indeed there are significant differences between the fishing

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[13] Gerard Delanty, *Community* (London, Routledge, 2003), p. 4.

communities, the nature of the marine resources exploited and the methods used to exploit these resources. Nevertheless, there are some aspects of life in the fishing communities that bear comparison. Hence, it may be helpful to make use of an appropriate methodological approach here, and Durkheim's model of social solidarities may be usefully adopted and adapted.[14]

When reviewing Tönnies' concepts of gemeinschaft (community) and gessellschaft (association, society) Durkheim rejected the concept of a progressive individualism implied by the latter, arguing that such a view leaves society fractured with the only thing holding society together being an imposed social order by the state.[15] He further argued that 'the life of large social agglomerations is just as natural as that of small groupings. It is no less as natural as that of small groupings. It is no less organic and no less internal,'[16] Hence, his use of the concept 'organic solidarity' in his work *The Division of Labour* where his concepts of a *mechanical solidarity* and an *organic solidarity* distinguish between social groupings in pre-industrial and industrial societies.

Individualism here is seen as a characteristic of modern times although as can be seen in the development of Grimsby the community tended to consist of numerous small groups. These groups can be identified via a range of significant factors including *origins and locality* (such as Brixham, Barking, Ramsgate and Sherringham (see Appendix 7), *culture* (different British and non-British fishing communities), *interests* (Friendly Societies and Temperance groups), *status* (fishing apprentices, deckhands, skippers, fishing vessel owners, as well as numerous groups outside fishing) and *religion* (Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, Jewish, etc.).

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[14] Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labour in Society*, (London, Macmillan, 1893/1964).
[15] Emile Durkheim, *Selected Writings,* ed by A. Giddens (Cambridge, CUP, 1972), p. 148. Tönnies, *Community and Society* .
[16] Durkheim, *Selected Writings*, p. 148.

Of the three fishing communities being analysed here, Grimsby is closest to Durkheim's concept of an *organic solidarity* where individuals contribute skills to the wider community;[17] Filey is closest to the concept of a *mechanical solidarity*, where each individual contributes to the survival of the community; and Scarborough sits mid-way between the two. Both types of solidarity are, of course, ideal types and will not match perfectly any given fishing community. Nor is Durkheim's model being used here in an evolutionary sense but is being applied to different kinds of community/society existing side by side. Neither is there any implication of 'primitive' or 'sophisticated' – attention is drawn merely to similarity and difference.

In the mechanical solidarity, argued Durkheim, the concept of self consciousness is minimal. For people growing up in such a community (for example, Filey, Staithes, Runswick Bay and Robin Hood's Bay,) their sense of personal identity matched their social identity to a high degree. Family, peers, neighbours, no less than school friends, teachers and work colleagues, were all familiar with the life and experience including the genealogical history of the community's members. Hence, the sense of self and personal identity was intimately bound up with this sense of social identity and included a strong sense of security in the face of what was at times a very insecure economic environment. With such a strong sense of self, demands for change were often met with strong opposition. Such an exaggerated self consciousness (consciousness of the self as opposed to 'self-consciousness')[18] is common to many groups today, not least those who are members of long established religious communities, such as the Mennonites, Hutterites, Amish and Bruderhoff. It is even the case with larger groups, as has been noted by Fred Gearing in his work with the Fox Indians of Iowa, and Carol Greenhouse's work among the Southern

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[17] Durkheim, *The Division of Labour*, Chapter VII. Durkheim's concepts here are roughly similar to Tonnies' Gesellschaft (community) and Gemeinschaft (society). Tonnies, *Community and Society*.

[18] Cohen, *Self Consciousness*.

Baptists in Hopewell, Atlanta.[19] Many other indigenous communities, such as the Inuit, Maori and Australian Aborigine have recently capitalised on their art as a means of cultural identity that helps to bridge the gap between themselves and the wider national and international population. We could of course go on to include numerous groups in today's world that face oppression and discrimination. The nineteenth century fishing communities faced dramatic and pervasive change as new fishing methods were developed to meet the huge demand for the fish discovered on new fishing grounds. The growth of new fishing towns and communities such as Grimsby, and the fishing community at Hull centred on Hessle Road, attracted fishermen and their families from all over Britain and the world.[20] In some cases the community's sense of identity was reinforced by certain constraints and legal requirements, yet change did occur within such groups, and Durkheim's model can help us to understand some of the processes here.

While the sense of identity and self consciousness among residents in Filey (an example of a mechanical solidarity) was strong, the residents of Grimsby (an example of an organic solidarity) had a weak sense of identity. Self consciousness tends to be more pronounced in organic solidarities where the relationship between personal identity and social identity is very loose. Hence, many aspects of personal and social experience in an organic solidarity have generally poor connections with each other. In this situation the focus tends to be on the individual rather than the group. Group identity tends to develop over time, and it is often not until the third generation that group identity becomes a significant force within the community.

Scarborough fits mid-way between Filey and Grimsby in that both forms of solidarity were more clearly evident here than in Grimsby. The fishing community

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[19] Cited by Cohen, *Self Consciousness*, p. 1.
[20] See Appendix 7 for the birthplaces of Grimsby, Scarborough and Filey fishermen.

living in what was locally called the 'Bottom End' had been long-established and there was a fairly clear distinction between the locality of the fishing families and the wider community. Hence, there were also some similarities to Filey. Scarborough's long-established fishing community, like that of Filey, had a strong sense of identity. The major difference between the two towns being that Scarborough had a harbour which attracted visiting vessels, and was a smaller community within a larger town. And, unlike Filey, there was an increase in visiting fishermen and their families settling in the town as the nineteenth century progressed and the North Sea fishery prospered. As can be seen from Table 8 the numbers of fishermen born in Filey only dropped below 88 per cent during the peak years of North Sea fishing during the 1870s and early 1880s, and subsequently rose in 1891 to over 90 per cent.

How then do we account for change in fishing communities in the face of both strong and weak forms of identity? There is always an unconscious potential for change that can manifest itself in certain situations, but how does this unconscious potential become a conscious reality? Fortunately, in the case of Filey we have a good example in that a significant number of the local population embraced religious allegiance to Primitive Methodism within a short space of time in early 1823, and the change appears to have been the result of both internal and external factors.[21] The Filey revival of 1823 was influenced by travelling preachers well before this event, first by the Wesleyan Methodists and later by the Primitive Methodists[22]. That a small number of Wesleyan Methodists had already become established is perhaps significant in that this acted as a precedent for later change, although the strong local sense of identity meant that the constraints on individuals and the population's

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[21] *PMM* (1823), p. 255; Luker, 'Revivalism in Theory and Practice'.
[22] *PMM* (1824), p. 255.

resistance to change were considerable.[23] Such resistance was also aided by the

growth of middle-class norms of discipline, centralisation and respectability in

Wesleyan Methodism, which had the effect of alienating many working-class

people.[24] It is perhaps not surprising, therefore that Wesleyan Methodism in Filey

initially achieved little in the way of success – gaining only fifteen members during

the period 1806-1823 (Appendix 8c2).[25] Preachers found it difficult to make any

impact on the town, and John Oxtoby's success for the Primitives came only after

several years of such visits.[26]

The conversion of approximately forty people in 1823 (with numbers reaching

around one hundred a year later) came after several years of social and economic

difficulty, precipitated by the disillusionment felt by many in the wake of the Anglo-

French wars.[27] Although such dramatic conversions are generally short-lived, in the

right situations with the right local support such change can be more permanent, and

this appears to have been the case with Filey. The strong sense of community identity

also aided the change in that when it began to occur it gathered momentum quickly

and had a significant impact on the future of the community.

In fishing communities with a weaker sense of identity we would expect

change to be less dramatic and complete, mainly because of the lack of wider social

support within the community. Movement and change were common factors of

nineteenth and early twentieth century communities, and fishing communities were

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[23] The early preachers were pelted with dried fish, and pigs were driven into the open-air meetings. The Methodists appear to have first preached in Filey in 1806 (there is no evidence that John Wesley ever visited the village), and a small Wesleyan Society was formed in 1810. This was followed with the opening of a small chapel in 1811 but progress remained slow such that by 1823 there were only 15 members (Fearon, *Filey*, p. 75).

[24] W. R. Ward, 'The Religion of the People and the Problem of Control, 1790-1830', in *Faith and Faction* (London, Epworth Press, 1993), pp. 264-284.

[25] East Riding Archives, Beverley, MRQ 1/36 (1796-1838).

[26] See Chapter 5, Part 3 of the present thesis.

[27] *PMM* (1824), p. 258; Petty, *The History of the Primitive Methodist Connexion*, p. 188. Woodcock, *Piety Among the Peasantry*, p. 36, where he gives the number as 50. John Oxtoby claimed to have seen 80 converts in a vision prior to entering Filey.

not the static, unchanging social environments that we might imagine, as Gerrish has demonstrated.[28] Grimsby, for example, did not exist as a fishing community until the 1850s, and is perhaps more appropriately pictured as a mixture of cultures, each with its own identity alongside a gradually emerging local identity based primarily on occupation (or we might perhaps say that individuals had multiple identities, corporate identities or fluid identities[29]). Yet the emergence of a local social identity was aided by the views and attitudes to the town by other localities, and the growth of a terminology applied to local individuals and groups. Filey long had a more coherent fishing community and a more consolidated identity, although it, too, as we have seen, in the right circumstances was affected by change. When people talk of the sense of community disappearing, their concept here is usually based on community of place and culture, thus giving a sense of permanence, a sense of something that has been lost. Although with Grimsby and Hull it took several generations for the local population to develop a sense of pride and identity in their place of birth. The truth, however, may be that while these communities experienced *periods* of stability, change for both types of community was often the norm. The figures in Table 8 help to provide a sense of the emerging local populations.

In 1841 92 per cent of Scarborough fishermen were born in the town. Ten years later only 61 per cent of the local fishermen were born there (and the percentage continued to decline until 1881) - the visiting fishermen and their families being attracted by the rapid growth of the North Sea fishing industry. When these visitors brought with them new methods of fishing, especially trawling, the indigenous Scarborough community, which was predominantly engaged in line fishing, responded by rejecting the innovation, sometimes violently, such as the stabbing of a

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[28] Gerrish, 'Special Industrial Migration'. See also Appendix 7.
[29] A. Maalouf, *On Identity* (London, Harvill, 2000, Paris edn. 1998), p17; H. Mol, *Identity and the Scared* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1976), p. 11.

southern fishermen by a Scarborough man.[30] The overall result was that many of the visiting fishermen eventually moved to the newly developing fishing communities of Hull and Grimsby where they found a more acceptable welcome. Even so, some visiting fishermen stayed on at Scarborough and saw the more lucrative fishing methods gradually adopted. As the percentage of fishermen born in Scarborough gradually increased towards the 1880s this suggests that following the influx of fishermen from outside the town during the period c. 1845 - c.1881, this was followed by an indigenous growth situation in the1880s, which gradually levelled off. This situation is made more stark when we see that the fishermen at home on census night consisted of 99 fishermen in 1841 and subsequently rose to 513 by 1891.

Table 9: Fishermen at home on census night.

	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
FILEY FISHERMEN	132	149	155	202	175	188	190
Born in Filey		131	137	160	146	171	177
Born elsewhere		10	18	42	29	17	13
% born in Filey		**88%**	**88%**	**79%**	**83%**	**91%**	**93%**
SCARBOROUGH FISHERMEN	99	158	246	358	363	513	329
Born in Scarborough	91	96	138	196	270	315	239
Born elsewhere	8	62	108	162	183	138	90
% born in Scarborough	**92%**	**61%**	**56%**	**55%**	**74%**	**61%**	**73%**
GRIMSBY FISHERMEN	10	17	209	646	1402	2216	2293
Born in Grimsby		7	14	26	90	239	244
Born elsewhere		10	195	620	1312	2077	1742
% born in Grimsby		**41%**	**7%**	**4%**	**6%**	**11%**	**12%**

Source: Census data for the three towns.

Note: The figures here are for those fishermen at home on census night. Unfortunately there is little consistency in the use of terminology, with 'seafarer', 'seaman' and 'engineer' coving a range of types of seafarer. Hence, for simplicity, the numbers here consist of those people designated smack owners, smack-master fishermen, fishermen, apprentice fishermen, and others, such as engineers, who were clearly working on a fishing vessel. There is no simple way to identify how many fishermen were at sea, hence we must rely of estimates by a number of people (see Tables 1, 2 and 3). On average there appear to have been approximately 2,500 fishermen (from Grimsby, Scarborough and Filey) at sea on each of the census dates 1871-1901.

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[30] See also, Gerrish, 'Who Followed the Fish to Scarborough "Fare"?' Part one, p. 18.

Grimsby is of particular interest here in that most people in the new fishing community had their origins outside the town, such that there was little concept of a common local heritage, as Margaret Gerrish has pointed out:

> Prior to the 1850s there had been no recent fishing industry of any importance at Grimsby. According to the census of 1841 only 1.3 per cent of all economically active males in the town were listed as fishermen. By 1851 – when the first stage of the re-development of the port was nearing completion – this figure had dropped to 0.6 per cent.[31]

The situation thereafter changed dramatically and by1857 there were twenty-two fishing smacks working from the town.[32] While the 1851 census recorded only 17 fishermen working there, by 1861, 209 fishermen were employed, although only 14 (seven per cent) were born there (see Table 8). By this date, too, '12 per cent of all employed males in the town were smack-owners, smack captains, fishermen or fishing apprentices'.[33] While fishermen and their families came from a very diverse array of localities, the chart in Appendix 7 shows that the majority of fishermen originated from a small number of towns, especially Barking, Brixham, Gravesend, Great Yarmouth, Grimsby, Lowestoft, Hull, Scarborough and Sherringham, although by 1891 an increasing number (239 or 11 per cent of the local fishermen) had been born in Grimsby: over two-and-a-half times the figure of ten years earlier.

The Grimsby fishermen lived within the half square mile bounded by North and South Victoria Street, Riby Street/Stirling Street, Park Street and Eleanor Street, this being the area mainly known as New Clee (Appendix 3a). By 1881 New Clee had a population of over 11,000, and by the beginning of the twentieth century there were over 26,000 people living within this area, most of whom were directly associated

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[31] Gerrish, 'Following the Fish to Grimsby', pp. 39-50.
[32] Alwood, *The Sea Fisheries*, p. 200.
[33] Gerrish, 'Following the Fish to Grimsby', p. 40.

with the fishing industry (Appendix 4a).[34] Given that various groups of fishermen shared similar roots, it is perhaps not surprising that, as Gerrish has pointed out, 85 per cent of the Devon and Kent fishing families in 1861 lived in purpose built properties in the Worsley Buildings, Kent Street, Church Street and Bath Street (all in a newly built area of the town).[35] The 1881 census also shows fishing families from Sherringham, Norfolk, living in close proximity (in Kent Street, Thorald Street and Cleethorpe Road), and by 1891 the majority of these had moved to Castle Street and Stanley Street.

In Cleethorpes 142 (85 per cent) of the 167 fishermen were born there by 1871 (Table 9).[36] By 1901 only 89 of the 476 fishermen (19 per cent) were born in the town. Nevertheless, proximity for fishermen from distant towns (living in both Grimsby and Cleethorpes) was restricted simply because of the demand for accommodation. At the same time, with increasing wealth, some smack owners moved further east into Cleethorpes and south to the more rural setting of Abbey Road, the majority of owners (that is, generally owners of one vessel) continued to live in the heart of the fishing community in the area of Mangle Street. Hence, while Cleethorpes saw a gradual increase of fishermen living in the town until 1891, the surge of numbers in 1901 (to 476 fishermen) bears witness to the growing wealth of the fishing community. The sharp decrease in numbers of fishermen born in Cleethorpes from 1891 suggests a gradual stabilisation of the numbers, and that many fishermen were earning sufficient for them to move some distance away to the more immediate area of the Grimsby fish docks. Further analysis of the census data here is likely to show that there was a general move into other areas of the town, especially the more

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[34] Gillett, *A History of Grimsby*, p. 283.
[35] Gerrish, 'Special Industrial Migration', p. 329.
[36] With the growth of the towns of Grimsby and Cleethorpes the boundary between the two towns became Park Street, with the west side being in Grimsby and the east side in Cleethorpes.

pleasant suburbs. But this new era of wealth for some had not been achieved without a cost.

Table 10: Fishermen at home in Cleethorpes on Census night.

	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
CLEETHORPES FISHERMEN	69	105	116	167	190	210	476
Born in Cleethorpes			85	142	138	116	89
Born elsewhere			31	25	52	94	387
% born in Cleethorpes			73%	85%	75%	55%	19%

Unless otherwise stated the Cleethorpes fishermen are not included in with the Grimsby figures.

Unlike the longer established fishing community in Scarborough, there was no opposition to new methods of fishing in Grimsby as the new fishing community began establishing itself during the 1850s and 1860s. The fish-docks had in any case been created with the new fishing methods in mind. But as the fishing community became established tensions began to rise, and in1880 there was an attempt by the fishing vessel owners to impose a new system that involved all year round fleeting. The men in turn objected to a system that they felt would result in many deaths and injuries during the winter months, and this led to united action by the fishermen. Gillet tells us that 'The strikers were sober and well behaved, and in the town there were very few who did not sympathise with them'.[37] Not surprisingly, after three weeks the men were able to celebrate a successful outcome. But later clashes between the owners and the fishermen did not lead to such positive results for the latter. In 1886 the owners made another attempt to impose winter fleeting, and, despite opposition and strikes by the fishermen, a number of the owners bought steam trawlers and eventually succeeded in imposing their system. Gillett has recorded that it was now impossible for the fishermen to resist the changes.[38] There was

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[37] Gillett, *A History of Grimsby*, p. 267.
[38] Ibid, p. 269.

nevertheless a sense of irony here in that with the advent of the steam trawler, fleeting quickly became a redundant method of fishing.

Other conflicts occurred from time to time culminating in the 1901 'Lock Out', when the newly formed 'Grimsby Federated Owners Protection Society Ltd.' sought to impose a new system of payment on the crews. This was strongly resisted and strike action was undertaken by the fishermen resulting in 400 trawlers being tied up in the docks. As the summer weeks turned into winter months the 'lock-out' caused increasing hardship for the fishermen and their families as well as for a wide range of support workers. An attempt by the owners to bring in foreign crews (not for the first time in local disputes) led to violence and rioting, which had the negative effect of detracting from the fishermen's cause. Arbitration was accepted and the fishermen eventually went back to sea 'on the terms offered by the Federation pending an award by an arbitrator'. But the fishermen benefited very little from this. Gillett comments

> Freed of their labour troubles, the owners were soon able to add another hundred trawlers to their fleet and the sailing smacks dwindled to less than thirty. The town seemed to have achieved its ultimate destiny as the home of the steam trawler and the fishing millionaire.[39]

Significantly, these conflicts become more evident from the late nineteenth century onwards when the community's sense of identity was becoming stronger, and the social and economic gap between owners and fishermen grew ever larger. This situation had been precipitated by the initially weak sense of identity in Grimsby, which allowed possibilities for change, resulting in economic power for a few, and a higher degree of social solidarity for the many. Even within the growing community of mid-century we might expect to have found remnants of strong identity present, a hangover from the community experience in the incomers' hometowns., and with

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[39] Ibid, pp. 287-289.

fishermen from other fishing communities tending, whenever possible, to live in close proximity which gave members a sense of security. In such a situation we would expect change to be more evident in the second and third generations as offspring became part of the emerging wider local identity, and it would be natural here to see the formation of various sub-cultures in which some did better economically than others.

The rapid growth in numbers of people in Grimsby, and their increasing self confidence, was partly enabled by the rapid establishment of a range of religious denominations following 1870 (Appendix 8a). The religious institutions provided and reinforced a sense of security in a rapidly changing environment, and thereby allowed the community to develop a stronger sense of local identity (or perhaps it would be more correct to talk of local identities). This was evidently the case by the end of the nineteenth century when members of specific social groups became civic dignitaries and council members.[40] Clearly it was easier for new groups in Grimsby with a strong sense of identity to achieve positions of authority in the town. These included fishermen from towns that had a strong connexion with the churches and chapels, especially Primitive Methodism, Jewish immigrants (a number of whom became important local civic dignitaries), and those who developed links with the growing number of local associations and societies.

As a general principle, therefore, it can be said that change came about in Filey Scarborough and Grimsby when it was necessary for survival, and when the relevant support networks were in place to aid security - thereby enabling individuals

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[40] Among the pioneers of the Grimsby fishing industry who subsequently became local dignitaries were Ald. Henry Smethurst, J. P., Sir George E. J. Moody, Thomas Campbell, Harrison Mudd, J. P. and George Lowe Alward, F. R. S. A., J. P. Smethurst, Campbell and Mudd, in particular, were staunch members of the local churches and ardent teetotallers. Alward, *The Sea Fisheries*; Gillett, *A History of Grimsby;* Lincoln, *The Rise of Grimsby*, Vol. 1, p. 124.

and groups to take risks. These support networks included extended families, fishermen and their families from the same hometown and with similar histories, churches and chapels, Friendly Societies and Temperance organisations. Even so, the changes, as we have seen, were far from smooth in that opposition was always present both individually (as the tendency is always to seek security within the familiar), and socially where the identity of the community was perceived to be under threat. The process of change here was therefore underpinned by the social and psychological need for security and survival – both in terms of continued personal existence and of personal and social identity. When personal psychological well-being and social and economic security were threatened the need to survive kicked in, creating tension between the various elements. In such situations there were a number of possible outcomes, but the net result was that change was usually facilitated in one form or another.

In a community with a strong sense of identity (Filey) such a change was likely to be slow but eventually dramatic, whereas in a community with a weak sense of identity (Grimsby) change was likely to be more gradual throughout, although in certain situations (such as the developing sense of communal identity) change was resisted. In a relatively small fishing community like Scarborough the conflict arising out of the tension was more evident. Thus, when outsiders move into a community that has a strong sense of identity this can cause conflict – although with increasing numbers of outsiders establishing themselves locally the tension and opposition to change gradually decreased. Such a situation was clearly evident in a number of fishing ports where conflict occurred over fishing methods (Scarborough), and with regard to fishing on Sundays, especially at Newlyn in 1896.[41] The dispute, however,

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[41] Corin, *Fishermen's Conflict,* Chapter seven: 'The Newlyn Riots'.

was not of long duration as F. G. Aflalo commented that on a Sunday in 1903 he saw 'fishermen packing, fishing and loading carts' – although Newlyn men still refused to go to sea on Sundays.[42] In contrast, as Filey was not a harbour port, there was little in the way of conflict here following the adoption of sabbatarisanism a few years after the religious revival of 1823.

Change, therefore, was not merely facilitated by the move from a situation of mechanistic solidarity to one of organic solidarity. Change takes place in both forms of community, although such change may well take a longer or shorter period of time to work itself out, depending on the type of community. In other words, it is not the move from one type of community to another that facilitates change, rather it is the tension created when the innate need for psychological, social and economic security comes into direct conflict with the threat to such security. This appears to have been Cohen's point when he spoke of identity becoming most evident when it is under threat.[43]

Durkheim's model therefore offers an explanation for many kinds of change experienced in the fishing communities, but it is especially evident in the nature of religious change. After all, it is usually religion in one form or another that offers an explanation of the need for change, and subsequently legitimates the actual change such as with the case of Filey in 1823, and in Scarborough and Grimsby during the 1870s. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to think of such change in isolation from other social changes in the community. Clearly each form of change has an impact on the others.

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[42] Ibid, p. 82.
[43] Cohen, *Belonging*, p. 3.

7.2.2 Culture and Identity

Cohen's argument that identity is formed and maintained in reference to cultural stability is no doubt also true in the wider sense, such that when people move from their locality they tend to seek out people from a similar background.[44] This is perhaps a natural biological and psychological trait and is clearly evident when we look at the census data for Grimsby where some groups of fishermen and their families from distant towns lived in close proximity. Change is often managed in reference to cultural stability and such cultural stability provides the security necessary for people who were willing to take risks leading to change in the long-standing communities.[45] The sense of cultural stability is often reinforced in a variety of ways such as the wearing of traditional dress like bonnets and ganseys, fishing methods, nick-names, the telling of stories especially of major events such as great storms and tragedies, and in the establishment of museums and displays of local materials.[46] Fishing vessels were often made in a local style (such as the Filey coble), and for the older communities there was usually general agreement on the nature of the fishing engaged in. Stories told and retold helped to bind together the experience of many, and for those who did not experience the actual events there was the sense of common heritage in which fathers, brothers and grandparents of the hearers were involved. But such stories (often of significant events and the exploits of memorable individuals) do, of course, gradually take on mythical proportions in the telling – and the common heritage becomes one of not just telling the tales but also of engaging in discussion on the variously perceived nature of the events.[47] In a number of instances the community produces memorials in the form of monuments, tapestries (especially

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[44] Cohen, *Whalsey*, p. 20.

[45] Ibid, p. 20.

[46] Nadel-Klein, *Fishing for Heritage*, pp. 100-101, 137 and 176; and 'Stigma and Separation in a Scottish Fishing Village', p. 109; Cohen, 'Rites of Identity', especially p. 57.

[47] Nadel-Klein, *Fishing for Heritage*, p. 172.

the one currently underway in Filey), Heritage centres (a Heritage Centre is being planned for Scarborough, while a longer established Heritage Centre continues in Grimsby), and museums with a range of artefacts. There are also collections of oral history accounts, poems and numerous other local publications. Increasingly, special services are held to commemorate major tragic events, other events celebrate the history and culture of the local communities.[48]

Cohen's argument that localities become especially aware of their culture and identity at the boundaries where they engage with others is borne out in the experience of the three communities under investigation. This is the point where the members' behaviour, previously implicit, now becomes explicit and is consciously perceived.[49] This situation, however, should not be seen merely negatively as it enables the placing of values on the community's distinctiveness, and in this sense fishing communities are no different from other social and cultural groups.

A further point by Cohen is also pertinent here. He maintains that 'People become aware of their culture, and experience their distinctiveness, not through the performance of elaborate and specialised ceremonial but through the evaluation of everyday practices'.[50] Among these we might include dress, local dialect, nicknames, customs and superstitions. At the same time special events also serve an important purpose. Turner, upon whose work Cohen drew, identified liminality in communities as important symbolic events in which the community reasserts its collective identity.[51] Such events include rites of passage, festivals, rituals and ceremonies. At the same time these various events include expressions of creativity and have

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[48] Nadel-Klein, Ibid.
[49] Buckser, *Communities of Faith*, p. 233.
[50] Cohen, 'A Sense of time, a sense of place: the meaning of close social association in Whalsey, Shetland' in Cohen, *Belonging*, p. 6.
[51] Turner, *The Ritual Process.*

important social functions.[52] There were numerous customs and traditions in fishing communities that were an important part of the local identity, with some such traditions often transcending religious allegiances. In Staithes, for example, the local fishermen would meet around the harbour on a Sunday evening (well into living memory) wearing their ganseys and at an appointed time march to their chapels and churches for the evening service, each group breaking away as they reached their own church or chapel. A Staithes resident, interviewed in 2007, recalled this event:

> On a Sunday night all the fishermen would meet down near the crab and Lobster and they used to get in a line and then, without anybody saying anything, start and walk backwards and forwards and backwards and forwards, fore and aft they called it. Just a few minutes before six o'clock, somebody must have had a watch, they would turn round and they would start to sing a hymn, and they would walk up the street singing a hymn. And as they got to each chapel the men from each chapel would break off and go to each chapel. We, as children, used to follow them when we could. It was lovely. That again must have been a tradition going back for a long time. [53]

Such a link between local processions and the churches was a very common part of life within fishing communities. Bob Lincoln (writing at the turn of the nineteenth century) recalled a similar parade in mid-nineteenth century Grimsby:

> A group of the old crowd … used to parade the streets on a Sunday night away back in the early sixties (1860s) singing hymns, making speeches on the street corners, and eventually entering to worship at the Primitive Chapel in Victoria Street. … I can just see the crowd consisting, amongst others, of the three Smethursts…the three Mudds… with Tommy Campbell, etc.[54]

We have already mentioned the funeral processions in Filey. But such processions were not always for ostensibly religious purposes. When the Grimsby fishermen objected to all year round fleeting being imposed by the fishing vessel owners in 1880, the fishermen's strike action involved the local churches. In his discussion of the strike, Gillett observed:

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[52] Delanty, *Community,* p. 44.
[53] 'Women's Voices Project', 33WC07St. (14.03.07) at Staithes.
[54] Lincoln, *The Rise of Grimsby, Vol. 1,* p. 124.

The strike began with 90 skippers and mates, but within a week 250 had joined in, as smacks came in, and there were parades through the streets with a band. On the first Sunday 200 fishermen dressed in blue guernseys and smart trousers paraded twice from the club-room in Kent Street to services in St. Andrew's church. Soon over 700 men were out and over 400 smacks were tied up in the dock. [55]

The ritual aspect of these processions points to the spiritual significance of social solidarity and local identity. Nevertheless, when applying Turner's ideas to the study of Whalsay Cohen argued that 'people can participate in the 'same' ritual yet find quite different meanings for it'.[56] But this, surely, is part of the powerful impact that lies at the heart of symbolism.[57] In essence, therefore, such expressions are full of symbolism and, as such, provide a rich mixture from which ever new interpretations can be found. Symbolism and ritual can also be found in a wide range of activities such as the making of tapestries, an example of which is to be found in the Eyemouth museum (constructed by local women with the help of a professional artist). The symbolism here has been used very effectively to commemorate the effect of the disastrous storm of 14 Oct 1881 in which 129 local fishermen lost their lives. The Filey group have been more orthodox in their approach but are involving a wider range of community members (see Appendix 10d). In Grimsby and Filey groups of local people have also recently written plays that draw upon significant events in the life of each town. Such activities are common today bearing witness to the rapid decline of the fishing communities and the desire to remember their past.

That the sense of community in fishing towns and villages is often reinforced by traumatic events and tragedies, is evident in that such events are told and retold in local stories, sometimes in narrative form, sometimes via the material arts (such as monuments, paintings and tapestries). This point has also made by Delanty who stated

[55] Gillett, *A History of Grimsby*, p. 266.
[56] Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, p. 55.
[57] F. W. Dillistone, *The Power of Symbols* (London, SCM Press, 1986).

that 'some of the most powerful expressions of community are often experienced precisely where there has been a major injustice inflicted on a group of people, who consequently develop a sense of their common fate.'[58]

The sense of nostalgia associated with the demise of perceived 'traditional' communities often gives birth to a new form of identity that may have only loose contingent links with earlier forms. It is no accident, therefore, that many fishing communities at the beginning of the twenty-first century are developing heritage sites, resurrecting traditional festivals, and exploring ways in which to preserve the local heritage. The construction of identity is a complex process and it appears to be in this sense that Bauman has argued that identity is a surrogate reinvention of community.[59] The telling of stories (about ourselves and about others) often includes a concern with personal roots, relationships (marriage, friends, peer groups, and so on), work, leisure, religion, and how people cope with change. The recollection of such events goes hand-in-hand with a reconstruction of events – usually via a selective memory. Any attempt to reconstruct earlier forms of community has to take into account the variety of influences here, and the stories often tell us as much about the present inhabitants of the town as they do about the nineteenth century community. In order to understand the past, therefore, we need to understand how we construct the present.

How, then, do societies 'reconstruct' their past in the light of present circumstances?[60] There are three important developments here. In the first instance it has to be recognised that the past is perceived as a 'cultural resource', not as a chronological series of events. Cohen has argued that identity on Whalsay was formed and maintained in reference to cultural stability,[61] and that this is often perceived

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[58] Delanty, *Community*, p. 48.
[59] Bauman, *Identity*, p. 15; see also Delanty, *Community*, p. 118-119.
[60] Cohen, *Whalsey*, p. 132.
[61] Ibid, p. 20.

symbolically. Secondly, identity may be seen as an individual experience that is socially and culturally mediated through the person, but this cannot be separated out from the collective experience. Indeed, Nadel-Klein (who like David Clark in Staithes, studied a fishing community by living in it for a time) has pointed out that 'we continually construct our lives in terms of origin and destination, home and away, places where we belong and places where we are not welcome, zones of comfort and zones of danger.'[62] Thirdly, social processes constrain and legitimise behaviour.[63] The telling of stories (whether orally or symbolically via material culture) reinforces the constant reconstruction of people's lives, and tends to reinforce our sense of security and ultimately our sense of identity. Doherty has made just this point in his claim that 'We seem to need stories to position ourselves in the world – to develop a sense of identity.'[64] Storytelling and public reading (readers were widely used in nineteenth century communities) were therefore important aspects of communication at a time when many people did not read or write.

Economic constraints left people with little option but to utilise readily accessible materials in creative ways. Among such activities were the making of rag-rugs, ganseys and other forms of dress, and furniture made use of driftwood. All were basically functional although designs and symbols were carefully incorporated, often paying tribute to local superstitious beliefs and practices, as described in the previous chapter. Net-making skills could be turned to other purposes, such as making items for the home and for sale thereby supplementing the meagre income. In some smaller communities, such as Robin Hood's Bay, smuggling, especially of drink and cloth, provided extra support; while in the trawler ports of Scarborough, Hull and Grimsby perfumes, tobacco and a wide range of goods, especially from Holland, Belgium and

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[62] Nadel-Klein, *Fishing for Heritage*, p. 216.
[63] Cohen, *Whalsey*, p. 22.
[64] Doherty, L. E. *Gender and Interpretation* (London, Duckworth, 2001), p. 12.

Germany, found their way from 'Dutch copers' onto fishing vessels and were eventually sold for a profit ashore.[65]

While creativity was clearly evident in the older fishing communities such as Filey and Scarborough, there was not such a rich vein of creativity evident in Grimsby. For many of the incomers traditional activities learned in their home towns were brought into the local melting-pot, but few of these became universally adapted local customs in the town. Even a local gansey pattern did not develop, and there was no common local dress worn by the women.

Folk rituals, too, were an important aspect of the local identity, and Robert Storch has pointed out that these rituals were an important means of expressing solidarity within a community. But these were beginning to disappear by the mid-nineteenth century - and it was just at this point that Grimsby was emerging as a major fishing port.[66] Rituals and customs nevertheless retained an active presence in many communities, especially the Yorkshire fishing communities, well into the twentieth century as is evidenced by the Women's Voices Project interviews cited in Chapter 6.

7.2.3   Religion and Identity

The relationship between religion, society and the individual has long been noted by scholars. Both Durkheim and Weber believed religion to be the key to understanding the relationship between the individual and society.[67] Both also recognised that the problem of individual existence in society is a religious problem.[68] For Durkheim (a structural theorist) it was the link between religion and society that

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[65] For an analysis of 'copering' activities see Friend, 'The North Sea Liquor Trade'.
[66] Storch, *Popular Culture,* p. 2.
[67] Cited in Luckmann, *The Invisible Religion*, p. 12.
[68] Ibid.

was paramount – and it was society that provided identity for individuals within the group. In particular he argued that religion had two main functions – to act as a source of moral authority, and to provide rituals that act as a mechanism for social solidarity. He further argued that religion provides a foundational means of social identity centred on its symbols. On the other hand, for Durkheim there was no supernatural realm – religion was the construct of society, an important element in ensuring social stability and harmony. For Weber, on the other hand (an actor-orientated theorist), the modern individual was seen as more than a social unit in that he placed more emphasis on individual rationality and personal motivation and action, which included the need to give life meaning and purpose. It should be noted, however, that these two perspectives are not mutually exclusive, and later scholars have tended to make use of both viewpoints.[69]

A later wave of interest in the nature of religion, and especially on the relationship between identity and religion, that drew upon the work of both Durkheim and Weber was generated in the post-second world war period, with important publications during the 1960s coming especially from Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann. In their joint book *The Social Construction of Reality* (1981/1966)[70] they appear to support Durkheim's view regarding an objective social reality with their claim that not only is society constructed by people but that people are the product of society. They later pointed out that in large groups it is difficult for the individual to relate effectively to others (a point clearly evident in the nineteenth century Grimsby population where numerous immigrants tended to associate with others who had common origins and culture). Making sense of, and giving meaning to, the world

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[69] Comments on Durkheim and Weber have made use of a number of sources, but especially the work of Inger Furseth and Pål Repstad, *an introduction to the sociology of religion: classical and contemporary perspectives* (London, Ashgate, 2006), pp. 32-37.
[70] Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, Penguin, 1981/1966).

requires membership of at least a small group.[71] In his publication *The Sacred Canopy*

Berger argued that for primitive societies religion was foundational and helped to

provide meaning, order and a moral basis for society (again there are similarities to

Durkheim), but that in modern complex societies there is increasing secularisation (a

thesis that he has more recently rejected, arguing that Europe is an exceptional case,

although he believes that it is impossible for people in modern societies to believe in

the same way as it was in the pre-modern, and that people today tend to be religious in

a new way).[72] Luckmann developed his own ideas further than Berger was prepared to

go in the 1960s, and argued that discussion about religion had degenerated to

descriptions of the decline of ecclesiastical structures, mainly from a parochial

viewpoint.[73] Religion for Luckmann was 'any symbolic form by which humans

transcend organic life, as implied in the English title of his book *The Invisible*

Religion' (1967).[74] While for most scholars 'religion' means institutionalised religion

Luckmann was concerned with the wider perspective. Around the same time Robert

Bellah helped to develop the insight that 'Human identity is a necessary and universal

function of religion' (1968).[75] And Building on Berger's and Bellah's ideas, Hans

Mol argued that the construction, maintenance and stabilization of identity are central

functions of religion, and he defined religion as the *sacralization of identity* (1976).[76]

Hence, there has been a gradual shift away from the social perspective of Durkheim to

the individual perspective of Weber, especially via Berger, Luckmann, Bellah and

Mol, although for Mol, too, religion is a stabilising factor that is central to the

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[71] Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *Modernity, Pluralism and the Crisis of Meaning* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Foundation, 1995), cited in furseth and repstad, *an introduction to the sociology of religion,* p. 58.
[72] Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (Garden City, New York, Doubleday, 1967).
[73] Luckmann*, Invisible Religion*, p. 18.
[74] Cited in Weigert, et al, *Society and Identity*, p. 18.
[75] Ibid, p. 19.
[76] Mol, *Identity and the Sacred*, p. 1.

formation and maintenance of identity.[77] The outline here concentrates upon a simplified overview of the developments in understanding the nature of identity. Indeed, Weigert, Teitge & Teitge pointed out (citing Gleason, 1983) that 'The widespread acceptance of the concept of identity does not imply agreement on or even a clear understanding of its various meanings'.[78] For our purposes here we will simply pick up the thread that explores the relationship between identity and religion.

Other scholars, (as has been noted earlier) began to raise concerns here.[79] The influence has been widespread with Geertz, Turner, Clark, Cohen, Williams and others developing the concept of religion in a range of ways. Williams' concept of a range of discourses or languages (the language of belief) developed Geertz's view so that a balance is offered to the criticism that Geertz's view is too uniform a model.[80]

By exploring the meaning, especially the symbolic meaning, of an act we can see this within the context of the wider culture and thereby analyse how meaning has been constructed. For example, commenting about death as a rite of passage, Cohen observed:

> When a death occurs on Whalsey there follows a suspension of normality (marked symbolically by the stopping of the clocks in the deceased's home), gradually spreading outwards with a ripple effect in a series of concentric circles from the bereaved household…'[81]

We have already seen that religion performed an important function in the development and maintenance of identity, enabling individuals and groups to cope with change while at the same time legitimising the changes. What is evident here is that 'religion' is clearly not limited to institutional orthodoxy and the rituals are not

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[77] Weigert, Teitge & Teitge, *Society and Identity*, p. 24. Mol, *Identity and the Sacred,* p. 10.
[78] Phillip Gleason, 'Identifying identity: A semantic history', *Journal of American History,* 69, (1983), pp. 910-931, cited in Weigert, Teitge & Teitge, *Society and Identity*, (1986), p. 29.
[79] See for example, Harrison, 'Religion and Recreation', p. 98; Hempton, *The Religion of the People*; Williams, *Religious Belief and Poplar Culture in Southwark*.
[80] Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*, p. 13.
[81] Cohen, Whalsey, p. 79.

limited to those imposed by the religious institutions. In day-to-day living a wide range of beliefs and practices, including rituals, complemented the more orthodox expression of religion, as has been demonstrated in Chapter 6.

Religious change, as Hobsbawm has noted, often acts as a buttress between radicalism, reformation and revolution.[82] With social, political and economic changes to a particular way of life new forms of religion in an established community often replaced the old, outmoded, and inadequate systems. On the other hand migrating families tended to emphasise their own familiar cultural and religious traditions, which helped to provide a sense of security and reinforced their identity. While small-scale migration was common among rural communities during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and helped to disseminate religious developments, there was a much larger scale migration in fishing communities that ensured a wider dissemination not only of diverse cultural and religious influences, but also, especially, of evangelical religion. This was especially observable during the Fishermen's Religious Revival of the 1920s, which arose when the fishing communities faced dire economic difficulties. The revival affected fishing communities along the East coast of England, especially those in East Anglia, and among the herring fishers such that it quickly spread to Scotland as the fishermen and their families returned home after the herring season. Duthie has commented: '1921 was an *annus terribilis* for the fishing communities of north-east Scotland – and the despair of the fisher folk led them to religious fervour for consolation.'[83]

The influence of Primitive Methodism (among other groups of the New Dissent) along the Yorkshire coast, as well as elsewhere, replaced the old hierarchical and conservative religious traditions of especially the Church of England and the Old

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[82] Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels*, p. 127.
[83] Duthie, 'The Fishermen's Religious Revival', pp 23-27; Also Jackie Ritchie, *Floods Upon the Dry Ground: God working among fisherfolk* (J. Ritchie, 'Norwin', Huna, Caithness, 1983).

Dissent. This was clearly the case in Filey where Primitive Methodism offered a more experiential and democratic form of involvement with their religion. But such change was not restricted to Yorkshire, the East Coast generally and Scotland, nor indeed to Britain. For example, the New Dissent was greatly influenced by revivalism in New England, resulting in a wave of evangelical influence that swept through Britain and Europe. One pertinent example of this influence is taken from Andrew Buckeser's study of sectarianism, identity and religious change on the Danish island of Mors. Here Buckser pointed to the 'Awakening Movement' in Jutland during the1830s, which was greatly influenced on Mors by the preacher Peter Larsen Skræppenborg, whose

> Godly meetings… shifted religious leadership from the village priest to the villagers, and thereby from the representatives of the king to the representatives of the folk. The meetings violated parish boundaries, linking people of different villages and kin groups on the basis of a common faith. Their common status as free farmers and artisans, members of a divinely folk culture, overrode the village and estate attachments that had previously defined them.[84]

The role of religion on Mors in creating new concepts of identity and community bears a strong resemblance to developments in some of the smaller Yorkshire fishing communities such as Filey and Staithes during the same early nineteenth century period. Although there was no sharp movement from Established church to Nonconformity in Filey, the dual allegiance of many in the local population (who attended both Anglican and Primitive Methodist services) suggests that the development of Primitive Methodism in the town did indeed act as a buttress between orthodoxy and radicalism and enabled the community to maintain, and even enhance, its local religious identity – thereby reinforcing local social norms.

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[84] Buckser, *Communities of Faith*, p. 233.

The extent to which identity may be formed by religion therefore clearly depends on how we define religion. If we restrict such definitions to the religious institutions, then religion would appear to be one factor among many that influence the construction and maintenance of identity. The advent of Primitive Methodism in Grimsby had an impact on the wider aspects of the residents' lives, not least in that those Primitive Methodist fishing vessel owners who insisted on teetotalism later became civic leaders. On the other hand, if we define religion in terms Orsi's concept of 'lived religion' then all aspects of life of the individual and the life of the community are bound up with a religious perspective that emphasises the on-going concern with making sense of life and giving life meaning.[85] The belief in superstitions clearly determined much of the daily life of community members. The ritual aspects of superstitions and folk customs were not only a means of expressing social solidarity they were also, like institutionalised religious rituals a means of easing guilt feelings and a sense of powerlessness, and thereby provided a sense of security.

The relationship between religion and identity may therefore be viewed as a kaleidoscope image that embraces sacred time and space, rites of passage, daily rites associated with superstition and folk customs, the material arts, and so on. The symbolism here is particularly important in that boundaries are evident, both physical and psychological, that reinforce both identity and religion.

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[85] Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street*.

247

Ch 8: Conclusion

The aim of this thesis has been to examine and explore the extent of the relationship between religion (especially popular religion) and identity in fishing communities, with particular reference to the three communities of Grimsby (Humber), Filey and Scarborough (Yorkshire). Harrison's suggestion that Church historians have tended to ignore the popular aspects of religiosity, alongside Hempton's urging that we must take an imaginative leap in order to explore the wider context of religious belief and practice, are both pertinent perspectives in the discussion.[1]

During the second half of the nineteenth century institutionalised religion made a significant impact on the Yorkshire and Humberside fishing communities. The increasing number and size of new religious buildings, especially evident in their construction from 1870 onwards (Appendix 8a) attracted greater numbers of people and saw an increase in membership and baptisms (Appendices 8b-d and 9a-d). During this same period institutionalised religion also became part of the leisure interest, especially of Scarborough and Filey, and also of Cleethorpes with visitors passing through Grimsby on the way. All were well endowed with churches and chapels with abundant seating for visitors.   While the local fishing community in Scarborough remained economically and socially separate from much of the wider community it was nevertheless open to religious influences. However, as Gill and Binns have pointed out there were more seats available in the Scarborough churches than were being used, although given the increasing numbers of people attending services there was perhaps reason for optimism and both the Anglicans and the Nonconformists did well.[2] At the same time, as Gill argued, Scarborough was exceptional with regard to the 1881 newspaper census of religion, which, along with Sheffield and Rotherham experienced

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[1] Harrison, 'Religion and Recreation', pp. 23, 98 and 164; Hempton, *Religion of the People*, pp. 52, 65, 163 and 170.
[2] Gill, *The 'Empty' Church Revisited*, p. 101; Binns, *Scarborough,* p. 209.

pleasant weather and this, along with the publicity surrounding the census, was perhaps good reason to expect that significant numbers of people would attend the services. However, the membership statistics, where these are available for different denominations in Scarborough, clearly show an increase in membership during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Grimsby was more unusual in that the fishing industry there developed from scratch with new docks stretching out into the River Humber onto reclaimed land. Grimsby's major advantage, however, was in having easy access to the cities south of the River Humber and being able to quickly process the fish caught in the North Sea. The churches appear to have been taken a little by surprise by the rapid population expansion after mid-century but they soon responded to such an extent that within twenty years churches, chapels and mission halls appeared at an accelerating rate.

With regard to the relationship between institutionalised and popular religion various models have been put forward from time to time, including Toon's grid based on his work in Leeds (Appendix 10a).[3] Nevertheless, the concept of the sacred as somehow separate from and in tension with the secular is highly misleading in that it reinforces a dualistic notion of reality. The Church reinforced this concept by on the one hand pointing to the sense of transcendence, and on the other hand to the immanence of the sacred. But it also restricted access here by emphasising the importance of sacred space and time. In his discussion on popular religious culture in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Martin Ingram pointed out that Peter Burke's model of 'elite' and 'popular' culture is essentially a bi-polar model, which 'makes it hard to do justice to the infinite gradations of the social hierarchy…', and tends to obscure areas of shared meanings.[4] In the same volume Bushaway described how the Revd. J. D. Atkinson saw his parishioners as reluctant to discuss their religious beliefs and practices for fear of being thought 'credulous of superstitions'. Yet

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[3] See also Ahern and Davie, *Inner City God*, p. 32.
[4] M. Ingram, 'From Reformation to Toleration: Popular Religious Cultures in England 1540-1690' (in T. Harris, ed., *Popular Culture in England c. 1500-1850,* London, Macmillan, 1995, p. 95)

Atkinson saw such beliefs and practices as 'a living faith' and holistic in nature, 'not rooted in ignorance but at odds with orthodox belief'.[5] For most working-class people in nineteenth century England, therefore, there was a propensity to see institutionalised and popular religion as parts of a broad spectrum of belief and practice although with some overlap between the two. Despite so many scholars maintaining a dualistic view of religion, there is clearly no bi-polar or dualistic distinction, rather a matrix of discourses that in total provides the elements of a living faith that helps to make sense of the world. For Bushaway the popular beliefs and practices of the nineteenth century were not irrational nor an alternative set of beliefs held by the ignorant but a 'shared understanding of the world around them' that helps to provide meaning and purpose.[6] William's model of a range of discourses also makes more sense in that the concept of dualism gives way here to a complex matrix of narratives with each contributing to the sense of meaning and purpose.

There has, nevertheless, been a tendency among historians of religion to emphasize the importance of the religious institutions in influencing the growth and development of identity, especially during the nineteenth century. Perhaps given the wealth of statistical evidence available this is not surprising, but when we look closer at the day-to-day events that moulded individual and social developments it becomes more obvious that popular religion played a significant, perhaps *the* significant role here. The present thesis has sought to add to the growing weight of evidence that shifts the focus away from the dualistic perspective, and offers a more meaningful approach to the nature of religious identity.

In order to meet the aim of the thesis four objectives have been identified on pages five and six. The first, that religion, especially popular religion represents an important narrative in a complex matrix of meaning, has been shown, especially in chapter six, to have a significant influence on the construction and maintenance of identity in fishing

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[5] B. Bushaway, 'Tacit Unsuspected, but still Implicit Belief in Nineteenth-Century Rural England' (in Harris, ibid, p. 189).
[6] Ibid, p. 198.

communities. When we examine the daily lives of people in fishing communities we discover that religiosity is painted with a more varied pallet than membership of the institutions alone – and membership can of course be variously interpreted. Even the major rites of passage embrace elements of superstition, magic, folk-lore and customs, which cannot always be separated out from the formal rites of the religious institutions. Indeed those churches that had a fair degree of success in attracting working class support were happy to accept and embrace a wide range of beliefs and practices. The analogy of a range of narratives works well in this context, like overlapping circles representing discourses that help to provide people with meaning and purpose in their lives.[7] Such discourses are rarely very sophisticated, rather they are part of the daily lives of the people with the lessons learned from a range of sources – Sunday School, Church and chapel, parents, friends, local traditions, superstitions and customs, work and leisure. In the light of this it must have been quite a shock for the Grimsby fishermen during the 1870s to encounter their local vicar at sea offering prayer, singing, worship and the Eucharist, as well as conversation and bringing messages from home and being willing to take messages back. By entering the fisherman's workaday world the clergy were demonstrating an implied acceptance of their world-view, and they were making an important statement about the interlocking narratives that help to make up this world-view.

For many people associated with the churches and chapels the whole week offered opportunities for a wide range of activities aimed at providing a total religious lifestyle for their members. But it was the intimate and homely nature of Primitive Methodism that allowed for popular beliefs and practices, which was an important factor in the denomination's success and, as Hatcher said, helped to 'reinforce a sense of belonging'.[8] This sense of belonging was of course important in both helping to create and reinforce a sense of

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[7] See also, Davie, *Religion in Britain Since 1945*, p. 74.
[8] Hatcher, 'The Origin and Expansion of Primitive Methodism', p. 549.

identity. However, the progress of Primitive Methodism was not smooth in that as the nineteenth century progressed members were faced with social and economic changes such that the denomination began to compete with others that were actively engaged in constructing ornate and imposing buildings, which made a social and economic statement about their status. There was also the need to grapple with a range of intellectual developments, and to work at the training of leaders, all of which also had an impact as the movement began to take on a number of more traditional roles.

Popular religion is also part of a much broader, cultural perspective with boundaries that are somewhat fluid, reinforced by stories, symbols and traditions. It is with this perspective in mind that we have focussed not on the extent to which people are merely conventionally religious, and we have used a more empirical approach and asked how do people make sense of and give meaning to their world in the life of fishing communities? This approach, however, is not without its problems in that it may appear that many people view their world without any reference to overt religious perspectives. Indeed, Luckmann's concept of 'invisible religion' is concerned with just this issue. The problem here involves our definition of religion, hence, the discussion on the theoretical issues in Chapter six has explored some of the responses. The division between institutionalised and popular religion provides us with a helpful starting point for investigation although the distinction is not clear-cut and there is a good deal of overlap between the two. In her concluding chapter on Religious Belief and Popular Culture Williams has made just this point, saying that

> Church-based elements of the popular religious repertoire cannot be considered in isolation from a second discourse of folk religion. In this idiom the Deity was amenable and accessible to immediate and private forms of address and manipulation through charms, amulets, and superstitions. Individuals positioned themselves in relation to the super-empirical sphere through a discourse which remained partially independent of both the churches and of orthodoxy.[9]

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[9] Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*, p, 165.

The same point has also been made by numerous other scholars, including Smith and Sykes.[10] Even so, some scholars, such as Obelkevich and Cox, while pointing to the broader perspective have tended to argue for a clearer distinction between institutionalised and popular religion.[11]

The second objective builds on the first in that religion in both its institutionalised and popular forms may be seen to be an important factor in social change. The thesis offers some suggestions for the nature of change, pointing out that it is determined to a great extent by the nature of the community, including the social, economic and political perspectives. Chapter 5 examined this in relation to the impact of revivalism, especially with reference to the developments in Filey during the Revival of 1823; and Chapter seven explored the impact of change by adopting Durkheim's model of organic and mechanical solidarities. Filey acted as a case study for the nature of change in a mechanistic solidarity. As can be seen from the observations in Chapter seven, change in a mechanical solidarity was strongly resisted by community members but took place quite dramatically when it did happen. Conversely, change in an organic solidarity (nineteenth century Grimsby) tended to be a constant factor in the lives of the community members, although for those with strong religious and cultural support change took place over several generations and provided opportunities for social leadership.

Objective three sought to demonstrate that religion played an important role in the process of change by providing security and stability. Religion in all its forms helped to provide a sense of security and meaning here, and in some cases, such as Filey, provided a legitimation for change by offering the relevant social support and theological justification, not just of the religious institutions but also via the wider beliefs and practices. Popular religion played a particularly important role by providing a link with long-held traditions and

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[10] Smith, *Religion in Industrial Society*; Sykes, 'Popular Religion in Dudley and the Gornals'.
[11] Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society*; Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society.*

customs. In a sense it was easier to change long-held theological views than to change the superstitions and customs, although with sympathetic clergy change was made easier. The role of institutionalised religion in helping to construct and maintain identity was significant although popular religion offered a more pervasive influence in the daily lives of fishermen and their families. Superstitions, folk customs, sympathetic magic, the influence of wise men and wise women, festivals and material culture all contributed to the complex matrix of daily life and it was in this sense that religion and culture helped to give meaning and purpose to the lives of the fisherfolk.

Objective four has shown the importance of ritual and performance and provides an important link between institutional and popular religion. The role of ritual has tended to be seen as the preserve of the churches, while a number of writers have pointed to the nature of ritual in the everyday lives of people,[12] and ritual formed a major aspect of the lives of fisherfolk, be this is the form of superstitious practice, folk customs or indeed the various Rites of Passage associated with the religious institutions.

By accepting the commonalities here we discover that ritual forms a part of the daily experience of people and points to their religiosity and religious identity. Indeed, as Abby Day has pointed out, the individual's religious beliefs, practices and identities are influenced by social contexts,' and 'What matters here is not epistemological preference, but rather how in fact people are religious and what their beliefs, practices and identities mean to them.'[13] While exploring the relevant theoretical issues the present thesis has made use of an empirical approach to explore the relationships. Nevertheless, exploring the nature of 'religious identity' is fraught with difficulties. David Bell, a contributor to Day's book, offered some helpful thoughts on the nature of these relationship. Like others, Bell bemoaned the lack of conceptual clarity of 'religious identity' and has pointed out that it has 'lacked theoretical

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[12] Rapport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*; Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*.
[13] Day, A (ed) *Religion and the Individual: Belief, Practice, Identity* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008), p. 1.

precision and empirical foundation,' although he did acknowledge that finding meaning was at the heart of identity.[14]

Throughout the thesis we have explored a wide range of religious beliefs and practices and we have demonstrated their continuing influence throughout the twentieth century. While the focus of the study has been mainly on the fishing communities along the Yorkshire and Humber coasts, references have also been made to other fishing communities is order to demonstrate commonalities and differences. In doing so we have provided a balance to the research undertaken in both rural (Obelkevich and Ambler) and urban communities (Cox, Smith and Williams among others).[15] Clark's work in Staithes was a more sustained participant observation study than the present thesis although the results here generally concur with Clark's findings, while rejecting the dualism inherent in the distinction between institutionalised and popular religion.[16] The thesis has focussed on the period 1815-1914 as this was the period during which the British fishing industry developed in numerous directions (technologically, not least with the growth of the railways; the discovery of new fishing grounds; innovations in fishing methods such as 'fleeting'; the preservation of fish, such as the development of artificial ice; and the huge growth of the industry). The present thesis has contributed to the debate by offering an insight into how members of fishing communities have found meaning through their varied religious beliefs and practices, and has demonstrated how identity has been constructed and developed within the context of both institutionalised and popular religion.

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[14] D. M. Bell, 'Development of the Religious self: a theoretical foundation for measuring religious identity' (in Bell, Ibid, pp. 127-142) p. 128.
[15] Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society*; Ambler, 'Social Change and Religious Experience'; Cox The English *Churches in a Secular Society*; Smith, *Religion in Industrial Society;* Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture*.
[16] Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*.

Appendix 1:   Some fishing communities along the Yorkshire and North East Lincolnshire coast.

Appendix 2a: Maps showing Grimsby's development during the nineteenth century.

Source: Kaye, David, The Book of Grimsby, (Barracuda Books, Buckingham, 1981)
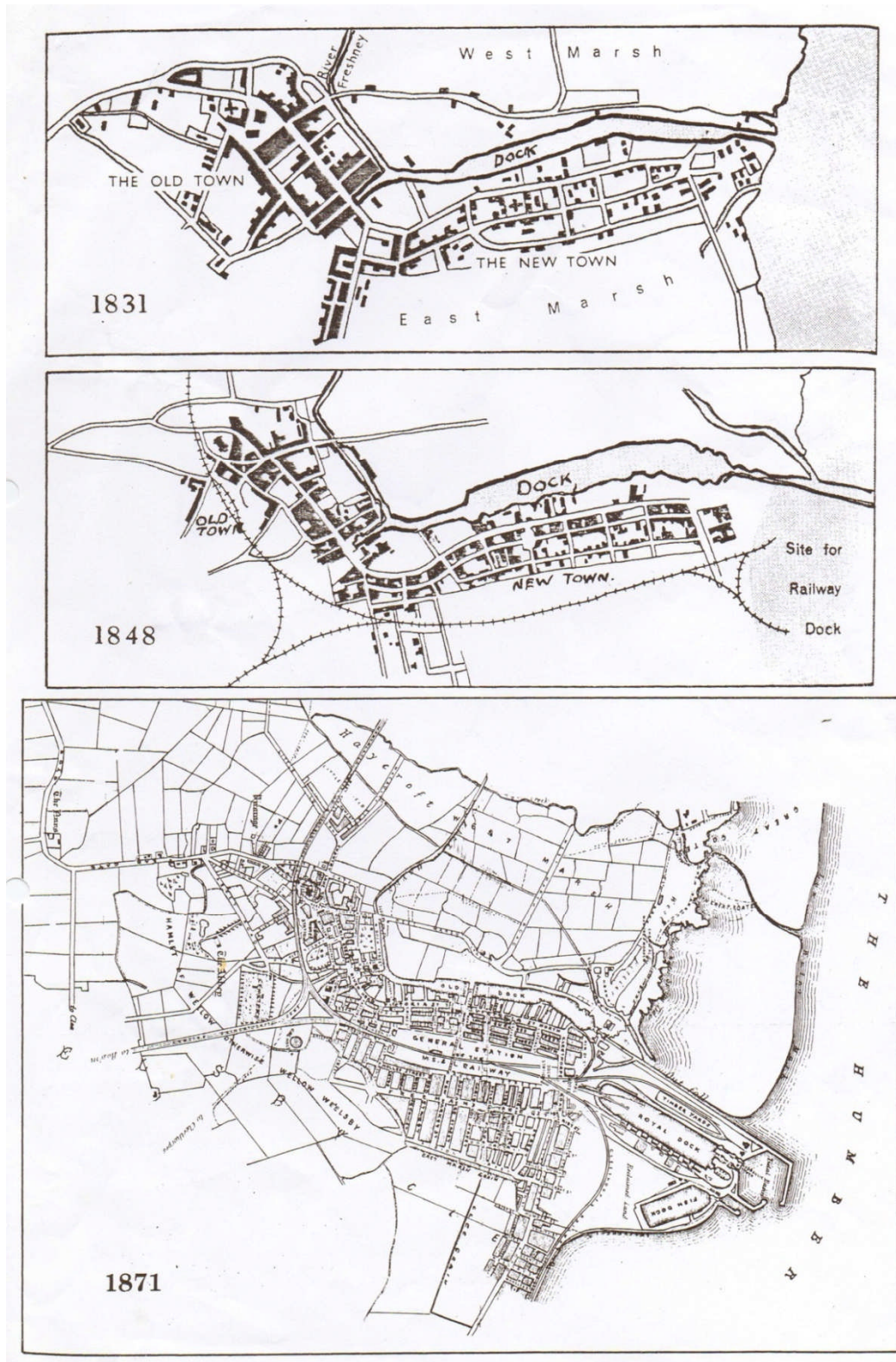
Appendix 2b: Map of Scarborough Old Town.

Source: Scarborough Borough Council

Source: M.Fearon, *The History of Filey* (Blackthorn Press, 2008), p. 86.
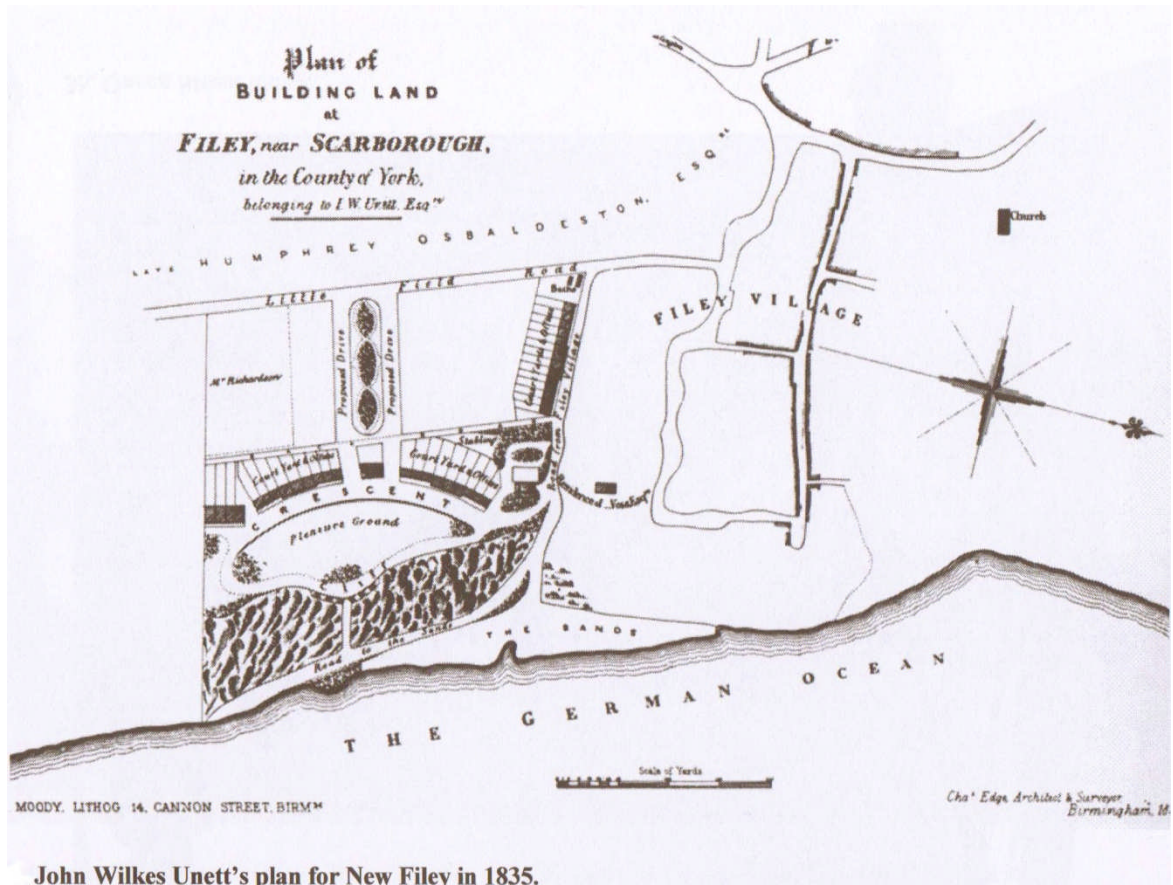
John Wilkes Unett's plan for New Filey in 1835.

Appendix 3a: The Grimsby fishing community (bounded by Cleethorpe Road, Park Street, Eleanor Street and Victoria Street. The majority of the Grimsby fishing community lived here c.1885).

Source: Charles Ekberg, *Grimsby Fish*, p. 50.

Map of docks 1885 showing two Fish Docks. (DNR)
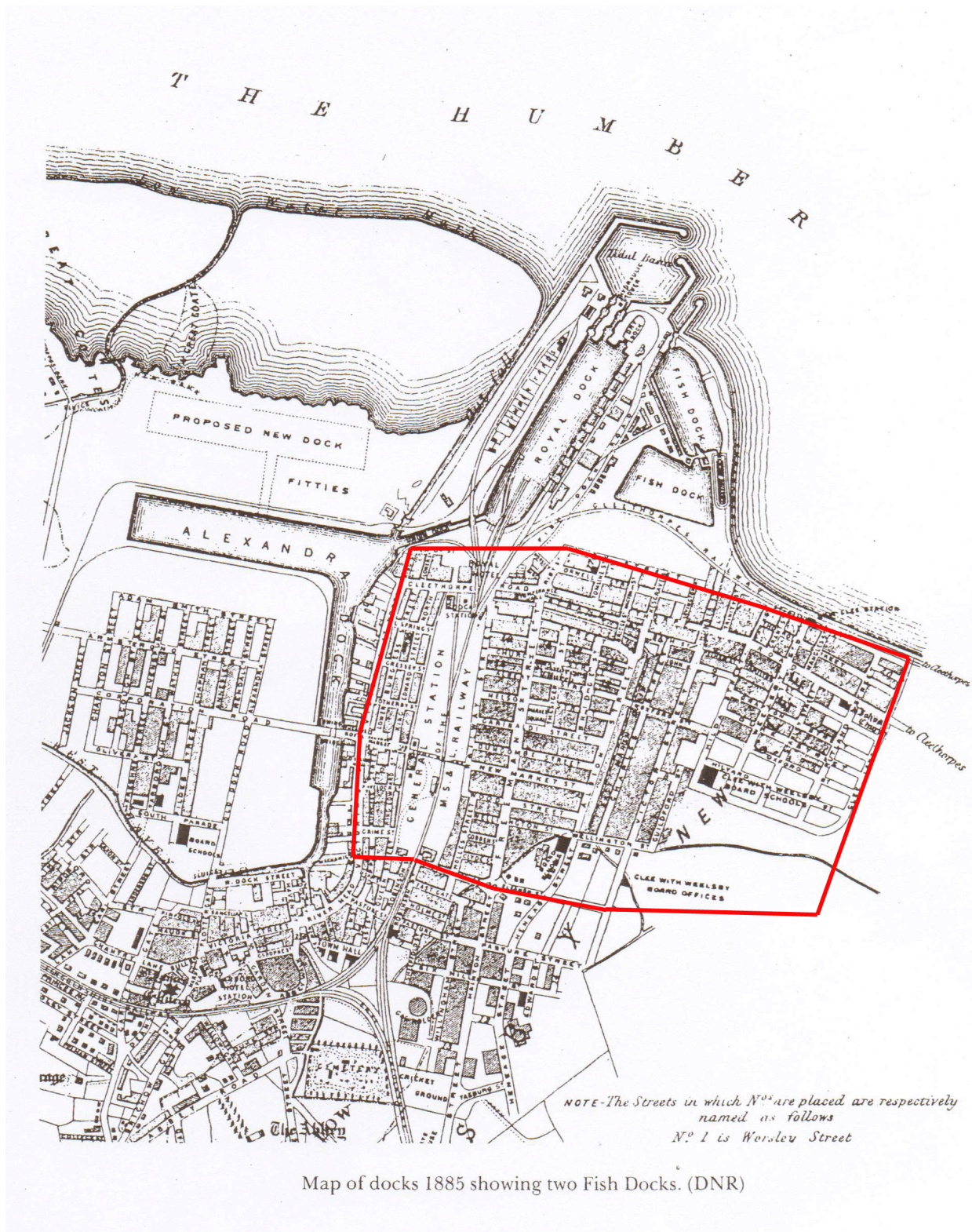
Appendix 3b: The Scarborough Fishing Community.

Source: Scarborough Borough Council.
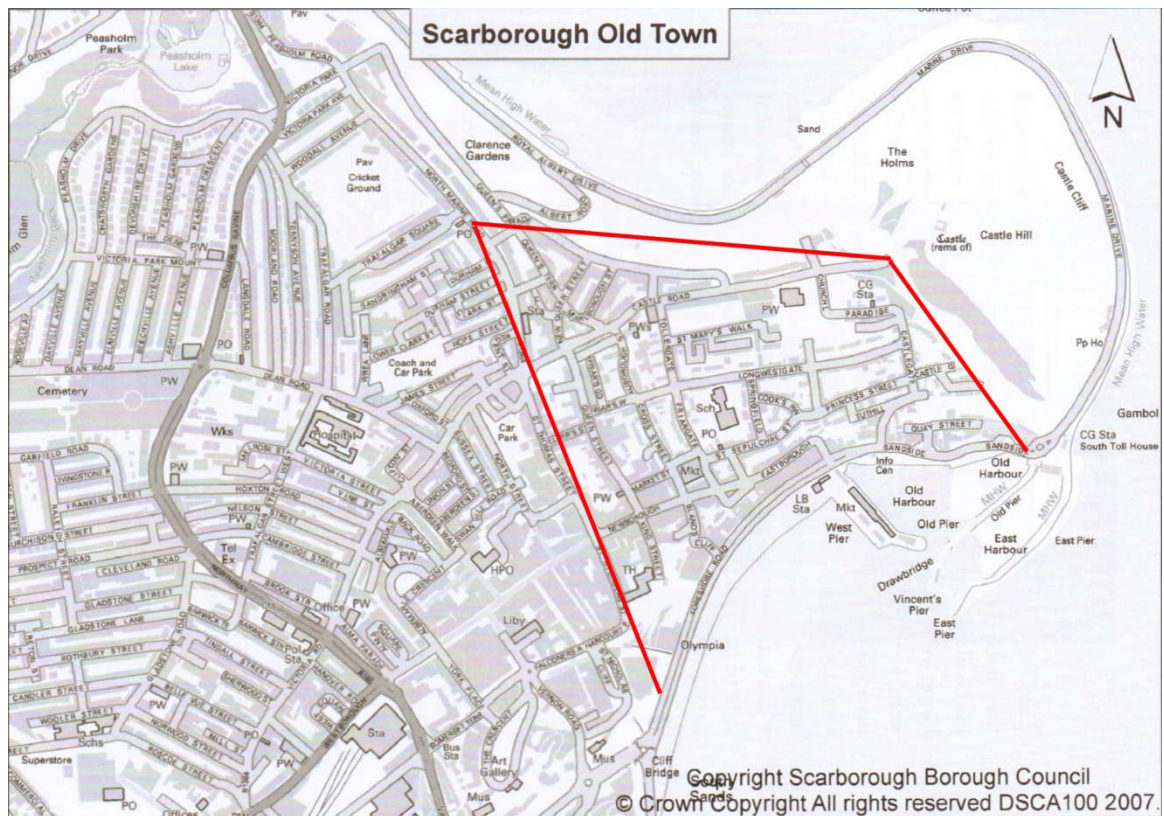
Source: M. Fearon, *The History of Filey* (Blackthorn Press, 2008), p. 86.
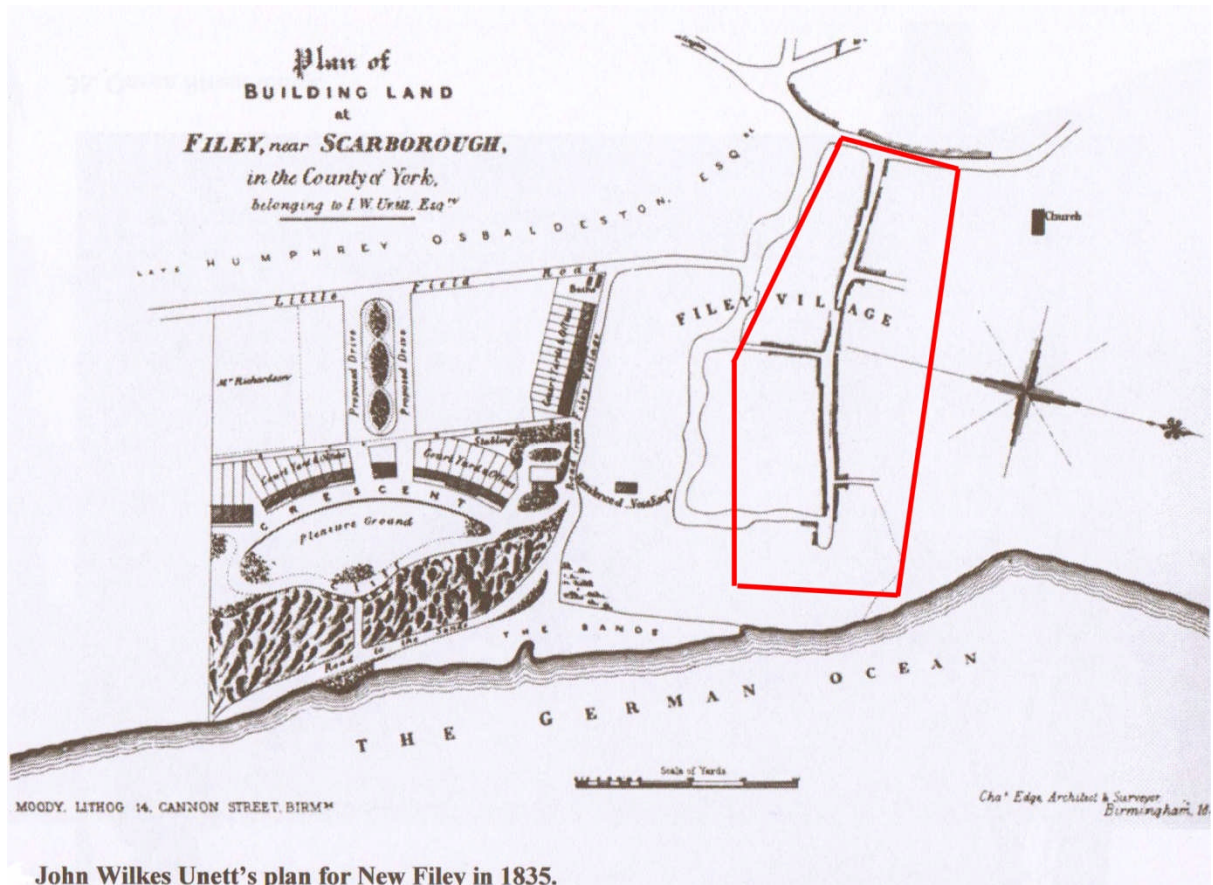
John Wilkes Unett's plan for New Filey in 1835.

Appendix 4a: Population of Grimsby and Cleethorpes, 1801-1991.

Source: Census data

Date	Grimsby	Clee	Cleethorpes	Scartho	Humberston	Total
1801	1,524	103	284	135	199	2,245
1811	2,747	115	375	133	218	3,588
1821	3,064	154	406	148	217	3,989
1831	4,225	177	497	147	258	5,304
1841	3,700	199	803	199	269	5,170
1851	8,860	195	839	211	259	10,364
1861	11,067	325	1,230	188	277	13,087
1871	20,244	2,058	1,768	210	254	24,534
1881	28,503	11,620	2,840	224	264	43,451
1891	33,283	18,775	4,306	190	254	56,808
1901	36,857	26,400	12,578	219	234	76,288
1911	74,659		21,417			96,076
1921	82,355		28,155			110,510
1931	92,458		28,621			121,079
1951	94,557		29,557			124,114
1961	96,712		32,700			129,412
1971	92,960		35,837			128,797
1981	92,596		35,637			128,233
1991	90,517		34,722			125,239

Grimsby Population 1801-1991
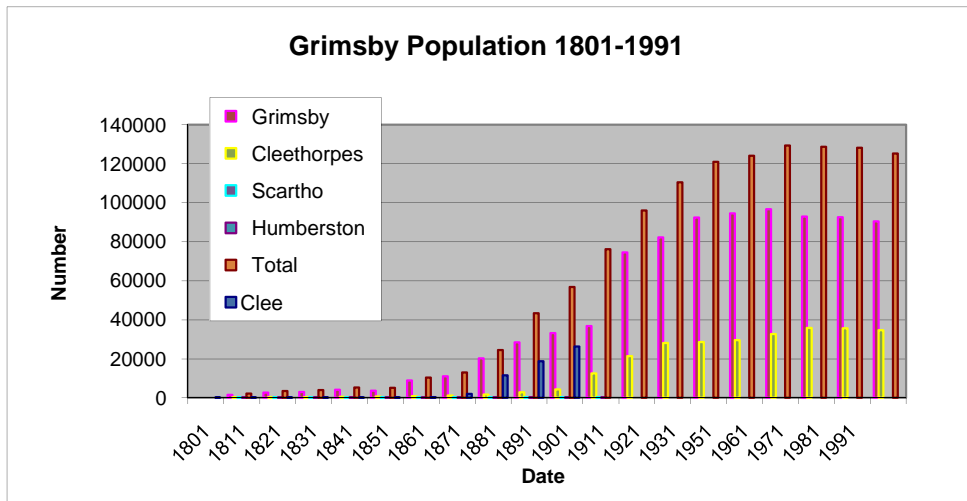
Scarborough Population
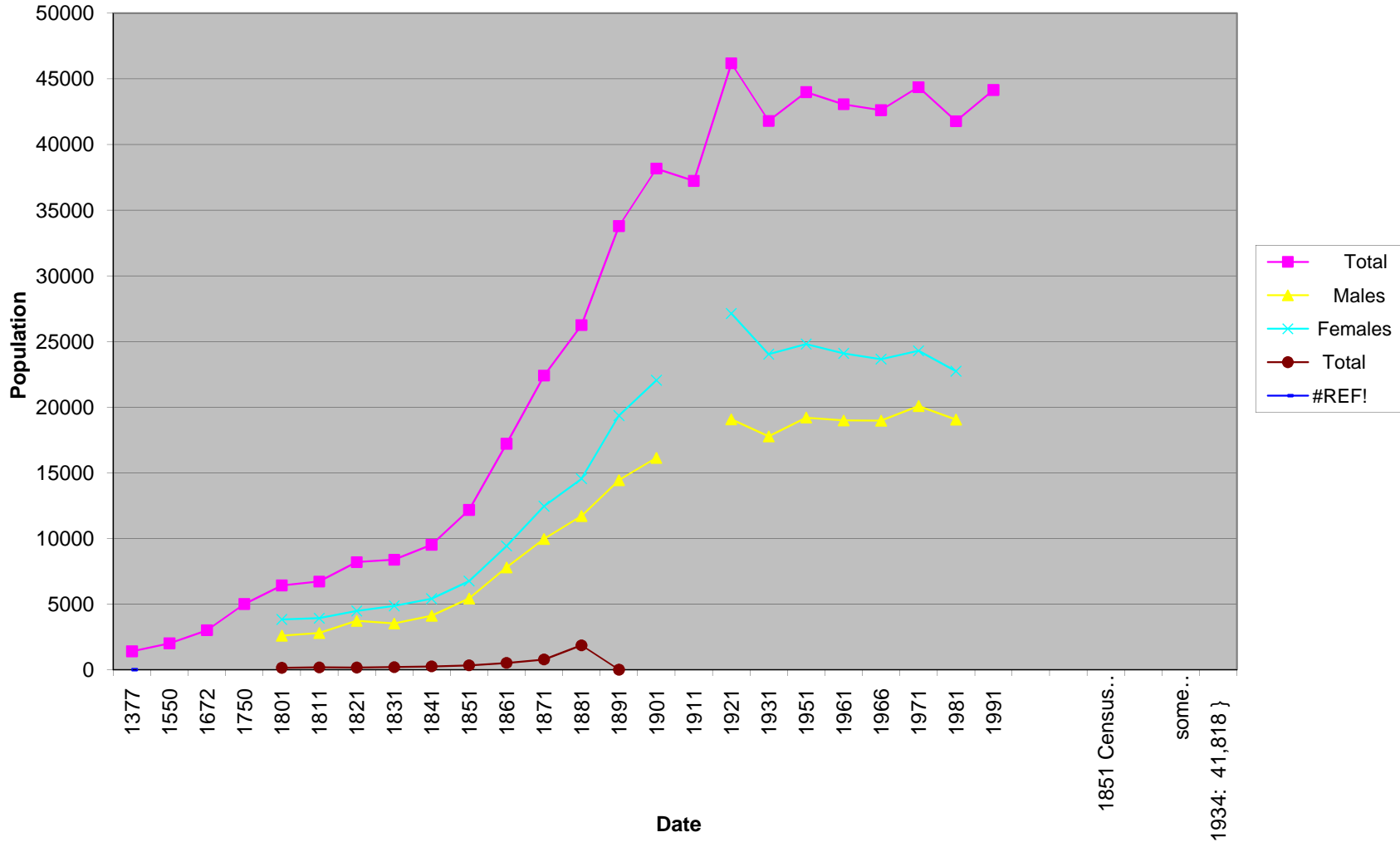
Appendix 4b: Population: Scarborough Township (North Riding).

In his guide of 1745 James Schofield said Scarborough had upwards of 10,000 residents.

Thomas Hinderwell estimated there to have been 7,350 residents in 1753.

Sources: Burrett, Eva M, 1967, Scarborough: Growth and Changing Function.
Figures estimated for 1550. 1672. 1750, 1938, 1944, 1985, 1987, 1988 and 1989
Census details checked for 1801 - 1881

Date	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Scarborough plus Falsgrave Males	Females	Total
1377			**1393**						**1,393**
1550			**2000**						**2,000**
1672			**3000**						**3,000**
1750			**5000**						**5,000**
1801	2,591	3,818	**6,409**	139	140	**279**	2,730	3,958	**6,688**
1811	2,793	3,917	**6,710**	169	188	**357**	2,962	4,105	**7,067**
1821	3,717	4,471	**8,188**	160	185	**345**	3,877	4,656	**8,533**
1831	3,512	4,857	**8,369**	192	199	**391**	3,704	5,056	**8,760**
1841	4,113	5,402	**9,515**	246	299	**545**	4,359	5,701	**10,060**
1851	5,414	6,744	**12,158**	328	429	**757**	5,742	7,173	**12,915**
1861	7,787	9,417	**17,204**	510	663	**1,173**	8,297	10,080	**18,377**
1871	9,948	12,443	**22,391**	772	1,096	**1,868**	10,720	13,539	**24,259**
1881	11,699	14,539	**26,238**	1,849	2,417	**4,266**	13,548	16,956	**30,504**
1891	14,422	19,354	**33,776**	Falsgrave Incorporated			14,422	19,354	**33,776**
1901	16,123	22,038	**38,161**				16,123	22,038	**38,161**
1911			**37,224**						**37,224**
1921	19,060	27,119	**46,179**	(Taken in late June, therefore the figures are an over-estimate)			19,060	27,119	**46,179**
1931	17,762	24,026	**41,788**				17,762	27,119	**41,788**
1951	19,192	24,793	**43,985**				19,192	24,793	**43,985**
1961	18,977	24,084	**43,061**				18,977	24,084	**43,061**
1966	18,960	23,650	**42,610**				18,960	23,650	**42,610**
1971	20,080	24,280	**44,360**				20,080	24,280	**44,360**
1981	19,043	22,727	**41,770**				19,043	22,727	**41,770**
1991			**44,144**						**44,144**

Appendix 4b: Population: Scarborough Township (North Riding).

1851 Census note: The Borough of Scarborough comprises the Townships of Scarborough and Falsgrave (I.e. Dist 525)

North Riding Parishes 1851: The population of this District has generally increased. The decrease of population in

some Townships since 1841, arises from emigration beyond seas, and removals to other places in search of employment.

1934: 41,818 }

1937: 40,910 } Unofficial estimate by Scarborough Town Hall.

* The 1921 Census took place on 19/20 June and therefore included several thousand holidaymakers.

There was no census for 1941due to the 2nd World War.
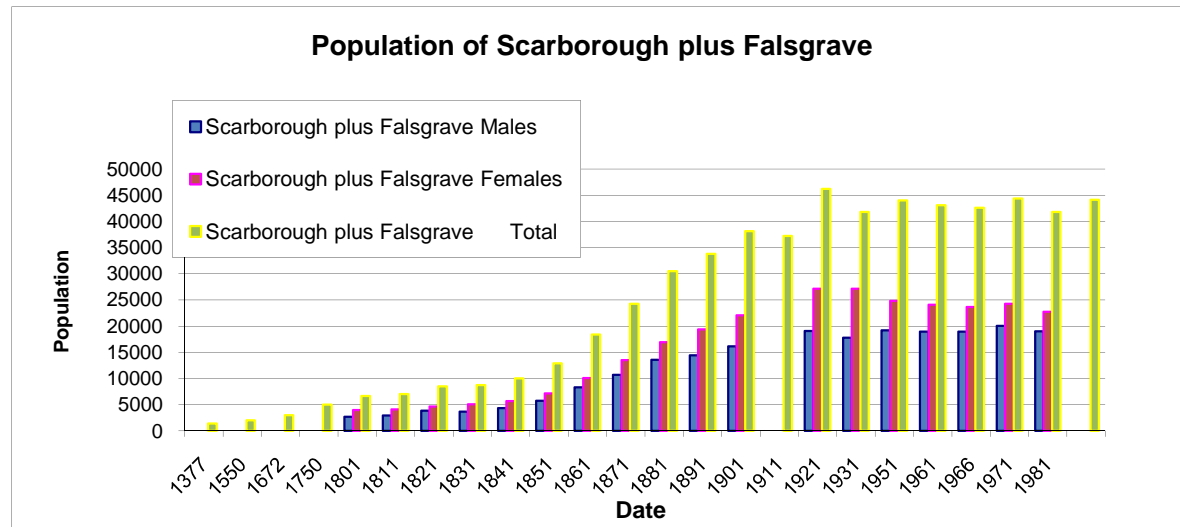
Filey Population
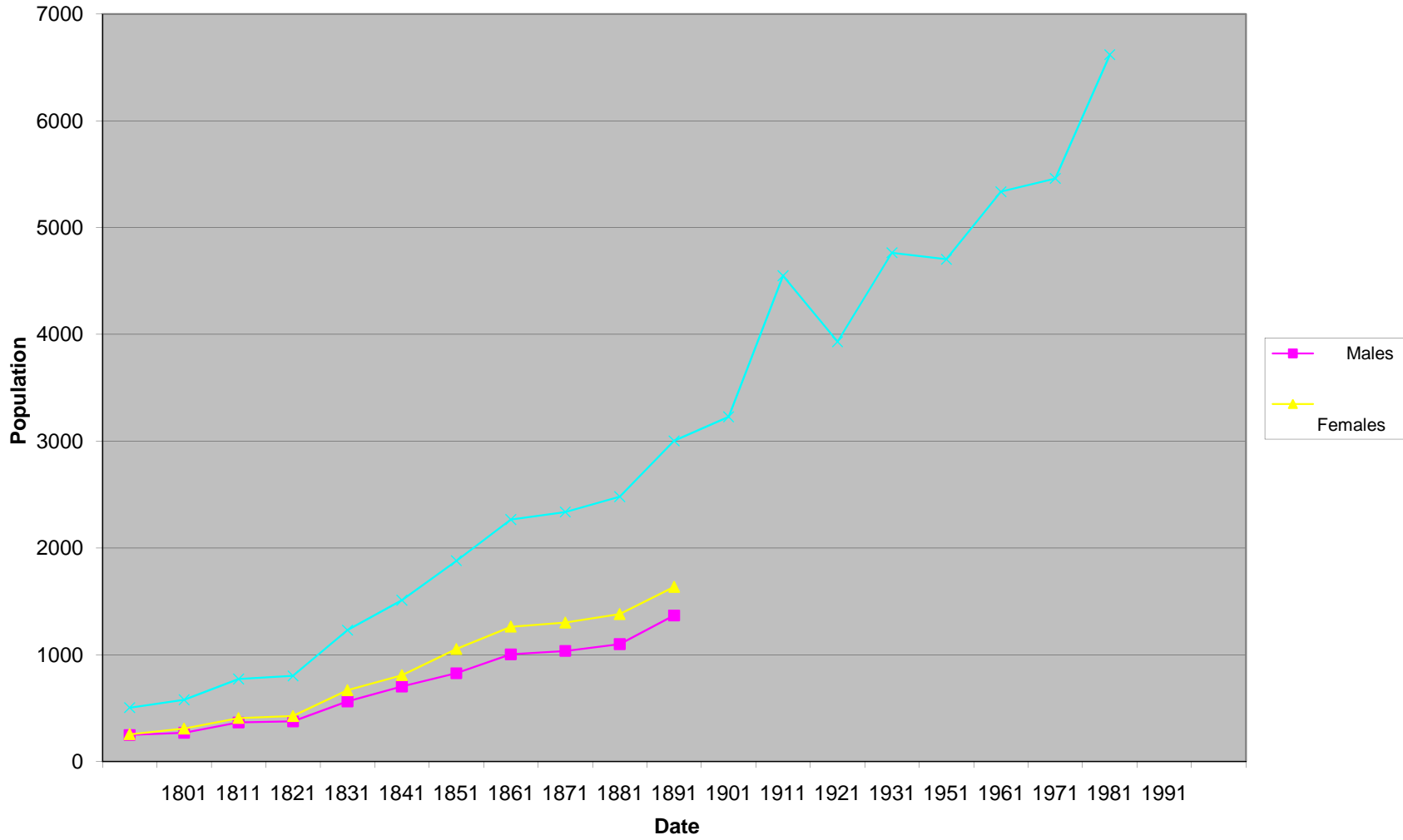
Appendix 4c: Population of Filey Township (North and South Riding).

Source: Census data

Date	Males	Females	Total
1801	249	256	505
1811	270	309	579
1821	366	407	773
1831	376	426	802
1841	563	668	1231
1851	703	808	1511
1861	827	1,054	1881
1871	1,004	1,263	2267
1881	1,036	1,301	2337
1891	1,100	1,381	2481
1901	1,368	1,635	3003
1911			3228
1921			4549
1931			3931
1951			4765
1961			4703
1971			5336
1981			5460
1991			6619

1851 Census note: 1841 - The increase in the population of Filey Township is ascribed to its having become a watering place. 1851 - The preponderance of females over males is said to arise mainly from the fact of many fishermen having been drowned while attending their vocation.
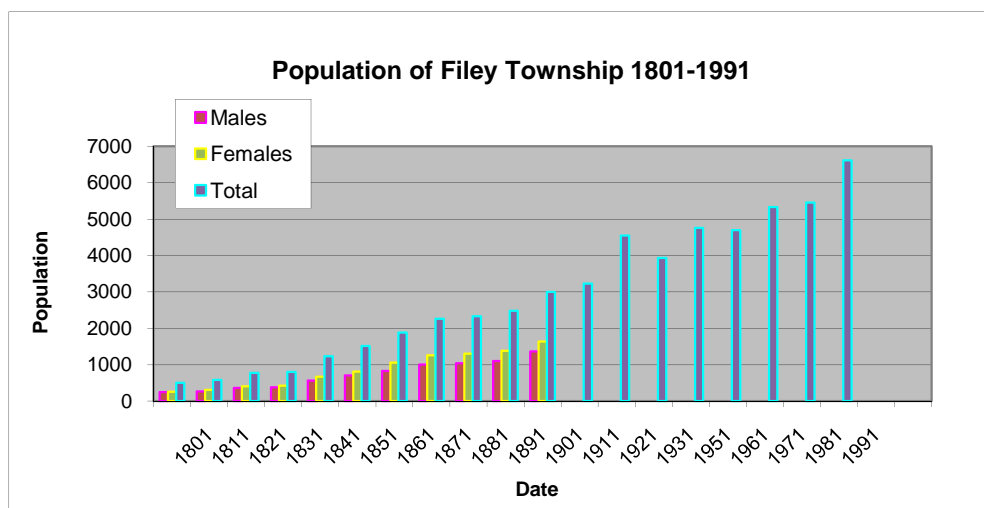
Appendix 5a: Grimsby and Cleethorpes Fishing Labour Force

Grimsby

	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901

Smack Owners

Appendix 5a: Grimsby and Cleethorpes Fishing Labour Force.

Source: Census data

Grimsby

	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
Smack Owners			14	49	76	48	
Smack-Master Fishermen			3	4		5	
Fishermen	10	17	154	493	1204	2012	
Apprentice Fishermen			38	100	122	151	
Sub-total	**10**	**17**	**209**	**646**	**1402**	**2216**	
Fishermen at sea			199	604			
Apprentices at sea				151			
Total	**10**	**17**	**408**	**1401**			

Cleethorpes

	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
Smack Owners			3		4	5	
Smack-Master Fishermen			4				
Fishermen	68	105	117	166	181	183	
Apprentice Fishermen			1	1	5	11	
Fisher Woman	1						
Sub-total	**69**	**105**	**125**	**167**	**190**	**199**	
Fishermen at sea							
Apprentices at sea		4					
Total	**69**	**109**	**125**	**167**	**190**	**199**	

The 1851 census recorded four fishermen's wives. Although the census enumeraters were instructed to record the number of fishermen at sea no such record was made. Presumably there were more than four fishermen at sea at the time.

Appendix 5b: Scarborough Fishing Labour Force (Census details).

Sources: Census data,
The Second Annual Report on Sea Fishermen for 1887 provides the follow statistics:

<div align="center">562 Fishermen; 2 boys.</div>

These figures suggest that approximately one third of the fishermen were at sea when the data was collected.

	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
Smack Owners						2	
Smack-Master Fishermen				2	2	2	
Fishermen	99	148	97	359	444	442	277
Fisherboy				1	1	2	1
Apprentice Fishermen	1	2	5	4	8	4	1
Fishermen Absent at Sea							
Fisherwomen			1*		1	1	
Totals	**100**	**150**	**106**	**367**	**455**	**451**	**278**

* The fisherwoman was Mary Raper, aged 50. As she was a widow it is likely that she looked after the family business.

Three bait pickers were recorded for 1891 - all members of one family:

<div align="center">

16 years   Single
18 years   Single
48 years   Widow

</div>

Appendix 5c: The Filey Fishing Labour Force.

Source: Census Data.

Occupation	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
Boat Owners	-	-	1	-	1	-	
Fishermen	132	146	150	202	175	188	200
Apprentice Fishermen	1	-	-	-	-	-	
Fisherboy	-	2	4	-	-	1	
Fishermen Absent at Sea When census was taken (according to the census enumerator)	None listed under this category						
Totals	**133**	**148**	**154**	**202**	**176**	**189**	**200**

	1841	1951	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
Bait Gatherers (Flithergirls)	-	-	20	-	1	-	-

Ages of Bait gathers (1861 Census):

15	-	2	(All are single)
16	-	1	
17	-	4	
18	-	1	
20	-	2	
21	-	1	
22	-	2	
23	-	1	
24	-	2	
26	-	1	
28	-	2	
42	-	1	(A widower)

Total: 20

Appendix 6a: Grimsby Fishing Apprentices.

Sources: Census data; Annual Reports of the Sea Inspector of Sea Fisheries;
D. Boswell, Sea Fishing Apprentices of Grimsby (Grimsby Public Libraries
and Museum, 1974)

Year	Grimsby Apprentices indentured during the year	Grimsby Number of apprentices employed during the year	Years	Grimsby Total by decades
1801				
1811				
1821				
1831				
1841				
1851				
1861	38			
1868	231			
1869	534			
1871				
1872	424	1,350		
1876	576			
1877	534			
1878		1,794	1868-78	4,277
1879				
1880				
1881	277			
1882	419			
1883	365			
1884	413			
1885	292			
1886	343	1,064		
1887	339	2,010		
1888	368	1,058		
1889	348		1880-89	3,312
1890	298	1,024		
1891	214			
1892				
1893				
1894	214	731		
1895	137			
1896	150	1,064		
1897	134			
1898	113	432		
1899			1890-99	1,574
1900				
1901	61			
1902		278		
1903				

1904				
1905				
1906				
1907				
1908				
1909			1900-09	590
1910				
1911	28			
1912				
1913				
1914				
1915				
1916				
1917				
1918				
1919			1910-19	212
1920				
1921				

Grimsby Fishing Apprentices
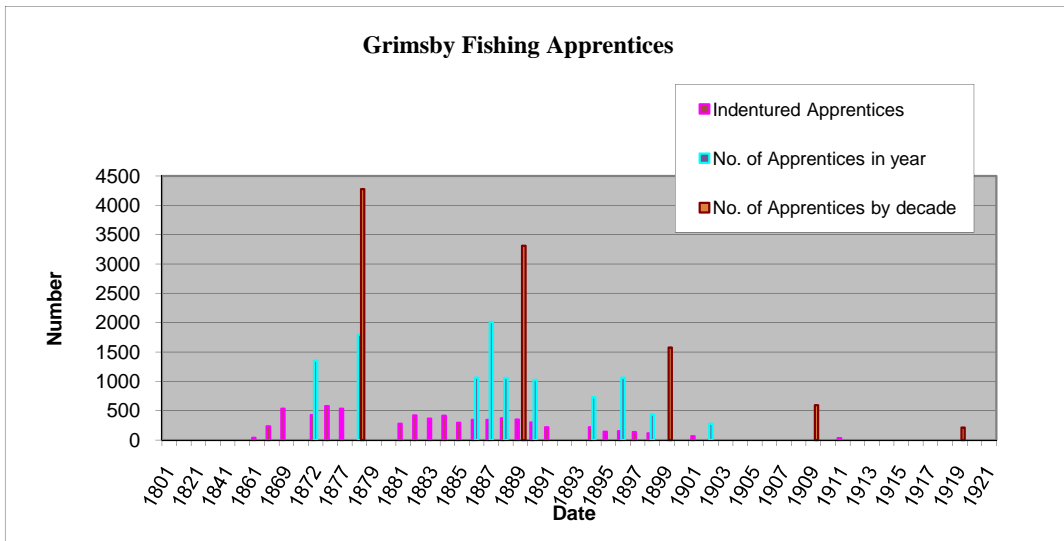
Appendix 6a: Grimsby Fishing Apprentices.

Appendix 6b: Scarborough Fishing Apprentices.

Sources: 1841-1881 are from the censuses.
1887-1900 are from BPP, Annual Reports of the Inspector of Sea Fisheries
Apprentices serving during year: BPP 1882, XVII (1875-1882)

	Indentured	**Serving during year.**
1841		
1851	2	
1861	10	
1875		3
1876		13
1877		8
1878		14
1879		10
1880		2
1881	8	2
1882		0
1885	18	
1887	21	
1888	34	
1889	32	
1890	23	
1891	14	
1892	9	
1893	1	
1894	2	
1895	2	
1896	1	
1897	1	
1898	1	
1899	0	
1900		

Scarborough Fishing apprentices
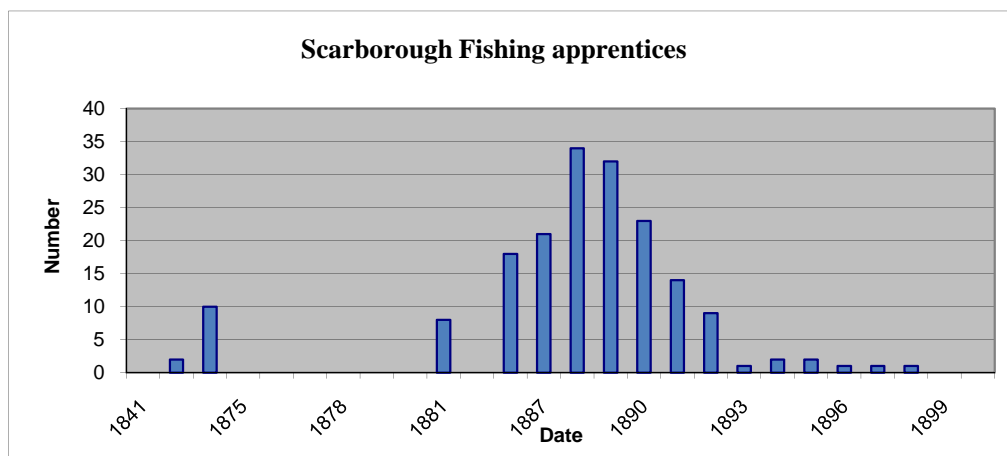
Appendix 6c: Filey Fishing Apprentices

Source: Census data.

Date	Fisherboys/ Apprentices
1841	1
1851	2
1861	4
1871	0
1881	0
1891	3
1901	1

Filey Fishermen & Apprentices
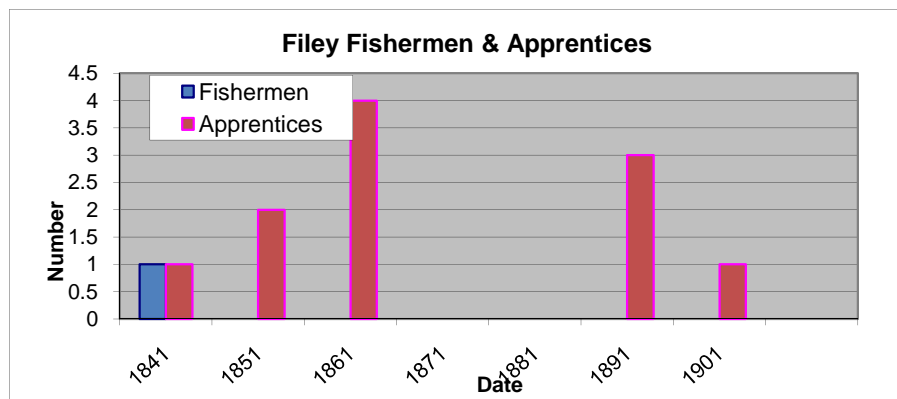
Appendix 7: Grimsby , Scarborough and Filey Fishermen - Birthplaces by county and country.

Sources and Notes:

1) The figures here are based on the census data and generally include only those fishermen at home on census day.

2) The population figures for Grimsby do not inlcude Cleethorpes, Scartho and Humberston.

3) Determining the numbers of fishermen registered at each port, especially for the nineteenth century, is fraught with difficulties. Even the census data present us with problems For example a 'Smack Owner' may or may not go to sea. I have, however, included these among the fishermen.

	1851			1871			1891		
	Gy	Scar	Filey	Gy	Scar	Filey (1871)	Gy	Scar	Filey (1891)
Not Known				8	2		151	1	
London		1		101	1	1	324	3	
Berkshire				1					
Bedfordshire							5		
Buckinghamshire							3		
Cambridgeshire		1		4			26		
Cheshire				1			4		
Cleveland		1							
Cornwall							1		
Cumberland							3		
Derbyshire				1			4		
Devon		6		26	5	1	37	1	
Dorset				1					
Durham		1		1	1		7		
Essex				104	1		157	3	
Gloucestershire							10		
Hampshire		1		3			24	1	
Hertfordshire				1			3		
Kent		6		74	8		83	8	1
Lancashire				8	3		69	2	
Leicestershire				1			10	1	
Lincolnshire	14	2		116	7	2	570	8	
Norfolk		9	3	50	70	17	170	48	4
Northamptonshire							3		
Northumberland							4		
Nottinghamshire				4			33		
Oxfordshire				1			4		
Rutland				1					
Staffordshire					1		10	1	
Somerset				4			2	4	
Suffolk			4	15	8		56	8	
Sunderland								1	
Surrey				4		1			

Appendix 7: Grimsby , Scarborough and Filey Fishermen - Birthplaces by county and country.

Sussex		1	1	3	2		10	1	
Tyne & Weir					1			2	
Warwickshire				3			17		
Wiltshire							1	1	
Worcestershire	1						1		
Yorkshire		128	142	51	247	177	216	356	180
Ireland			3	3	1	2	7	1	3
Scotland				2		1	13	2	
Shetland				2					
Wales				2			4		
Isle of Man							2		
Isle of Wight				1			1		
Guernsey							1		
Australia							1		
Belgium							1		
Denmark				1			8		
East Indies							2		
Finland				1					
France				1			2		
Germany				1			13		
Holland									
Iceland				1					
India							2		
Malta							1		
Newfoundland				3			1		
Norway							13		
Sweden							1		
USA							6		
Zetland									
Total Fishermen	**17**	**158**	**149**	**646**	**358**	**202**	**2,216**	**453**	**188**
Fishermen born in the town	7	96	131	26	196	160	239	315	171
Population of towns	**9,055**	**12,158**	**1,511**	**22,302**	**22,391**	**2,267**	**52,058**	**33,376**	**2,481**

Appendix 8a1: Cumulative Number of Religious Groups/Buildings in Grimsby 1801-1911.

Sources: A wide range of sources have been consulted for this chart, including the 1851 Census, local histories and yearbooks. These include: *The Grimsby and Cleethorpes Directory and Illustrated Visitors Handbook*,(Grimsby, Albert Gait), 1871; White's Directory,(Sheffield, Wm White), 1872,1882, 1892; Kendall, *The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church,* Vol. 1, pp. 447-448.

Religious Groups/Buildings	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911
C of E	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8	8	9	9	10
RC										1	1	2
Methodist (Wesleyan)	1	1	1	1	2	3	4	7	9	10	11	11
Methodist (PM			1	1	1	2	3	4	7	7	8	10
Baptist				1	1	1	1	4	5	5	5	5
Congregational	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	4
United Free Methodist								1	1	1	2	2
Presbytarian										1	1	1
Salvation Army									1	1	1	1
Scandinavian Lutheran									1	1	1	1
Independent								1	1	3	4	4
Jewish								1	1	1	1	1
Sailors and Fishermen's Bethel										1	1	1
Fishermen's and Sailors Gospel Temperance Mission								1	1	1	1	2
TOTALS:	**3**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**8**	**10**	**28**	**36**	**43**	**50**	**55**

Note: some of the buildings here are offshoots of one or other of the different groups. Mission halls and meeting rooms have also been included. In some cases later buildings replaced earlier ones.

Appendix 8a2: Great Grimsby (Municipal Borough). Increase in places of worship, 1851-1872.

Source: Supplement to the *Nonconformist*, Jan 8, 1873, p. 54.

Religious Denomination	1851 Population 8,860		1871 Population 20,239		Increase between 1851 and 1872	
	No. of Places of Worship 1851	No. of Sittings 1851	No. of Places of Worship 1872	No. of Sittings 1872	No. of Places of Worship 1872	No. of Sittings 1872
Ch. Of England	1	600	4*	2,500	3	1,900
Presbytarians	---	---	---	---	---	---
Congregationalists	---	---	1	800	1	800
Baptists	1	600	2	1,600	1	1,000
Soc. of Friends	---	---	---	---	---	---
Unitarians	---	---	---	---	---	---
Wesleyan Meths.	1	1,350	4**	3,250	3	1,900
United Meths.	---	---	1	700	1	700
New Connexion	---	---	---	---	---	---
Primitive Meths.	1	500	3+	1,800	2	1,300
Calvinistic Meths.	---	---	---	---	---	---
Bible Christians	---	---	---	---	---	---
Brethren	---	---	1	150	1	150
Roman Catholics	---	---	1++	200	1	200
All Others	---	---	2#	400	2	400
TOTAL	**4**	**3,050**	**19**	**11,400**	**15,**	**8,350**

*Includes two mission rooms (500).
The numbers of sittings for 1851 are estimated, not having the returns by me. The increase between 1851 and 1871 includes enlargement of existing places of worship and new buildings.
** One erecting and will be opened in Spring instead of a school now used. Includes one mission room (300).
+ Includes a mission room.
++ A mission station.
# Including temporary place, Danish (100) and Ragged-school used for services (300).

Remarks

The above table for 1851 is an estimate of our enumerator, there having been no separate return in that year for the borough. The Primitives have recently built a large chapel and schools in New Clee, only a yards from the borough boundary, and the Church of England and Baptists have preaching places. These are not counted, nor other Churches and chapels within the Parliamentary, but outside the Municipal Borough. The rapid growth of this borough and port is exceptional and the increase of places of worship has kept place with the population.

Appendix 8a3: Grimsby Wesleyan Methodist Membership.

Source: Lincoln Archives: METH B/Gy/4/1-32 records of Wesleyan Circuit.

Annual Schedules for:

Date	Totals	Totals
	On Trial	No. in Soc. Those on trial not included
Dec 1836	9	238
March 1837	8	258
1838	15	266
1839	17	313
1840	3	290
1841	8	311
1842	4	284
1843	2	292
1844	1	301
1845	2	303
1846	6	309
1847	10	365
1848	15	400
1849	63	483
1850	21	548
1851	8	516
1852	15	494
1853	8	420
1854	17	438
1855	8	474
1856	4	453
1857	10	431
1858	0	422
1859	6	447
1860	13	489
1861	12	570
1862	6	557
1863	0	563
1864	12	542
1865	20	614
1866	0	621
1867	0	639
1868	0	627
1869	2	619
1870	5	662
1871	14	647
1872	10	641

March 1889: George Lester* says the total members for Grimsby were 1329, with 25 on trial and 249 in junior society classes.

Appendix 8a3: Grimsby Wesleyan Methodist Membership.

1873	18	614
1874	26	804
1875	31	945
1876	7	965
1877	9	993
1878	28	1042
1879	11	1050
1880	21	1072
1881	16	1123
1882	36	1183
1883	29	1186
1884	9	1193
1885	18	1243
1886	21	1218
1887	24	1208
1888	14	1365
1889	17	1283
1890	10	1254
1891	26	1237
1892	37	1259
1893	44	1309
1894	21	826
1895	20	853
1896	69	891
1897	38	914
1898	28	913
1899	59	912
1900	39	915
1901	24	921
1902	35	902
1903	59	917
1904	49	918
1905	28	933
1906	52	900
1907	24	902
1908	24	884
1909	23	882
1910	18	851
1911	36	909
1912	28	892
Sep-13	11	900
Sep-14	0	655

* G. Lester, *Grimsby Methodism (1743-1889) and the Wesleys in Lincolnshire* (London, Wesleyan Methodist Book-Room, 1890).

Appendix 8a3: Grimsby Wesleyan Methodist Membership.
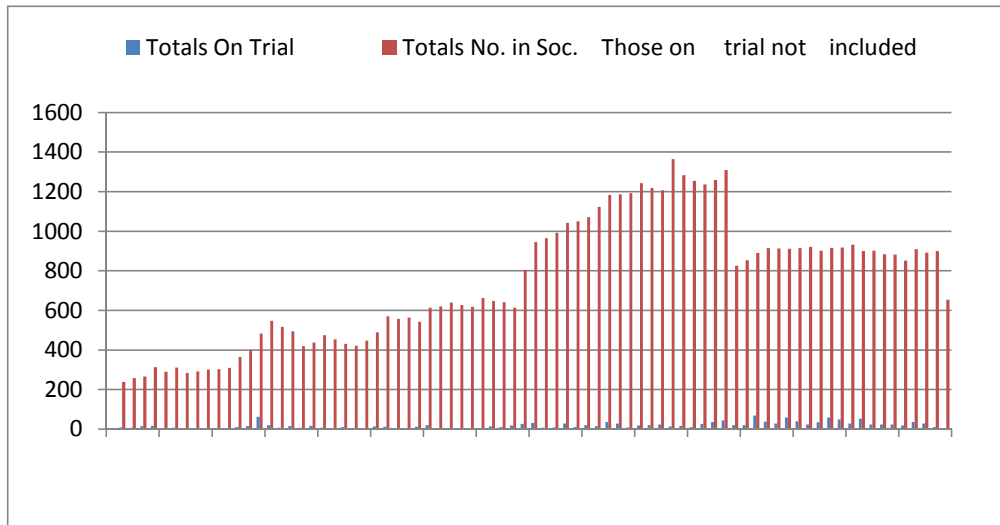
Development of local circuits:

        Horncastle was made a circuit from Grimsby in 1786

        Boston was made a circuit from Grimsby in 1796

        Louth was made a circuit from Grimsby in 1799

        Market Rasen was made a circuit from Grimsby in 1813

        Caistor, etc., was made a circuit from Grimsby in 1868

Sources: (Ref: METH B/Grimsby/37/1) Primitive Methodist Schedules. Misc. Don 1275: Methodist
    Statistics, George Lawton in Proceedings of the Wesleyan Historical Society, 1947-8,
    Vol. XXVI, pp. 10-13.
The figures were calculated in March each year. Children under 14 years were not included.

Date	Members				Sunday Scholars	Chapels & Rooms	Deaths	Increase/ Decrease
	Approved	**On Trial**	**Doubtful**	**Total**				
1822				400				
1823				320				
1824				320				
1825								
1826								
1827								
1828				269				
1829				368				
1830				368				
1831				319				
1832				313				
1833				363				
1834	317	36		352		1		
1835	353			353		2	8	
1836	382	10		392		3	8	39
1837	482	18		500		10	16	108
1838	481	65		553		11	12	53
1839 Missing				677				124
1840	649	32	3	684		17	4	7
1841 Missing				700				16
1842	670	40	10	720		18	10	20
1843	619	122	2	743		17	6	23
1844	743	60		803	224	17	11	60
1845	769	64		833	264	19	7	30
1846	484	90	6	580	155	13	11	24
1847 Missing				584				4
1848	563	47		610	307	14	16	26
1849	574	156		730	395	16	7	120
1850	763	67		830	411	16	8	100
1851	842	38		880	428	15	9	50
1852	817	72		889	521	16	14	9
1853	800	59		859	506	16	9	-30
1854	755	104		859	458	17	9	0
1855	788	77		865	534	17	16	6
1856	810	75		885	613	17	18	20
1857	830	108		939	633	18	13	54
1858	903	157		1060	634	18	21	121
1859	1103	27		1130	675	18	12	70
1860	1135	10		1145	695	18	16	15
1861	1013	152		1165	738	18	11	20
1862	1075	140		1215	727	19	18	50
1863	1078	147		1225	817	19	14	10
1864	1095	67		1162	754	19	17	-63
1865	1055	31		1086	836	20	15	-76

Appendix 8a4:   Primitive Methodist Membership in Grimsby
(Lincoln Archives: PM Reports).

Year							
1866	977	123	1100	935	20	17	14
1867	1055	85	1140	1005	20	16	40
1868	680	70	750	772	11	8	-390 *
1869	720	50	770	790	11	13	20 **
1870	380	55	435	291	5	8	50
1871	430	30	460	296	5	8	25
1872	460	20	480	301	6	11	20
1873	432	29	461	318	6	6	-19
1874	435	29	464	354	6	3	3
1875	433	41	474	400	7	5	10
1876	478	32	510	567	7	13	36
1877 Missing							
1878 Missing							
1879 Missing			639				
1880 Missing							
1881	635	22	657		7		12
1882			695				
1883	685	35	720		8	5	13
1884	661	119	780		8	12	60
1885	770	20	790		8	9	10
1886	802	28	830		8	12	40
1887	830	20	850		8	12	20
1888	840	20	860		8	12	10
1889	860	4	864		8	6	4
1890	826	16	842		8	6	-22
1891	817	26	843		8	15	1
1892	829	26	855		8	11	12
1893	880	0	880		9	9	25
1894	875	10	885		9	16	5
1895	885	15	900		9	9	15
1896	897	22	919		10	4	19
1897	924	11	935		10	17	16
1898	950		950		11	12	15
1899	595	15	610		6	4	-340 ***
1900	614		614		7	9	4
1901	620		620		7	12	6
1902	635		635		7	4	15
1903	665		665		7	5	30
1904	675		675		7	7	10
1905	700		700		7	13	25
1906	700	10	700		7	13	10
1907	725		725		7	8	15
1908	750		750		7	9	25
1909	760		760		8	13	10
1910	760		760		8	8	
1911	760		760		8	10	
1912	772		772		8	5	12
1913	772	13	772		8	6	
1914	759	13	772		8	12	

* 390 members were given to Tetney Circuit in 1868.
** The circuit was divided into 1st and 2nd Circuits in March 1869
*** "We have decreased 340 members… We gave 5 places with 342 members to the
    Grimsby 3rd Circuit in June, so that we have an increase of 2 since the the division.

PM Membership in Grimsby Circuit (a)
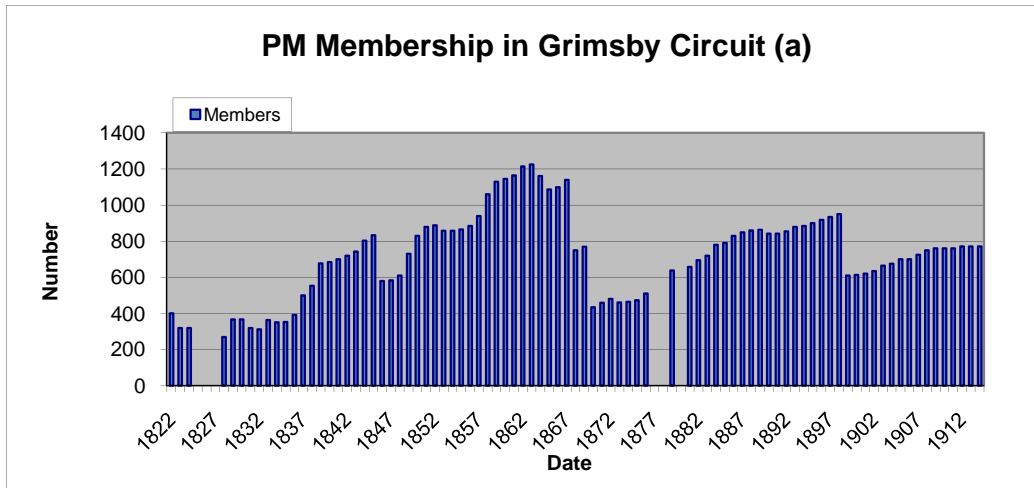
While every effort has been made to ensure that the figures are correct, there are some discrepencies between the different sources. I have used the Schedule figures in preferance to other sources wherever possible. The figures for 1822-1832, however, are not available from the schedules and have been taken from George Lawton's summary in the Procedings of the Wesleyan. Historical Society's Report. Even so, in the light of comments in the Primitive Methodist Magazine for 1888, p. 461. the early figures for Primitive Methodism in Grimsby are puzzling: 'At the end of twenty years of self-denying labour we had not more than about sixty members; ten years later we had more than three times that number. Since then the town has grown marvellously, and our cause. has grown with it. We have now more than 1,000 members in the Grimsby and Cleethorpes societies.'

Note: There appears to have been a split of some sort in 1845/6.
        The figures here do not include Cleethorpes.

The first Grimsby PM Circuit was founded in 1822 (the second circuit in 1869)

**Appendix 8a4:   Primitive Methodist Membership in Grimsby
(Lincoln Archives: PM Reports).**

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Appendix 8a5: Grimsby United Methodist Free Church.

Source: United Methodist Free Church Minutes of Annual Assembly.
North East Lincolnshire Archives, Grimsby: METHB/Grimsby/61-82:
records of the UMFC circuit and Park Street.

Grimsby, Freeman St, 1868

Date	Members	Sunday Scholars
1869	60	70
1870	92	80
1871	119	100
1872	90	108
1873	62	129
1874	78	87
1875	50	87
1876	61	111
1877	82	140
1878	111	198
1879	125	265
1880	138	281
1881	167	217
1882	180	255
1883	150	205
1884	137	242
1885	138	248
1886	128	254
1887	130	263
1888	136	289
1889	137	280
1890	138	170
1891	112	270
1892	123	249
1893	123	216
1894	142	186
1895	165	206
1896	162	170
1897	169	480
1898	204	490
1899	205	436
1900	213	494
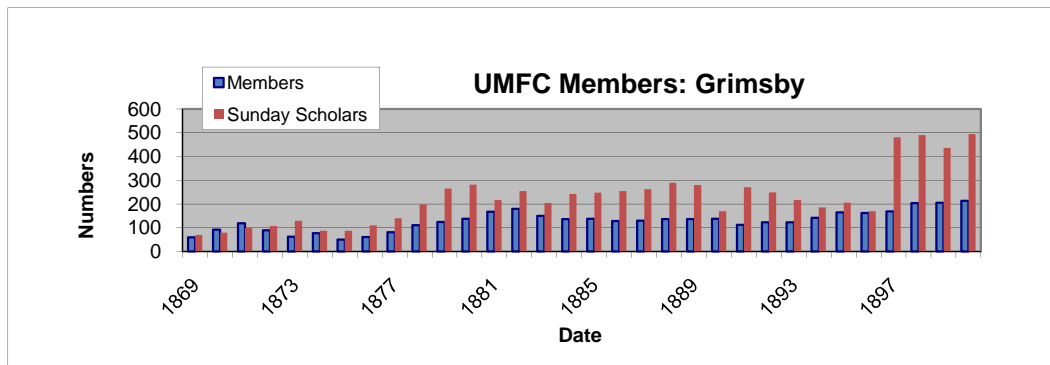
Appendix 8a6:   Grimsby Baptists Membership (General Baptists, New Connexion).

Source: Lincolnshire Archives, Lincoln, Baptist Membership, MISC DON 1275.

Date	Members **Baptist Union (see note) Upper Burgess St 1825** This became Victoria St in 1878.	Sunday Scholars	Members **Albert St 1860**	Members **Freeman St 1868**	Sunday Scholars	Members **New Clee 1870**	Sunday Scholars
1838	66	160					
1839							
1840	73	160					
1841							
1842							
1843	70	142					
1844							
1845							
1846							
1847							
1848							
1849							
1850							
1851							
1852	98	111					
1853							
1854							
1855	77	145					
1856							
1857							
1858	100	170					
1859							
1860							
1861							
1862	200	260					
1863							
1864							
1865	180		8				
1866	180		10				
1867	180		12				
1868	180	300	12				
1869	110	295	12		128		
1870	141	311		60	94		
1871	156	468		65	200		
1872	180	470		70	200		
1873	203	482		72			
1874	220	482					
1875	238	580					
1876	248	582					
1877				76	250		

Appendix 8a6:   Grimsby Baptists Membership (General Baptists, New Connexion).

Date	Upper Burgess St/Victoria St		Freeman St		New Clee	
1878	252	600	76	250		
1879	262	600	77			
1880	312	600	85			
1881	340	650	85			
1882	366	750	89	150		
1883	366	795	111	156		
1884	366	795	124	150		
1885	391	810	138	150		
1886	391	810	132	170		
1887	399	840	129	195		
1888	380	801	129	200		
1889	396	820	105	195		
1890	396	821	109	252		
1891	398	815	110	230		
1892	398	801	116	220		
1893	398	832				
1894	398	821	103	230		
1895	289	530				
1896	320	510	85	141	35	200
1897	335	510	99	215	37	200
1898	349	575	97	140	40	200
1899	230	608	108	150	43	200
1900	256	520	115	185	43	190

Notes: Baptist worship began in Grimsby in 1822.
First chapel and schoolroom built in 1824.
Baptist Union: In 1865 there were two Baptist Churches (presumably these were
Upper Burgess St and Albert St.)
Freeman Street was added in 1869
Upper Burgess St chapel was replaced by Victoria Street chapel in 1878?
New Clee was an outstation of Victoria St Chapel.
The Baptist Tabernacle (Victoria St) was built in 1876-7 and was used until the 1950s.
The Baptist Church then transferred to Laceby Road.
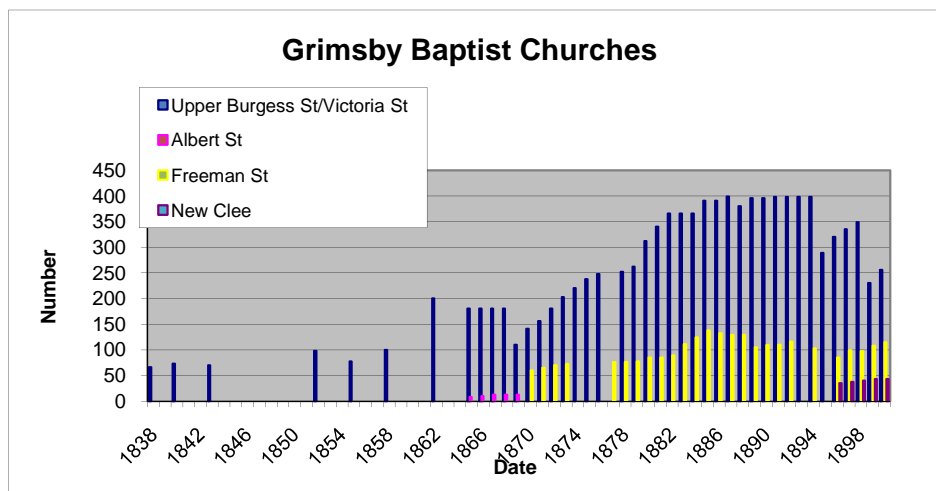
Appendix 8a7: Grimsby and Scarborough, summary of Church accommodation, 1851-1872.

Source: Supplement to the *Nonconformist*, January 8, 1873, p. 52. (Extracted from the *General Summary Table of Population, Places of Worship, and Sittings in Eighty-four Cities and Boroughs of England and Wales*.)

Town	Population	Total Accommodation 1851		Total Accommodation 1872		Accommodation 1851				Accommodation 1872			
		Places of Worship	Sittings	Places of Worship	Sittings	Established Churches		Non-Established Churches		Established Churches		Non-Established Churches	
						Places of Worship	Sittings	Places of Worship	Sittings	Places of Worship	Sittings	Places of Worship	Sittings
Grimsby	20,238	4	3,050	19	11,400	1	600	3	2,450	4	2,500	15	8,100
Scarborough	24,615	68	20,050	78	29,988	21	8,211	47	11,800	24	11,064	54	18,950
Hull	122,266	51	36,173	66	49,569	15	12,830	36	23,347	18	17,815	48	31,754
Gt Yarmouth	41,792	22	14,688	40	21,942	6	6,928	17	7,760	10	10,220	30	11,722

Town	Percentage of Accommodation 1851		Percentage of Accommodation 1872		Increase per cent on 21 years.	
	Established Churches	Non-Established Churches	Established Churches	Non-Established Churches	Established Churches	Non-Established Churches
Grimsby	20.0	80.0	21.9	78.1	316.6	263.3
Scarborough	41.1	58.9	36.8	63.2	33.9	60.5
Hull	36.2	63.8	35.9	64.1	38.9	23.4
Gt Yarmouth	47.1	52.9	46.6	53.4	51.8	51.1

Appendix 8b1: Cumulative number of religious groups in Scarborough 1800-1921.

Given the different estimates, some including a number of outlying villages (see letter on page) the above figures are based on a number of sources.

Sources: 1851 Census,

Religious groups/buildings	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1912
C of E	1	1	1	2	3	3	4	5	8	8	8	8	8
RC	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	4
Methodists (Wesleyans)	2	2	2	2	4	6	8	8	7	9	9	10	10
Wesleyan Association						2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Methodists (PM			1	1	1	1	2	3	5	5	5	5	5
UMFC								1	1	1	1	1	1
Independent						1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Baptist				1	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	3	3
Congregational						1	1	3	5	5	6	6	6
United Free Methodist													
Presbytarian	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Salvation Army									1	1	1	1	1
The Bethel	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Society of Friends	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
United Reformed								1	1	1	1	1	1
The Town Mission								1	1	1	1	1	1
Unitarians								1	1	1	1	1	1
Christadelphians										1	1	1	1
Fishermen's Institutie										1	1	1	1
Plymouth Brethren					1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
First Church of Christ Scientist												1	1
Jehovah's Witnesses (1966)													
Assemblies of God (1929)													
Elim (1934)													
Holiness Church													
Albert Hall Lectures									1	1	1	1	1
Batty Place Mission									1	1	1	1	1
TOTALS	7	7	8	10	14	21	27	36	44	48	51	54	55

Appendix 8b2: Scarborough – increase in places of worship, 1851-1872.

Source: Supplement to the *Nonconformist*, Jan 8, 1873, p. 54.

Religious Denomination	1851 Population 24,615		1871 Population 36,378		Increase between 1851 and 1872	
	No. of Places of Worship	No. of Sittings	No. of Places of Worship 1872	No. of Sittings	No. of Places of Worship	No. of Sittings
Ch. Of England	21	8,241	24*	11,038	3	2,797
Presbytarians						
Congregationalists	3	1,725	4**	2,510	1	785
Baptists	3	940	3+	1,630	---	690
Soc. of Friends	1	400	1	400	---	---
Unitarians						
Wesleyan Meths.	22	5,338	24++	6,984	2	1,610
United Meths.	2	620	1	750	(dec. 1)	130
New Connexion						
Primitive Meths.	13	2,081	15~	4,862	2	2,781
Calvinistic Meths.						
Bible Christians						
Brethren	---	---	1	150	1	150
Roman Catholics	1	270	1~~	1,000	---	730
All Others	2	435	4^	730	2	295
TOTAL	**68**	**20,050**	**78**	**30,018**	**10**	**9,968**

*Many have good schools – including two mission stations.
** Two have good schoolrooms.
+ One has a good schoolroom.
++ Including two mission rooms (170). About to build a large chapel at Filey.
~ Good schools attached to 5 chapels.
~~ Rebuilt.
^ Mission room (250); Adult school Mission room (300); Free dwellings Mission room (150); and Christadelphians (300). These are poorly supported by Church people.

Remarks

Two of the mission rooms under 'all others' are supported by members of all Protestant denominations. Religious services are held in the workhouse by all branches of the Christian Church alternately. The Unitarians hold services in the Temperance Hall during the summer months. Out-door meetings are held in summer on the sands, and many other parts of the town, by the Congregationalists, the Wesleyans, the Primitives, and the Town Mission. During the last twenty years, many of the places of worship have been enlarged, which accounts for the increase in the number of places of worship being so much less, comparatively, than the increase in the number of sittings.

But see the letter on the next page:

Appendix 8b2: Scarborough – increase in places of worship, 1851-1872.

The following letter appeared in the *Nonconformist* of January 15, 1873, p. 63.

The Scarborough Statistics

To the Editor of the Nonconformist

Sir, Permit me to direct your attention to the fact that the returns in your newspaper of the religious accommodation in Scarborough do not refer to this town exclusively, but to the entire district included in the Scarborough Poor Law Union; that district extends some thirteen miles outside the town, and embraces thirty-seven villages. As your statistics are generally believed to refer to towns *not* districts, I think this should be stated. Persons at a distance might conclude from these statistics the Church of England has twenty-one places of worship here, whereas they have only five. The Wesleyans have not twenty-two chapels but two, with two mission stations. The Primitive Methodists not thirteen chapels, but two, with one mission station. The Baptists have three chapels not two. The United Methodists not two chapels but one. The Congregationalists have three churches, as correctly stated in your returns. The population of Scarborough is about 24,500, not 36,378 as stated in your return – the latter figures referring to the entire district above mentioned.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
ROBERT BALCARNIE

Scarborough, January 14, 1873.

Appendix 8b3: Census of Attendance at Places of Worship in Scarborough, 1881.

Sources: *Scarborough Mercury*, 10 Dec 1881

Andrew Mearns, *The Statistics of Attendance at Public Worship, as published in England, Wales and Scotland by the local press, between October,1881, and April 1882* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1882). The Nonconformist and Independent, 2 Feb 1882, p. 7.

Summary

Denominations	Buildings	Accomm.	Morning	Attendance Afternoon	Evening	Total
Church of England	8	6560	3433		2864	6297
Wesleyan Methodist	7	3946	1795		1793	3588
Primitive Methodist	) 6	3380	1042		1212	2254
United Methodist Free Church	)	734	137		120	257
Congregational	5	2750	916		914	1830
Baptist	2	1470	308		363	671
Society of Friends		200	138		21	159
Unitarian		250	59		58	117
Christian Brethren		252	50		59	109
Batty Place Mission		120	----		93	93
Salvation Army	1	-----	720		2660	3380
Presbytarian	1	-----	41		52	93
Albert Hall Lectures		-----	----		68	68
Roman Catholic	1	700	403		238	641
TOTALS		**20,362**	**9,042**	**1,152**	**10,515**	**20,709**

Church of England		6,560	3433		2864	6297
Protestant Nonconformist		13,102	5206		7413	12,611
Roman Catholic		700	403		238	641
TOTALS		**20,362**	**9,042**	**1,152**	**10,515**	**20,709**

POPULATION 30,484

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF WORSHIPPERS: 13,123.

PERCENTAGE OF ESTIMATED NUMBER OF WORSHIPPERS TO POPULATION: 43.O5

The Nonconformist, 2 Feb 1882, p. 7: 'It will thus be seen that the proportion of accommodation and of attendances of the Free Church of Scarborough, as compared with the Established Church, is about two to one. The returns show that out of every 100 of the population of Scarborough 29 attended a place of worship last Sunday morning and 34 in the evening.'

'The returns for this fashionable watering-place were established on Sunday, December 4th by the Scarborough Mercury, and the statistics were taken in co-operation with the officials connected with the various places of worship, which was readily rendered.'

**Appendix 8b4: Scarborough Primitive Methodist Members
(Based on March quarterly figures, unless otherwise stated).**

Source: North Yorkshire County Record Office, Northallerton: Local leaders meeting book
and quarter day accounts: R/M/Sc/1/2/1-4 (1835-1856).

Date		Total Members	On Trial	St Sepulchre Circuit 1		Jubilee Circuit 2	
				Members	On Trial	Members	On Trial
	1835	139	10				
Feb	1836	75	36				
	1837	133	8				
May	1838	130	10				
	1839	117	11				
	1840	125	1				
	1841	124	12				
	1842	131	2				
	1843	130	19				
	1844	143	8				
	1845	158	6				
	1846	156	14				
	1847	143	36				
	1848	220	17				
May	1849	236	11				
	1850	242	12				
	1851						
	1852						
	1853						
	1854						
Dec	1855	251	5				
	1856	255	18				
	1857	252	20				
	1858	255	18				
	1859	230	17				
	1860	294	26				
	1861	270	43				
	1862	135	6				
	1863	208	4				
	1864						
	1865						
	1866						
	1867						
	1868						
	1869						
	1870						
	1871						
	1872						
Sept	1873	517	11	217		300	11
	1874	516	28	214	10	302	18
	1875	513	52	220	16	293	36
	1876	516	45	226	28	290	17
	1877	531	17	233	2	298	15
	1878	537	28	236	9	301	19
	1879	641	21	345	7	296	14

**Appendix 8b4: Scarborough Primitive Methodist Members
(Based on March quarterly figures, unless otherwise stated).**

Year						
1880	657	4	346	4	311	
1881	664	3	311	3	353	
1882	604	14	287	14	317	
1883	570		245		325	
1884	543		229		314	
1885	534	2	214		320	2
1886	490	12	192		298	12
1887	466		178		288	
1888	454	4	168		286	4
1889	465	9	175	2	290	7
1890	467	6	173		294	6
1891	470	27	177	2	293	25
1892	452	3	172	2	280	1
1893	455	5	179	1	276	4
1894	458	7	174	6	284	1
1895	515	35	202	5	313	30
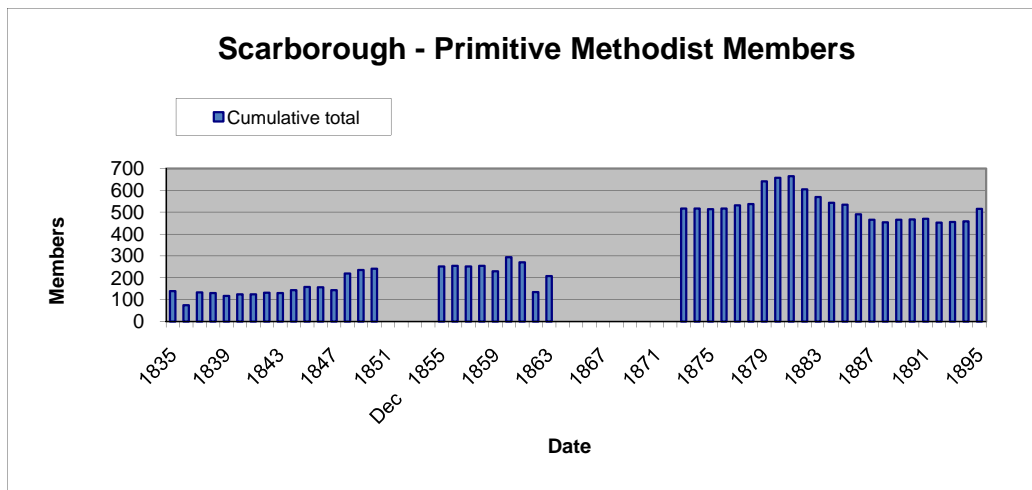
Note: The figures are somewhat confusing with duplicate copies for some dates offering different figures, and separate figures for Falsgrave, St John's Road, and other sites from c.1874. The Falsgrave and St John's Road figures would together add a significant number (125 members in 1873 and over 400 in 1889). Were these included in the overall Scarborough figures we would see a gradual increase in overall membership up to c. 1890, and then possibly a gradual falling away up to the beginning of the twentieth century.

Appendix 8b5: Scarborough United Methodist Free Church.

Source: United Methodist Free Church Minutes of Annual Assembly.
            North Yorkshire County Record Office, Northallerton: R/M/Sc/2/25
            Scarborough: Claremont UM, Chapel Records.

Date	Members	Sunday Scholars
1858	57	100
1859	65	25
1860	80	100
1861	75	80
1871	30	135
1872		
1873	44	113
1874	54	157
1875		
1876	68	185
1877	76	190
1878	80	195
1879		
1880		
1881	75	214
1888	69	122
1889		
1890	92	124
1891		
1892		
1893	80	130
1894		
1895	66	90
1900	55	34
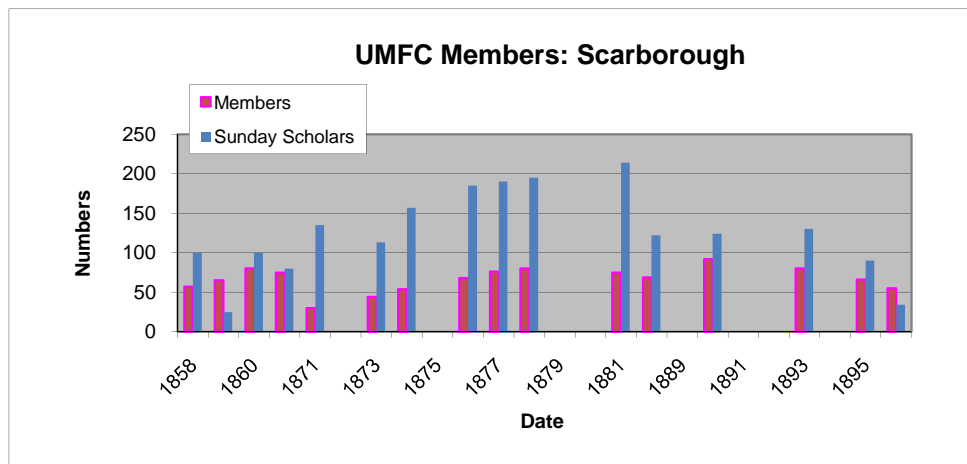
Appendix 8c1: Cumulative Number of Religious Groups/Buildings in Filey 1800-1911.

Source: A range of sources have been consulted for this chart, including the 1851 census, local histories and yearbooks.

Religious Groups /Buildings	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911
C of E	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
RC												1
Methodist (Wesleyan)		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Methodist (PM				1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Salvation Army										1	1	1
Christian Science Society												
Plymouth Brethren												
Society of Friends						1	1	1	1	1	1	1
TOTALS:	1	2	2	3	3	4	5	5	5	6	6	7

Appendix 8c2: Wesleyan Methodists in Filey.

Source:　East Riding Archives, Beverley: Bridlington Circuit MRQ 1/36 (1796-1838)
　　　　The figures were taken in July of each year.

Date	Filey members	On trial	
1796			No entries for Filey
1799			"
1800			"
1804			"
1805			"
1808			"
1809			"
1810	14		
1811	20		
1812	17		
1813	11		
1814	14	*	
1815	14	*	
1816	19		
1817	15		
1818	15		
1819	23		
1820	24		
1821	25		
1822	28		
1823	27	27	The figures given add up to 26!
1824			
1825	66		Again the figures given add up to 65!
1826			
1827	59		
1828			
1829	56		
1830	53		
1831	57		
1832			
1833	46		
1834	78		
1835	60		
1836	59		

* Includes Lebertson
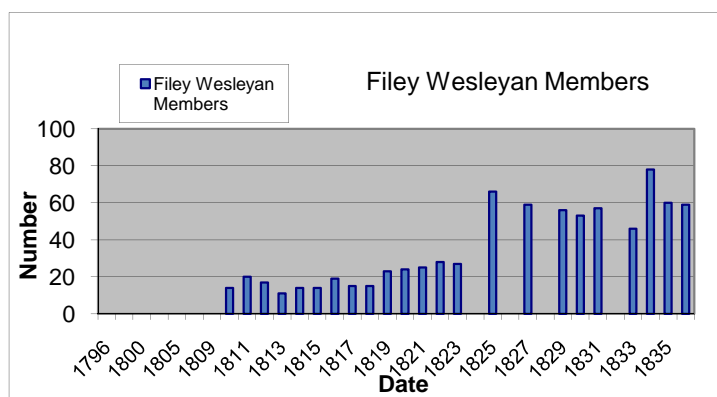
Filey Wesleyan Members

Appendix 8c2: Wesleyan Methodists in Filey.

Sources: Northallerton Archives: Quartely Schedules (March figures) R/M/Fil/1/1/6-8
The earliest source for the 1823 data is: William Howcroft, 'On the Work of God at Filey'
in the 'Primitive Methodist Magazine' for 1823, p. 255.
On page 258 he adds a note saying that within four or five weeks of his earlier report
more than 100 people had joined the new society.
Other sources include: J. Petty1880:189 and Rev H, Woodcock, 1889,p. 36
(Woodcock gives the figure as fifty)

Filey was a part of the Bridlington circuit until 1864 when it became an independent circuit.

Date	No.	Date	No.	Date	No.	Date	No.	Date	No.
1823	40	**1844**	79	**1865**	256	**1886**	306	**1907**	341
1824	100	**1845**	72	**1866**	255	**1887**	287	**1908**	340
1825	50	**1846**	84	**1867**	248	**1888**	275	**1909**	303
1826		**1847**	83	**1868**	301	**1889**	258	**1910**	283
1827		**1848**	111	**1869**	274	**1890**	235	**1911**	290
1828		**1849**	95	**1870**	262	**1891**	242	**1912**	256
1829		**1850**	104	**1871**	242	**1892**	237	**1913**	263
1830		**1851**		**1872**	262	**1893**	220	**1914**	237
1831		**1852**		**1873**	244	**1894**	218		
1832		**1853**		**1874**	295	**1895**			
1833		**1854**		**1875**	319	**1896**	233		
1834		**1855**		**1876**	316	**1897**	205		
1835	50	**1856**		**1877**	326	**1898**	226		
1836	36	**1857**		**1878**	337	**1899**	240		
1837	35	**1858**		**1879**	333	**1900**	241		
1838	34	**1859**		**1880**	350	**1901**	229		
1839	31	**1860**		**1881**	353	**1902**	208		
1840	32	**1861**		**1882**	323	**1903**	311		
1841	33	**1862**	208	**1883**	339	**1904**	297		
1842	71	**1863**	248	**1884**	347	**1905**	325		
1843	74	**1864**	254	**1885**	299	**1906**	340		

Filey: Primitive Methodist Members

Source: PM Circuit Books, NE Lincolnshire Archives, Grimsby.

Grimsby Primitive Methodist Circuit

After 1765 two Methodist circuits were formed in Lincolnshire, known as East & West, or Grimsby and Epworth. Grimsby UMFC Circuit was formed in 1869 and was centred on Freeman St, & included one other society.

First Circuit
1822

1868
Tetney Circuit

First Circuit 1869
Victoria St, Hainton St & Flottergate Chapels

1868-1909
Second Circuit
Centred on Ebenezer Chapel.

Bethel, Ebenezer & Garibaldi St Chapels;
Plus Laceby, Swallow & Irby.

Third Circuit 1898-1932
Centred on Hainton Ave & Welholme Rd,
& Included Immingham & Stallingborough.

1909-1932
Cleethorpes Circuit
Trinity & Mill Road

1932-1965
Renamed
Gy Hainton
Circuit

1932-1965
Renamed
Gy Flottergate
Circuit

1933-1937
Grimsby &
Cleethorpes Circuit
(Formed from Duncombe St Wesleyan,
Ebenezer PM, Cleethorpes PM,
Caistor Wesleyan, Tetney PM &
Gy UMFC Circuits.

Amalgamation of all PM circuits with the Wesleyans

Appendix 8d1: Methodist Development (Grimsby).

Scarborough Methodist Circuits

York
(Methodist Preaching House, Foster's Yard, 1756)

Scarborough & Hull Circuit, 1770

1821: Clowes preached in Scarborough

**Wesleyan
Methodists**
Cross St, 1813

**Primitive
Methodists**
'Church' = a home-made structure, 1821.
Aberdeen walk, 1861, Jubilee Bld.
St Sepulchre St Methodist Ch, 1864

1896

Jubilee
(Circuit 2)

St Sepulchre
(Circuit 1)

Queen St
1932

1945

1960
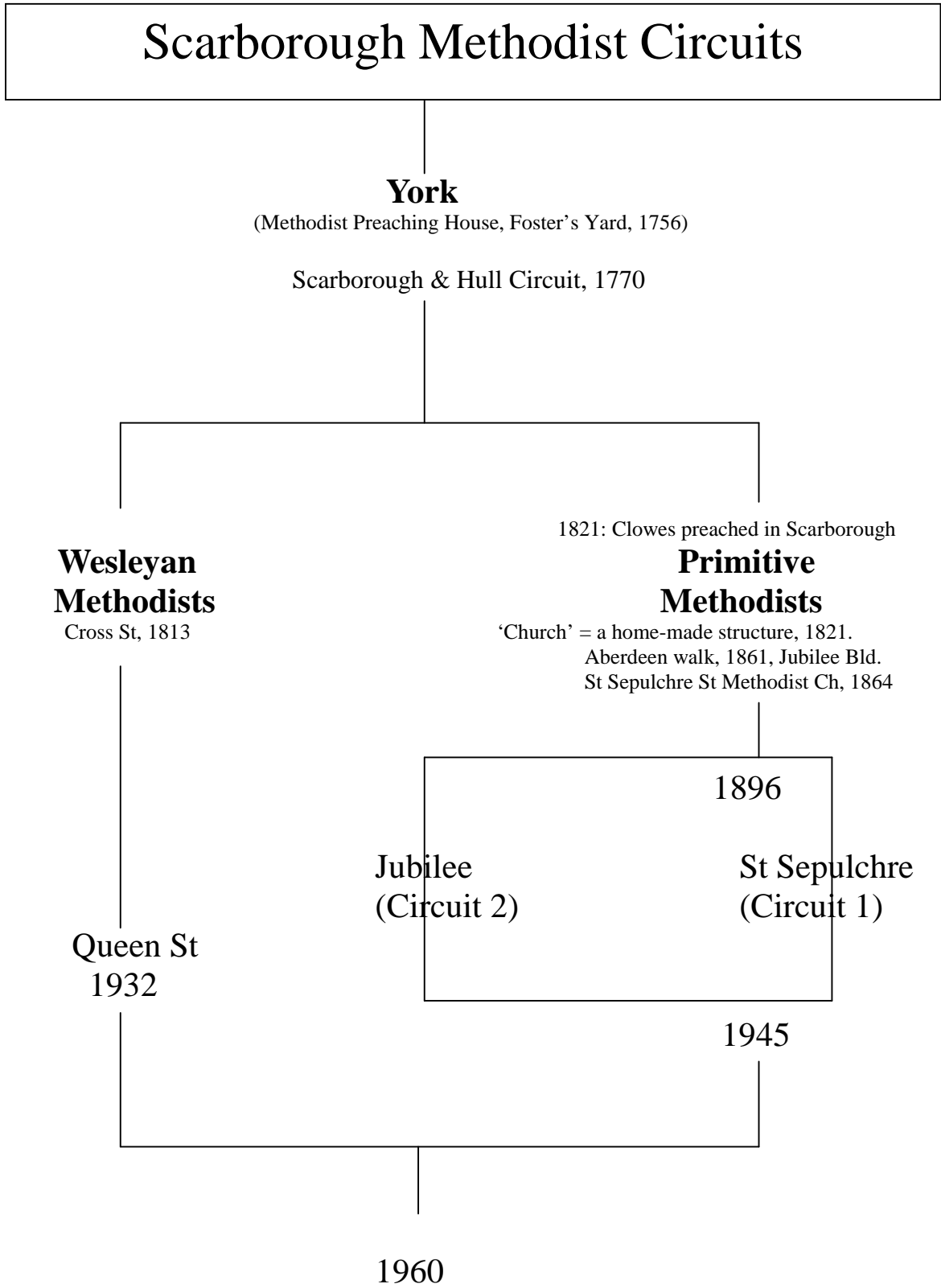
Appendix 8e: 'The Great Yorkshire Revival, 1792-6'.

Source: M. Hill, (ed), A Sociological Yearbook of Britain, 7, (SCM, pp. 50-51).

51

The Great Yorkshire Revival 1792-6

1794/5

1796/7

1793/4

1795/6

KEY: % change in circuit membership

Negative
0–10 Increase "
10–20 "
20–40 "
40+ "

50

A Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain

KEY TO CIRCUITS

1 ISLE of MAN
2 WHITEHAVEN
3 BARROW
4 ALNWICK
5 HEXHAM
6 NEWCASTLE
7 BARNARD CASTLE
8 SUNDERLAND
9 YARM/STOCKTON
10 WHITBY
11 SCARBOROUGH
12 BRIDLINGTON
13 HULL
14 POCKLINGTON
15 MALTON
16 YORK
17 THIRSK
18 KEIGHLEY
19 OTLEY
20 HALIFAX
21 BRADFORD
22 LEEDS
23 BIRSTAL
24 HUDDERSFIELD
25 SHEFFIELD/ROTHERHAM
26 WAKEFIELD
27 DEWSBURY
28 DERBY
29 NOTTINGHAM
30 EPWORTH
31 GAINSBOROUGH

32 GRIMSBY
33 HORNCASTLE
34 MACCLESFIELD
35 STOCKPORT
36 WARRINGTON
37 CHESTER
38 LIVERPOOL
39 WIGAN
40 BOLTON
41 MANCHESTER
42 OLDHAM/ROCHDALE
43 COLNE
44 BLACKBURN
45 BURSLEM/LEEK

For key to symbols
see opposite page

1792/3

1791/2

300

Appendix 8e: 'The Great Yorkshire Revival, 1792-6'.

Appendix 9a: Baptisms in Grimsby Churches.

Sources: Lincolnshire Archives, Lincoln: PMs: METH B/Grismby/33/9,10
St Andrew's Church, Grimsby: 09-16-001-01A/007-2A (1870-1914)
St John's, New Clee: 09-03-001-01A/006-04A (1873-1914).

Date	St Andrew's	St John's New Clee	PMs Circuit 1	PMs Circuit 2
			Est. 1839	Est. 1869
	Consecrated 1870	Consecrated 1879		
	Fishermen's Children	Fishermen's Children	Fishermen's Children	Fishermen's Children
1848			1	
1849				
1850			1	
1851			1	
1852			2	
1853			2	
1854			1	
1855			7	
1856			7	
1857			6	
1858			13	
1859			10	
1860			11	
1861			19	
1862			13	
1863			13	
1864			24	
1865			18	
1866			18	
1867			34	
1868			26	1
1869			13	10
1870	15		10	26
1871	42		2	36
1872	48		6	14
1873	44	3	5	19
1874	50	14	2	25
1875	45	21	3	46
1876	70	19	5	72
1877	44	16	2	63
1878	56	21		85
1879	66	16	1	71
1880	53	11		78
1881	54	19	5	92
1882	69	33	3	54
1883	64	36	3	65
1884	63	63	4	75
1885	60	58	2	70

1886	76	68	3	57
1887	80	99	3	29
1888	97	83	8	8
1889	83	76	2	3
1890	73	105	3	6
1891	108	132	1	4
1892	98	133	5	3
1893	89	135	2	5
1894	59	124	6	5
1895	68	141	3	4
1896	66	129	3	1
1897	58	143	1	5
1898	64	134	3	
1899	66	149	1	
1900	60	153		
1901	46	128		
1902	103	153		
1903	68	163		
1904	62	165		
1905	44	143		
1906	50	166		
1907	61	147		
1908	41	167		
1909	44	153		
1910	64	152		
1911	64	124		
1912	60	131		
1913	69	126		
1914	68	124		

Grimsby Baptisms - Comparative (Fishermen's children)
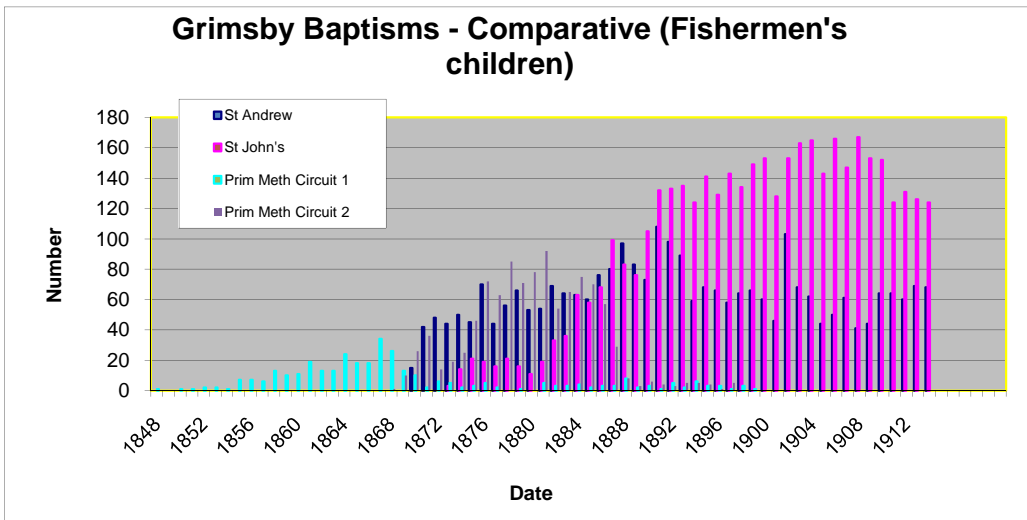
Source: East Riding Archives, Beverley: St Mary's Church: PE 165 (1813-1914)

St Thomas' Church: PE 166 (1844-1914)

North Yorkshire County Record Office: Primitive Methodists: R/M//Sc/3/1-7. 9-10 (1833-1916)

Date	St Mary	St Thomas	PMs
1813	6		
1814	9		
1815	3		
1816	9		
1817	8		
1818	7		
1819	11		
1820	16		
1821	4		
1822	16		
1823	5		
1824	14		
1825	9		
1826	13		
1827	7		
1828	12		
1829	8		
1830	14		
1831	11		
1832	10		
1833	9		1
1834	12		
1835	6		
1836	11		
1837	11		
1838	11		
1839	6		
1840	10		1
1841	9		2
1842	7		1
1843	15		
1844	9	1	2
1845	11	2	3
1846	11	7	4
1847	7	12	
1848	12	5	6
1849	3	13	3
1850	3	20	9
1851	2	6	10
1852	4	15	12
1853	5	15	12
1854	3	8	16
1855	2	7	17
1856	4	15	11
1857	0	25	8
1858	6	14	16

1859	6	17	10
1860	6	20	14
1861	4	11	23
1862	5	19	23
1863	4	20	29
1864	7	11	9
1865	14	13	12
1866	5	11	36
1867	11	12	25
1868	8	9	18
1869	10	10	36
1870	6	13	33
1871	9	8	39
1872	8	4	54
1873	6	5	55
1874	5	2	47
1875	11	1	40
1876	14	3	32
1877	11	4	47
1878	10	9	50
1879	9	4	55
1880	18	3	60
1881	19	2	36
1882	12	4	58
1883	14	2	38
1884	12	4	59
1885	20	3	42
1886	26	2	51
1887	30	18	45
1888	32	18	38
1889	18	35	25
1890	16	34	20
1891	15	44	20
1892	18	41	22
1893	18	39	16
1894	9	37	19
1895	21	43	2
1896	13	40	1
1897	19	38	1
1898	11	32	2
1899	13	29	0
1900	10	30	0
1901	11	21	0
1902	10	18	1
1903	10	25	0
1904	4	15	0
1905	10	31	0
1906	9	25	0
1907	10	20	0
1908	5	22	0
1909	12	25	0
1910	8	24	0

1911	7	8	0
1912	5	19	0
1913	10	24	0
1914	13	16	0

Scarborough Baptisms - Comparative (Fishermen)
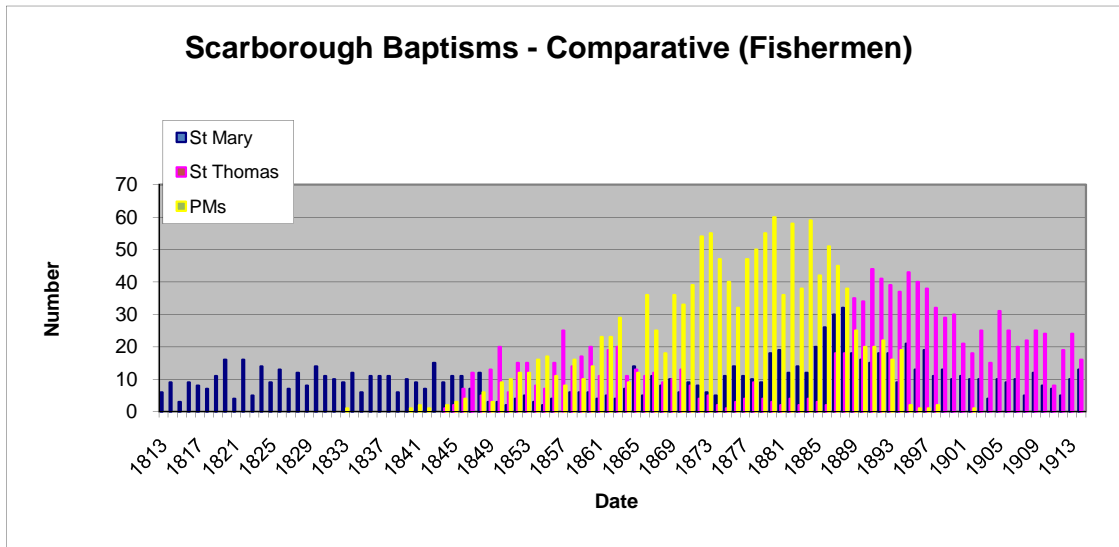
Appendix 9c: Filey Baptisms - Comparative (Fishermen's children).

Sources: East Riding Archives, Beverley, Filey Baptismal Registers, 1813-1936
St Oswald's Church, PE 142/5-7 (1813-19360
Wesleyan Methodists, MRQ/1/1-3 (1838-1947)
Primitive Methodists, MRQ/1/1/2/3 (1838-1947)

	St Oswald's	PMs..	Wesleyans
Date	Consecrated 11?	Est. 1823	
1813	12	-	-
1814	13		
1815	13		
1816	13		
1817	14		
1818	11		
1819	16		
1820	14		
1821	13		
1822	16		
1823	16		
1824	21		
1825	6		
1826	13		
1827	11		
1828	17		
1829	10		
1830	15		
1831	11		
1832	13		
1833	14		
1834	17		
1835	15		
1836	12		
1837	17		
1838	11		
1839	16		
1840	13		
1841	20		
1842	9		
1843	27		
1844	16		
1845	18		
1846	15		
1847	15		
1848	28		
1849	10		
1850	21		
1851	17		
1852	13		

Appendix 9c: Filey Baptisms - Comparative (Fishermen's children).

1853	9		
1854	17		
1855	16		
1856	11		
1857	19		
1858	19		
1859	12		5
1860	12		4
1861	18		0
1862	11		4
1863	7	13	2
1864	6	20	10
1865	7	15	10
1866	6	19	2
1867	6	8	9
1868	10	27	10
1869	9	19	9
1870	4	18	3
1871	5	26	9
1872	4	19	8
1873	3	25	10
1874	3	30	5
1875	2	32	9
1876	3	28	14
1877	4	13	15
1878	4	18	10
1879	3	33	11
1880	9	15	6
1881	23	19	4
1882	17	19	7
1883	22	8	5
1884	10	7	3
1885	16	13	1
1886	21	5	7
1887	15	3	3
1888	17	7	1
1889	17	7	4
1890	13	9	3
1891	23	10	4
1892	14	8	2
1893	14	6	2
1894	22	7	3
1895	28	2	4
1896	21	4	4
1897	21	5	0
1898	23	4	2
1899	12	1	1
1900	27	3	5
1901	24	3	2
1902	22	5	6
1903	23	1	1
1904	11	8	8

Appendix 9c: Filey Baptisms - Comparative (Fishermen's children).

1905	15	3	5
1906	17	5	2
1907	16	3	3
1908	12	4	5
1909	16	5	5
1910	9	5	8
1911	14	5	3
1912	12	6	4
1913	5	1	2
1914	9	4	1

Filey Parish Church Baptisms (Fishermen)

Grimsby Baptisms - Comparative (Fishermen)

Legend: St Andrew's, St John's, PM Circuit 1, PM Circuit 2

Y-axis: Number (0–180)
X-axis: Date (1813–1913)

Scarborough Baptisms - Comparative (Fishermen)

Legend: St Mary, St Thomas, PMs

Y-axis: Number (0–70)
X-axis: Date (1813–1913)

Filey Baptisms - Comparative (Fishermen)

Legend: St Oswald's Church, Filey PMs

Y-axis: Number (0–35)
X-axis: Date (1813–1913)
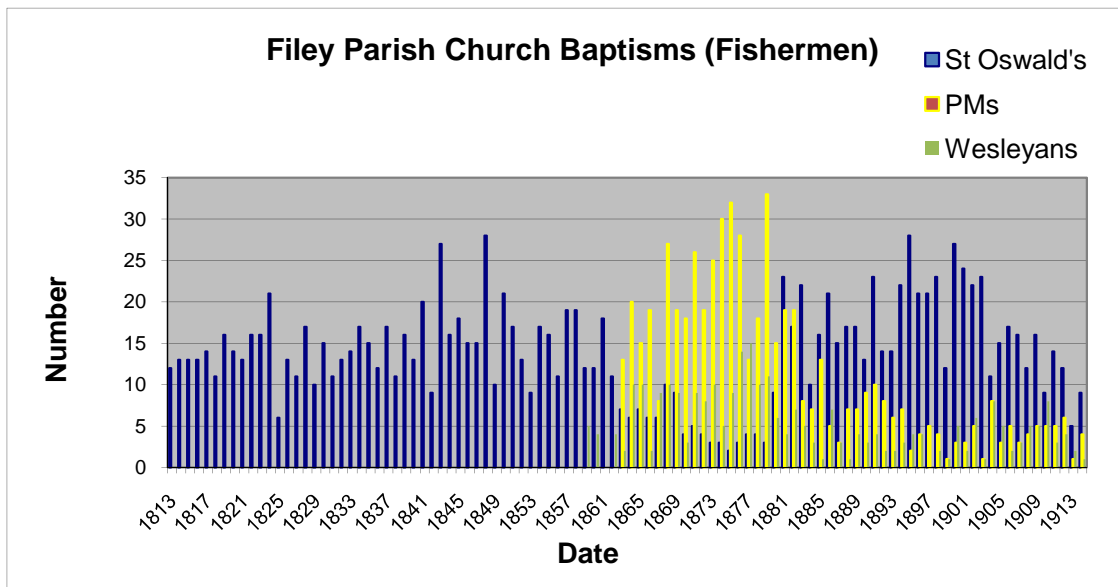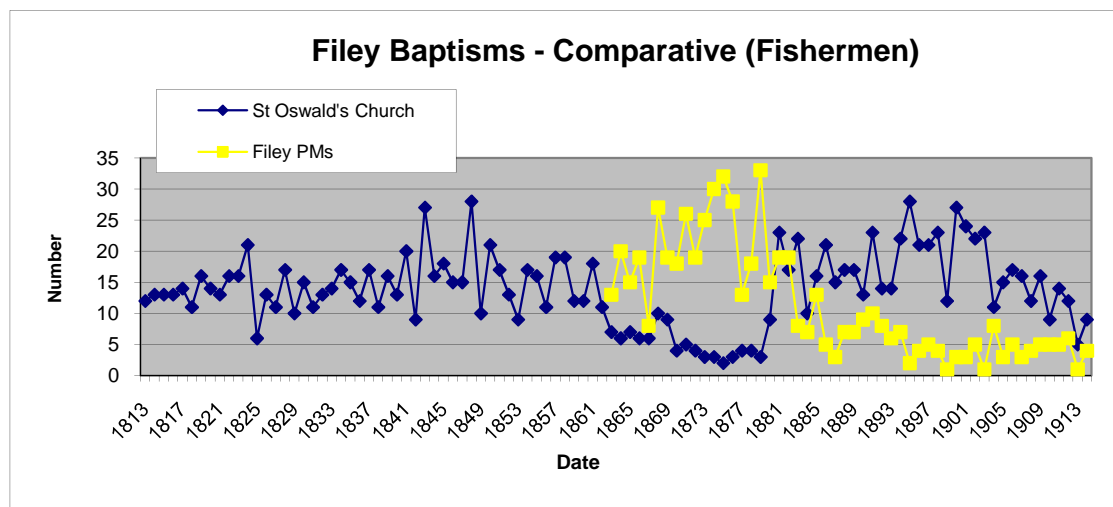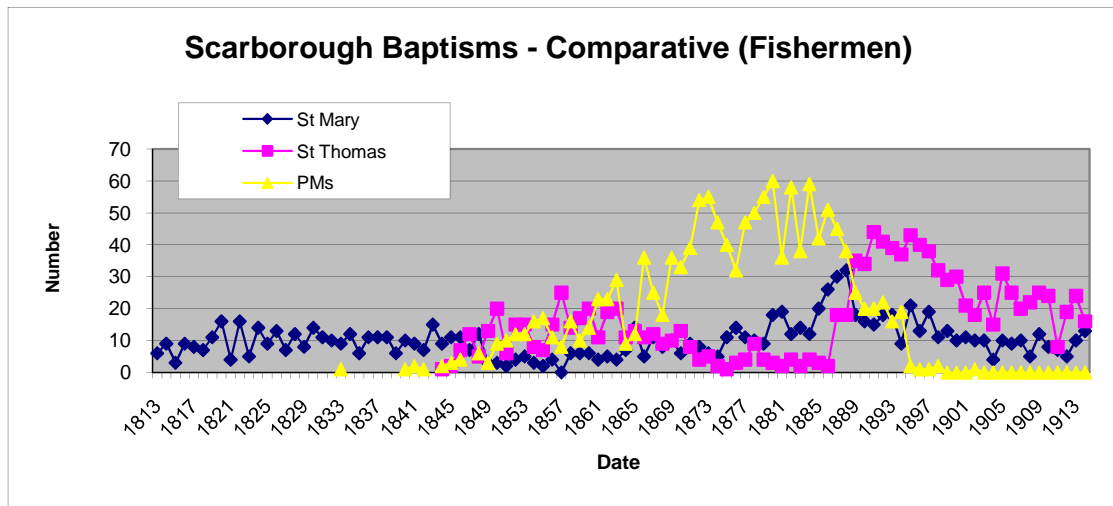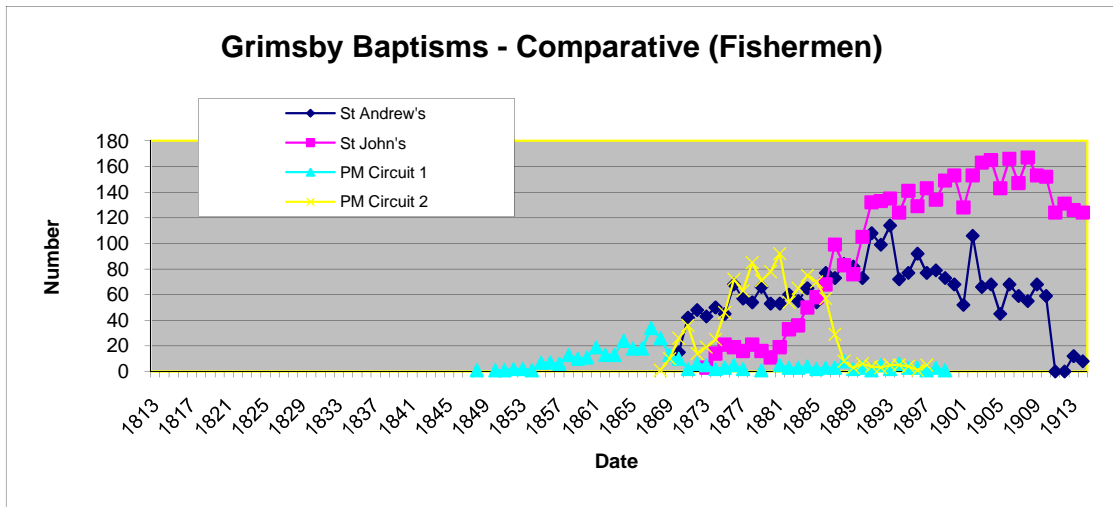
Appendix 10a: Dimensions of the Definition of Religion

Source: Richard Toon: Leeds Project on 'Conventional Religion and Common Religion in Leeds'. (Paper No. 3: *Methodological Problems in the Study of Implicit Religion*)

<div align="center">

Non-organised Religion

</div>

Common* Religion	Invisible** Religion
Supernatural Referents	**Empirical Referents**
Conventional Religion	Surrogate Religion

<div align="center">

Organised Religion

</div>
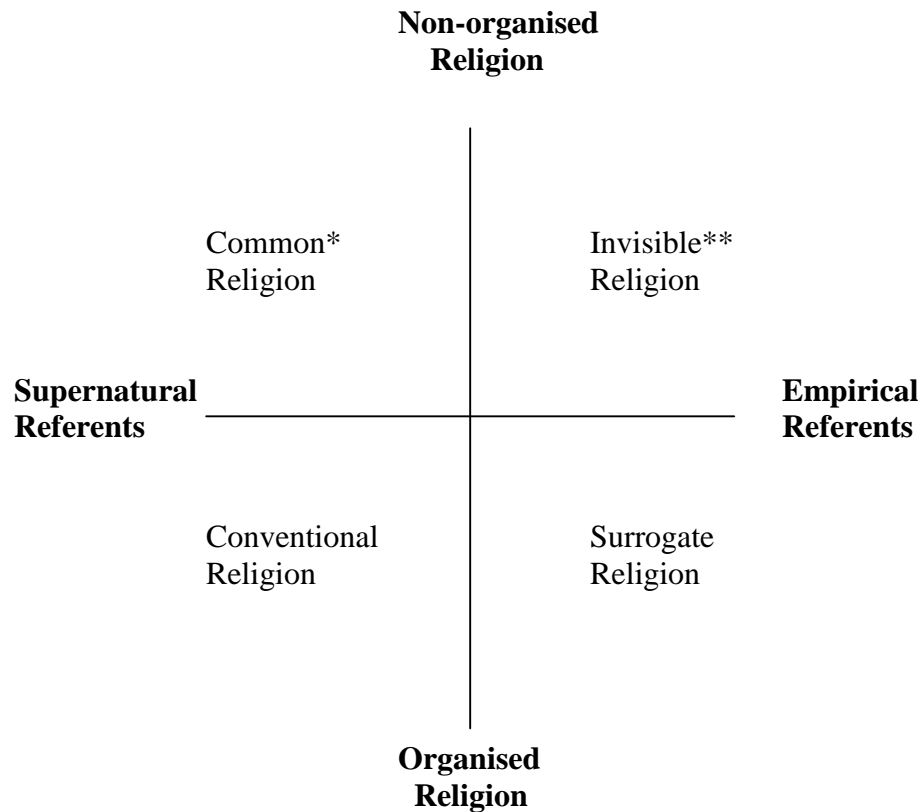
*   'Common Religion' is a term taken from Robert Towler's book *Homo Religiosus* (1974), and is by nature thematic rather than systematic. The term was then adopted by all those associated with the Leeds Project. Towler defines 'common religion' as 'those beliefs and practices of an overtly religious nature which are not under the domination of a prevailing institution.' (It therefore includes: the paranormal, fortune telling, fate and destiny, the existence of God, life after death, ghosts, spiritual experiences, prayer and meditation, luck and superstition. See Ahern and Davie, *Inner City God*, p.34)

**   'Invisible Religion' is taken from Luckman's definition (*Invisible Religion*, 1967). Luckman has defined this as 'a system of symbolic meaning in which there is no reference to the supernatural' (nor is this religion organised in any way). The term covers the sense of meaning that people find in life.

Appendix 10b: The VALIANT (Seamen's Chapel moored In Hull Docks, 1821-1851).

Source: With permission of the Sailor's Family's Society
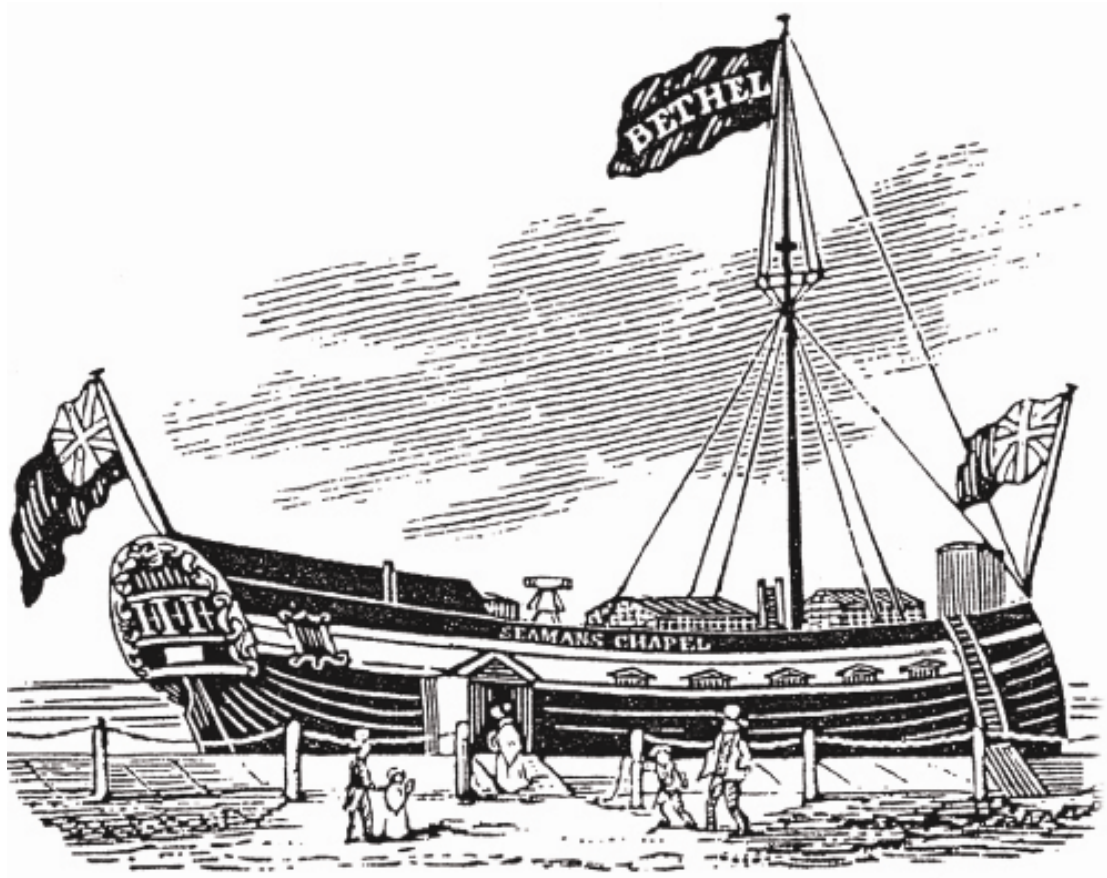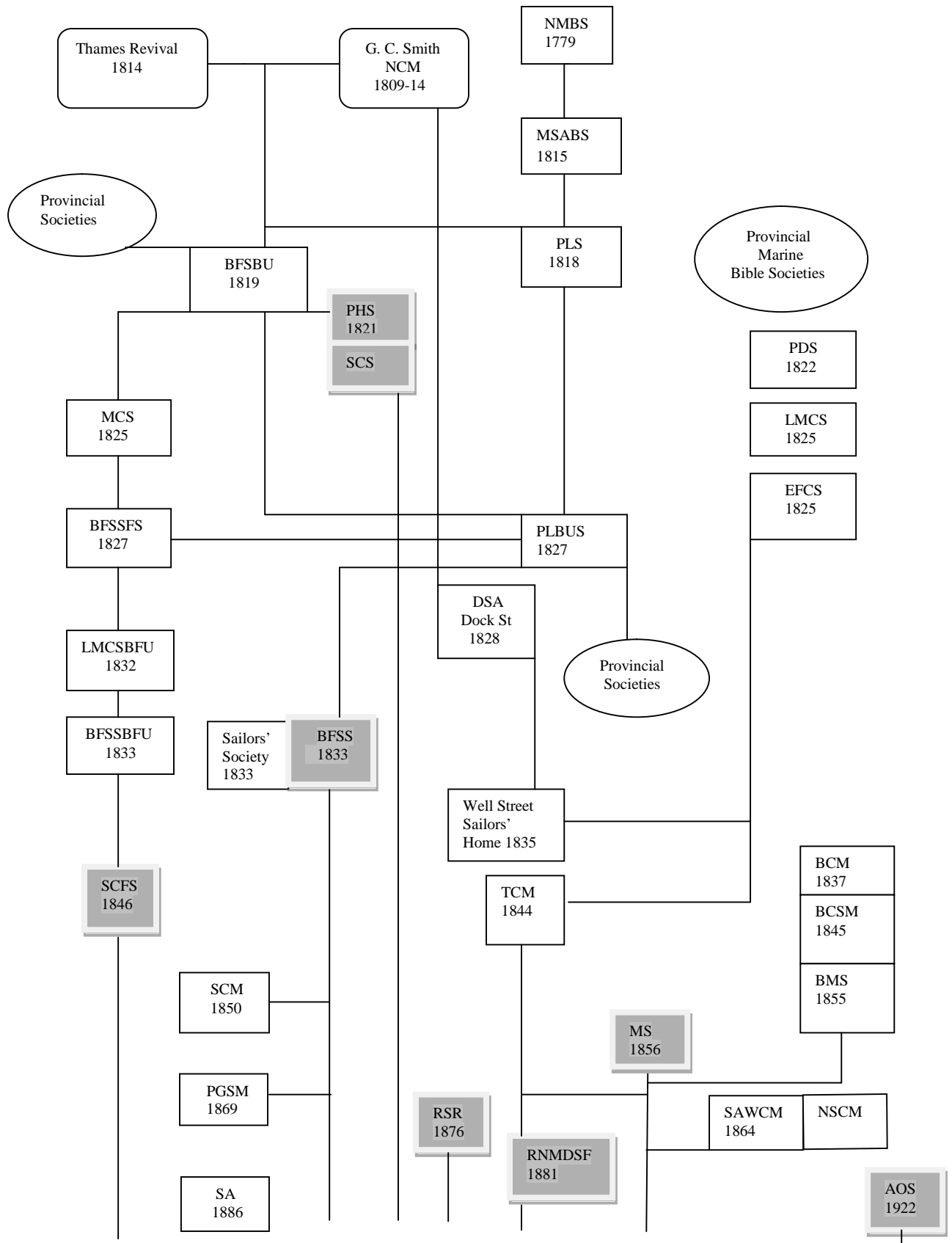
Appendix 10c: Key to Abbreviations.

Nonconformist Missions

BFSBU: British and Foreign Seamen's Bethel Union

BFSFSBU: British and Foreign Seamen's Friend Society and Bethel Union

BFSS: British and Foreign Sailors' Society (now called the 'Sailors' Society')

BFSSBFU: British and Foreign Sailors' and Soldiers' Bethel Flag Union

DSA: Destitute Sailors' Asylum

LMCSBFU: London Mariners' Church Society or Bethel Flag Union

MCS: Mariners' Church Society

MDSF: Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen (known as the 'Royal National MDSF' from

               1897)

MSABS: Merchant Seamen's Auxiliary Bible Society

NMBS: Naval and Military Bible Society

PGSM: Portsmouth and Gosport Seamen's Mission

PHS: Port of Hull Society (later called the 'Sailors' Children's Society')

RSR: Royal Sailors' Rests

SA: Salvation Army

SCFS: Seamen's Christian Friend Society

SCM: Scottish Coast Missions

Church of England Missions

BCM: Bristol Channel Mission (later known as the 'Bristol Channel Seamen's

               Mission' (BSCM); and the 'Bristol Mission to Seamen' (BMS)

EFCS: Episcopal Floating Church Society

MS: Missions to Seamen

PDS: Port of Dublin Society

PLBUS: Port of London and Bethel Union Society

PLS: Port of London Society

SAWCM: St Andrew's Waterside Mission (later known as the 'St Andrew's Waterside

               Church Mission (SAWCM)

Shaded blocks represent missions which have survived to the present day.

Appendix 10d: Part of the tapestry on display in Eyemouth Museum.

Photo by S. Friend, with permission of Eyemouth Museum.

Appendix 10e: A modern example of sympathetic magic. The item was carved from the top six inches of a broom handle by a Hull trawler fisherman during the 1970s. (The original is in the possession of Alec Gill).

Appendix 10f: Nineteenth century fishermen wearing gansies.

Source: With permission Wick Archives.

Appendix 10g: Painting by L. T. Crawshaw (1864-1949): 'Hauling the Cobbles in Runswick Bay'
(On display at the Pannett Art Gallery, Whitby).

Source: George H. Traves, M.B.E., *Flamborough, A Major Fishing Station* (Driffield, Yorkshire, Horsley & Dawson, 2006).

The photo recalls a tradition common in Flamborough during the nineteenth century called 'Raising the Herring'. This involved the women in dressing in men's clothes and visiting their friends and neighbours and making music.

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Primitive Methodists, Filey, Bridlington Circuit: MRQ/1/1/2/3 (1838-1947)

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Records of Wesleyan Circuits: METH B/Gy/4/1-32
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18 July 1890

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4 December 1881
10 December1881
24 December 1881

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27 Dec 1993;

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9. Interviews and Correspondence

Women's Voices Project (York, York St John University, Project Director: Stephen Friend)

The Women's Voices Project (2005-2007) was established at York St John University in April 2005, and uses a personal narrative methodology thereby allowing the women to tell their own stories about life in Yorkshire fishing communities. This recorded material is an important resource for community members, scholars and academics. The project is currently investigating how the women make sense and meaning of their lives within the communities, and this lends itself naturally to an exploration of 'formal, popular and lived religion'. Several of the women interviewed appear in a film produced as a DVD: 'Women's Voices: Reflections of Women in Yorkshire Fishing Communities', Published by the Women's Voices Project, York St John University, 2006. Those interviews used as a comparative resource during this study include:

    Scarborough
        01aLR04YS (25.11.04)
        02bRJ04YS (09.12.05)
        18AW05YS (18.08.05)
        22MP05YS, (05.10.05)
        02bRJ05YS, (25.11.05)
        27MC05YS (29.11.05)
        11DN05YS, (23.06,06)
    Hull
        09MH05YH, (08.06.05)
        MO1RH05YF (04.08.05)
    Filey
        03AW05YF, (09.05.05)

                16MT05YF, (22.07.05)
        Whitby
                23NW06YW, (08.04.06)
                32NW06YW (20.04.06)
                M02HS07YW (09.05.07)
        Staithes
                33WC07YSt (14.03.07)

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Part of the tapestry on display at Eyemouth Museum. Photograph by S. Friend with permission of Eyemouth Museum.

Broom Handle carving, photograph by S. Friend, used with permission of Alec Gill, Hull.

Nineteenth Century fishermen wearing ganseys. Photograph used with permission of Wick Archives.

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17.   Theses and Dissertations

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