

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

" The photography of Thomas Watson of Lythe:  
its importance as a social document"

being a Thesis submitted for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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by

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society for the privilege of working in and on the Watson Collection at the Whitby Museum, and hope that my work as Hon. Curator of the Collection will go some way towards acknowledging that debt, and prove of continuing value to the Society.

My thanks are due to the officers and researchers at the museum, and to all the librarians and archivists at the very many institutions which helped me with my enquiries.

I am particularly grateful to my supervisors, and to all those who knew Tom Watson and were kind enough to share with me their knowledge of him, especially the late Lord Normanby and his staff, and Watson's granddaughter, Mrs. Eileen Whittingham.

FOREWORD

The 2,126 glass plates, 4 film negatives and 303 glass projection slides which are lodged in the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society's Whitby Museum as the Watson Collection were selected in 1957 by Mr Percy Burnett, who wrote to the then Hon. Keeper of the Museum as follows:

31st. May 1957

Dear Miss Walker,

The late Mr. T. Watson's Negatives

Some years ago Mr. Watson promised me that, after his death, I could have for the Museum such of his negatives as should be preserved. From a local history record point of view, Mr. Watson has, throughout a long lifetime, done a rather wonderful job - better than he knew, since local history was not at all in his mind.

From about 1890 he, his bike, and his camera travelled the Whitby district, and many thousands of plates bear witness to the many changes that have taken place in the intervening years.

One of his achievements is a long series which gives almost a week by week story of the demolition of Lythe old church, and of its rebuilding. I do not know of a sequence like this anywhere else. Again, he photographed the Sandsend-Whitby road in its pre-toll-bar days, and at every subsequent stage - the cutting back of the cliffs, filling in the ravines, and on until the opening of the

roadway. Every village round about is represented by a very full series of plates. Sandsend floods...Esk valley floods...bridges...windmills...churches... Whitby Abbey... Robin Hood's Bay...Hawsker...Danby...Castleton... Goathland.... there is hardly an end to them.

At Miss Watson's request I am sorting all these negatives, and over one hundred boxes of them are already in the Museum. The rest will come as soon as the selection is completed.

There can be no doubt that the Museum will accept them. One can never again take photographs of places that disappeared nearly a life-time ago. May I recommend their acceptance and ask that, in due course, after the Committee has met, a letter of appreciation be sent to Miss Watson from the Society. I would like further to plead that some monetary acknowledge (sic) be offered to her. These negatives are of untold value. They are a man's life's work. It is not a question of buying the plates. But, knowing something of the circumstances, I feel sure that something would be more than acceptable. If the Society feel it reasonable I would suggest an amount of not less than ten guineas, nor more than fifteen guineas.

Yours sincerely,

(signed) PERCY BURNETT

Miss D. Walker, Hon. Keeper,  
Whitby Museum.

It is not altogether clear from Mr Burnett's first sentence whether he intended "such of his negatives as should be preserved" to mean "such of his negatives as might still exist (at the time of his death)" or "such of his negatives as ought (in the opinion of the Museum's curator) to be preserved after his death", but the second is probably the interpretation he intended.

Since Mr Burnett was at the time the Hon. Curator of the Local History Collection, and later Librarian at the Whitby Museum, it seemed reasonable to assume that his selection of Watson's work was made with skill and insight as to the material likely to be of greatest value to the local historian, and that it would reveal evidence of, for instance, the major events, industries, social and economic conditions, transport developments, religious attitudes, educational provision and leisure pursuits of the times and the area.

It also seemed reasonable to attempt a comparison of Watson's work with that of other Victorian photographers or picture postcard producers such as Sutcliffe, Frith, Valentine, Hayes and G.W.Wilson, and to seek possible explanations for

(1) the failure of these photographers generally to provide the critical social documentation found in the work of others active at the same time or even earlier, such as Annan, Hine, or Thomson, and

(2) the effect of Watson's postcard production on his landscape photography in general and his work as a social document in particular, and

(3) the development of photography as an instrument of social documentation in the 20th. century and the qualitatively different achievements thereof vis-à-vis those of the 19th century.

If the photography of the Watson Collection proves on analysis to contribute to a knowledge of Watson's times and area rather less than Mr Burnett anticipated, this may be due to a variety of reasons. Firstly, since "local history was not at all in his mind", it is possible that Watson's photography did not, in general, provide very detailed or extensive evidence of his locality and his times. Secondly, perhaps Mr Burnett's selection of such photographs as Watson did take could have been improved, to include others of even greater value to the local historian. (By far the greater part of Watson's production was scrapped after Mr Burnett had made his selection for the Museum: see Richardson (1990), pp.8-9). Finally, it is certain that the Watson Collection lacks certain Watson photographs which exist in private collections only and which are therefore unavailable to the public. Frank (1980), p.6, says, "A greater number of original prints, it is believed, are the property of the present Marquis of Normanby. When these become available to social historians and students of the history of photography Watson's documentation of life



at the Castle in late Victorian and Edwardian days will represent a most valuable (in terms of scholarship) record of the provincial aristocracy."

Personal communication with the late Lord Normanby (letter, 1 March 1990) made it clear that in addition to the "original prints" mentioned by Frank, the Normanby collection includes a number of "plates in the Estate Office which are personal family ones, so these are not available for you to inspect." The writer has viewed these plates when asked by the late Lord Normanby to advise on their conservation and storage, and maintains his earlier view, expressed in Richardson (1992), p.11, that "they are of course in the private and personal collection of Lord Normanby and there is no reason why they should be made available to the public."

Even if, as Frank (op. cit.) hopes, these photographs eventually "become accessible to social historians and students of the history of photography", they will only present "a most valuable (in terms of scholarship) pictorial record of the provincial aristocracy." The scope of the present enquiry, it is hoped, is much wider than this single and restricted topic of "the provincial aristocracy" would be.

## REVIEW OF THE PERTINENT LITERATURE

This is not extensive: there is a chapter in Cockcroft, (1974), pp. 113-120, entitled "The missing art of Tom Watson", and some of Watson's photographs are reproduced, with short references to the quality of his work, in Tom Scott Burns (1987) and (1988). An unpublished outline of his life which accompanied an exhibition in 1980 of "Photographs from the Watson Collection" at the Pannett Art Gallery, Whitby, and the Crescent Art Gallery, Scarborough, contains an introduction by Kenneth W. Baird (1980, pp.1-2) and a study of Watson and his work by Peter Frank (1980, pp.3-10) entitled "Thomas Watson of Lythe 1863-1957: Journeyman Photographer". A pamphlet of seven pages by Tindale (n.d.) accompanied a re-issue of a series of "then and now" photographs by Watson and Tindale, and there is an article by Williams (1980) in Creative Camera, May/June 1980, p.201.

The article itself is anonymous, but as it refers to a selection of Watson's photographs made by Val Williams and Ken Baird (1980) for an exhibition organised by the Impressions Gallery of York in 1980, it has been assumed that it is in fact editorial comment. Hence its attribution to Williams and its reference to the bibliography under "Williams (1980)".

There are factual errors in some of these sources, and

mis-interpretations and unwarranted assumptions are sometimes made in the analysis and correlation of the rest of the evidence available. This evidence consists of the Watson Collection of negatives and prints, some fragmentary correspondence and personal possessions left by Thomas Watson, and other documentary evidence of Lythe and Whitby during his lifetime, all of which are the property of and held by the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society at its Whitby Museum, Pannett Park, Whitby.

The present writer's publications on Watson consist of Richardson (1991) and Richardson (1992).

## PART I

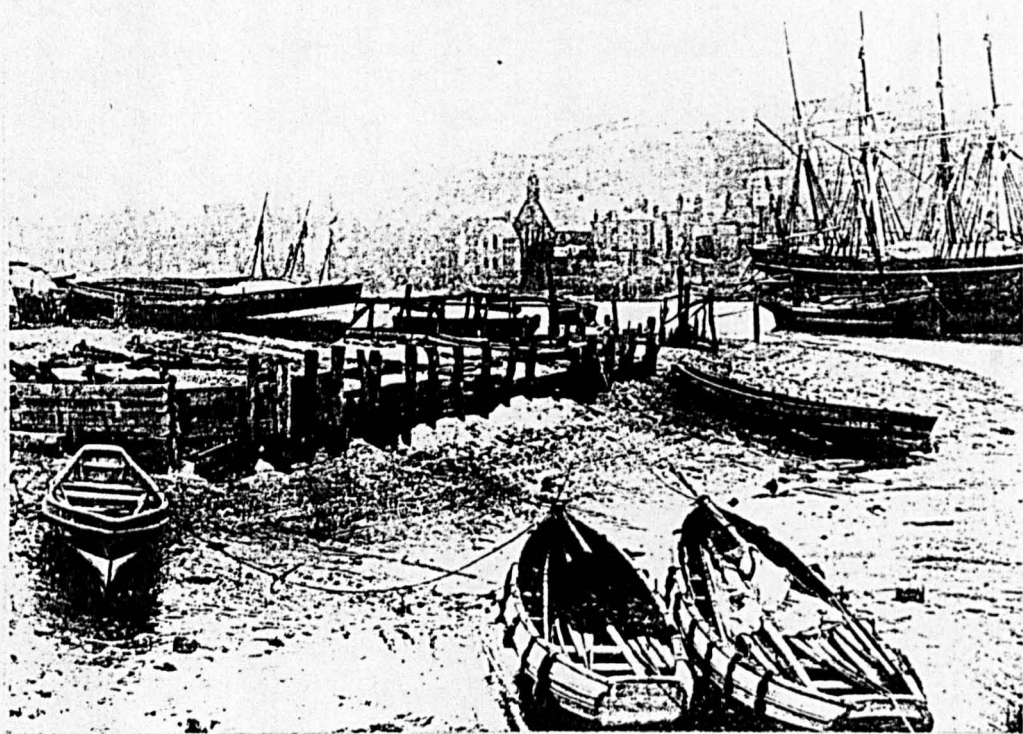
### The life and work of Thomas Watson, 1863-1957

#### Chapter One: Early years

There is no doubt that Thomas Watson was born the son of a joiner on 16 March 1863, but whereas Tindale (n.d.,p.2) states that he was born "at Castleton, to Joseph and Mary (formerly Agar)", his father was in fact named William, and his mother was formerly named Martin, not Agar. Frank (1980) and the Whitby Gazette of April 18 1957 report in identical terms that he was born "in a cottage at Ruswarp Shipyard, on the site of the present Whitby Goods Station."

The national census of 1861 shows William Watson living with his wife Mary and their three-month-old daughter Ann M. Watson at 15 Hobkirk's Yard, in the township of Ruswarp. This was not the present Ruswarp, where there could never have been a shipyard because the centuries-old weir ensures that the River Esk is not tidal above the mill.

Ruswarp in 1861 took in a large part of what is now Whitby proper, and Watson's birthplace was indeed on the site of the present Goods Station, on the west side of the river and almost opposite the present Whitehall Shipbuilding Company's yard, but further downstream. Whether it was ever called Ruswarp Shipyard is doubtful: all the Whitby shipyards at the time seem to have been called after their



To face p.-11-  
( See line 17 )

owners, and William Watson's address of 15 Hobkirk's Yard (see map on p. 12) was not in a yard of that name off a town street (unlike the Argument's Yard of Sutcliffe's famous photograph and Francis Frith's postcard shown in Jay (1973), p. 88), but quite literally no.15 in Hobkirk's (Ship)Yard. (See endnote 1.) Whether number 15 was indeed a "cottage" cannot now be verified, but the shipyard in which it once stood has a distinguished and well documented history:

"In about 1760 Wm Simpson began a building yard on the west side of the river, on land apparently gained from the harbour, and built a dry dock there. In 1774 the yard built "Diligence" for Mr Herbert of Scarborough; which vessel was bought by the Government to accompany the "Resolution" in Capt.Cook's third voyage. It was re-named "Discovery".

In 1838 Mr Wm Hobkirk began work in this yard, but the dry dock was in the occupation of Mr Henry Barrick". (There is a photograph by Frank M. Sutcliffe of "Cobles on the mud outside Barrick's yard" in Shaw (1974), p.22, which illustrates where the shipyard was situated.)

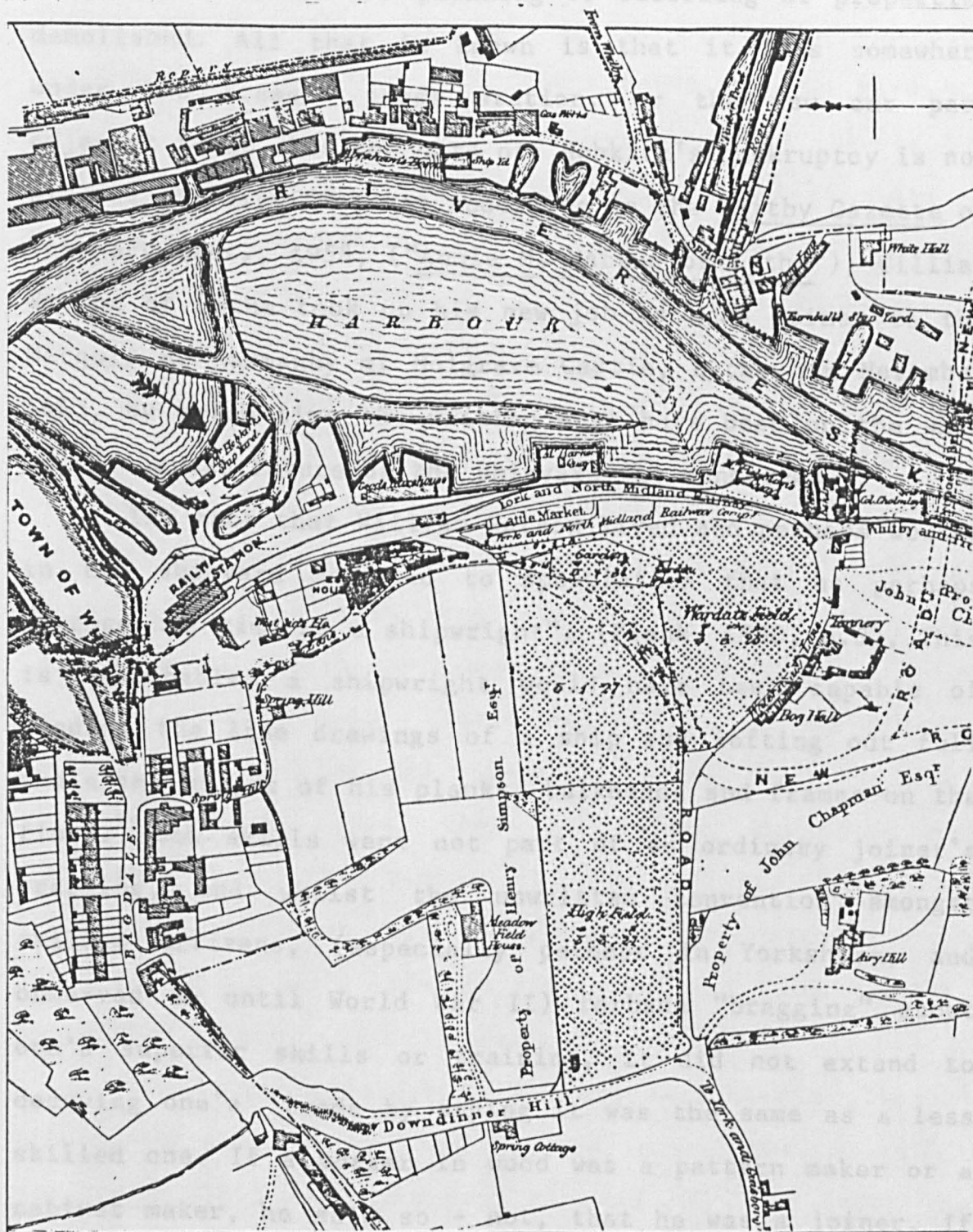
"After the retirement of Mr W. Hobkirk in 1850, his son Thomas continued the building until 1862, when he became a bankrupt. Soon after this the N.E. Railway company bought the whole of these premises, filled in the dock, and the yard, as such, disappeared." (Weatherill (1908), p. 30).

It would have been gratifying to have been able to produce a photograph of Watson's birthplace to compare with that of Sutcliffe at Far Headingley, or his childhood home

# FREEHOLD BUILDING GROUND

close to the

## Town and Borough of Whitby, YORKSHIRE.



MAP OF WHITBY HARBOUR IN 1853

at Ewe Cote Hall, but it is no longer possible even to locate the site of the house with any accuracy, since the later development by the N.E. Railway Company took place piecemeal, without any planning or recording of properties demolished. All that is known is that it lies somewhere under the present goods station, or the new car park adjacent to it. But the date of Hobkirk's bankruptcy is not without its significance: according to the Whitby Gazette of February 21st., 1958, ("Annie M. Watson of Lythe"), William Watson of Lythe took up his new job as head joiner to the Marquis of Normanby at Mulgrave Castle, Lythe, in November 1863, by which time the writing must have been on the wall as far as the future of the shipyard was concerned.

The fact that William Watson lived and perhaps worked in the shipyard has led to speculation that he perhaps "served his time as a shipwright". (Frank, 1980, p.3). This is improbable: a shipwright would have been capable of reading the line drawings of a ship and lofting out full scale the shapes of his planks, bulkheads and frames on the floor. Such skills were not part of an ordinary joiner's training, and whilst the unwritten convention amongst skilled artisans, (especially perhaps in Yorkshire, and observed up until World War II) forbade "bragging" about one's superior skills or training, it did not extend to decrying one's trade by saying it was the same as a less skilled one. If a worker in wood was a pattern maker or a cabinet maker, he said so - not, that he was a joiner. If



William Watson had been a shipwright, he would not have informed the Returning Officer for the 1861 census that he was a joiner, which he did.

Interestingly enough, the very next line in the census return, after William Watson's entry, lists his next-door neighbour at No. 16 as one Thomas Lawrains, who gave his occupation as "boatbuilder". Lawrains was not a joiner, and William Watson was not a boatbuilder, still less a shipwright. Numerous others of his neighbours describe themselves in the census as "ship carpenter": perhaps that too was different from being a journeyman joiner.

William Watson, upon leaving his address in Hobkirk's yard, was appointed head joiner to the Marquis of Normanby at Mulgrave Castle, and moved with his young family into the lodge at the entrance to the estate in Lythe, the village where he had been born. (His wife, inexplicably, was born in Marchamley, north-north-west of Shrewsbury, Salop.) For the next thirty years Thomas Watson was to be infant, "scholar", apprentice and joiner in Lythe, facts on which all the sources agree. There is however confusion and vagueness about the timing of some of his moves and activities; confusion which is removed, paradoxically, by a study not of Watson's life but of that of his oldest sister, Ann Mastin Watson. (He had three other sisters).

It is understandable that the narrative of Thomas' life during these years should abound in such phrases as "It was around 1865 that the family moved..." "No doubt the

children went to school in the village"... "At about the age of 13 or 14, Tom was apprenticed..." (Frank, 1980, p.3).

This is because documentation on Thomas Watson's life is almost completely lacking for these years, and the County Archivist for the North Yorkshire County Council at County Hall, Northallerton, for instance, can state categorically that "there are no records of Lythe village school at this office, and I do not know where any may be located." (By personal communication, 26 February 1990). In fact many of the original school log books are still held at the present Lythe Church of England School, and photocopies of those for the years in question, 1862-1906, are held by the Whitby Museum and supply valuable information on Watson, though he is in fact directly mentioned only twice, once in 1876 and once in 1877.

Firstly, it is certain that the Watson family moved to Lythe earlier than "around 1865". The headmaster's entry in the log book for March 2nd. 1864 states that "Mr. Watson put in the window which Puckett broke", so it seems that Watson père was then working as Lord Normanby's head joiner and the Whitby Gazette is probably correct in saying (February 21st., 1958) that "William Watson moved to Lythe in November 1863". This would be within a year of the shipyard's bankruptcy, and Tom Watson was some eight months old.

Tom Watson's admission to the village school is not recorded in the log books, though those of his sisters are. This does not mean that his name was not enrolled in the

official school register: on several occasions the headmaster confines his log book entries to such phrases as "30th. May 1870, Admitted several children"; "May 17th 1872, Admitted several scholars". But Alice Watson, for instance, was admitted on 28th. November 1870, and on 10th. May 1869 the headmaster had noted that at the request of her mother, "Mary Watson will pay weekly." The fee was 2d. per week, and Tom Watson too presumably paid this, since he left school fourteen years before the introduction of free elementary education for all in 1891.

None of this is known for certain, however, since Thomas Watson is not mentioned in the log books until March 17th. 1876, when the headmaster

"Received report of Pryr: Bk: Exam:

Name: Tom Watson      School: Lythe      Class: 2nd."

On April 6th 1877 he finally noted "Thomas Watson become (sic) apprenticed to his father (a joiner)." The reference to William Watson as merely "a joiner", instead of an acknowledgement that he was the head joiner at Mulgrave Castle, serving the same Lord Normanby who was the headteacher's own employer and sponsor of his school, seems strange. Three times in 1864 ( Watson's first year at the castle ) the headmaster's log book had referred to him as "Mr. Watson": by 1877 the relationship between the two men had evidently grown more distant, or the headmaster had

grown forgetful and was no longer so fully aware of just who his pupil's father was, perhaps even confused as to his first name . The point is dealt with more fully on pp.19-21, in the context of the possible sources of funding for Tom Watson's quite extensive travels abroad.

The lack of information on Thomas Watson in the school log books, however, in itself reveals something of Tom Watson at school; he was neither a very good nor a very bad "scholar". (The badly behaved boys were named in the log book and given the alternative of "a flogging" or writing out a text 60 times.) Nor was he, apparently, one of those injured in the "gunpowder explosion" of January 9th. 1874, when "about half-a-dozen boys were injured very much", and the worst casualties were named on their return to school some four weeks later. Here again the headmaster's apparent uncertainty as to precisely how many were involved is strange: "about half-a- dozen boys injured very much" is an inadequate report on what must have been a very serious incident indeed.

Outstanding pupils, on the other hand, figure frequently in the log. One of these was Tom Watson's eldest sister Annie, for whom on August 7th. 1874 "Wm. Watson made application for his daughter Annie to be a teacher." She began a month later as an unpaid pupil teacher, and was thus for three years a teacher in the same school where her brother and sisters were ordinary pupils - a situation which must have been embarrassing to pupils and teacher alike. In

1878 she applied to the Wesleyan Training College, Westminster, for teacher training, and in 1882 it is logged that "Ann M. Watson, formerly a teacher at this school, gained a first class at Southlands Training College."

She taught for seven or eight years only, and then was persuaded by her publishers, Hornes of Whitby, to give up teaching and devote all her time to writing her stories, of which they published some 130 in all over the years. To provide background for these she began to travel, and to travel very extensively indeed. It is this which may be of significance to the account of Tom Watson's own career.

Watson served his apprenticeship with his father until he was twenty-one, and then worked for eight more years as a joiner at Mulgrave Castle. During this time he was keenly interested in and practising photography as a hobby, and surprise is sometimes expressed that a young journeyman joiner could afford such an expensive pastime coupled with his extensive travels abroad. In 1893, for instance, a mere year after being dismissed from his post at the Castle because of the depressed economy, he visited the Chicago World Exhibition; he also went to the continent on at least nine occasions.

It is usual to consider Ann Watson's travels and those of Tom Watson as separate activities, presumably separately funded: the "Appreciation of Annie M. Watson of Lythe", however, printed in the Whitby Gazette of 21st. February 1958, makes it clear that Ann "went with her father and

brother to Switzerland and other countries."

One cannot help wondering whether her stories even at this early stage were selling so well; whether Watson was making a great deal of money from his spare-time hobby of photography; what exactly were the terms on which William was employed by the Rev. the Marquis of Normanby, since a head joiner, even if he lived on the estate, rent-free, could hardly have afforded in the 1890s to finance such travel abroad from his wages alone. There would seem to be a distinct possibility that by this time William was not merely a journeyman employee of the Marquis, but - whilst still working in the workshop on the estate - allowed on occasion to branch out on his own and work independently. (See endnote 2). The school log books reveal a change of attitude on the part of the headmaster towards the joiner which would give some support to this theory, although mere theory it remains.

"A school for boys and girls" (in Lythe) "was erected by the Countess of Mulgrave" (Kelly, 1872, p.179) and in Watson's day the then Marquis of Normanby was responsible for the existence, upkeep and success of the village school not only in the economic sense (the school logbook entry of January 11th., 1864, notes that "For the future the school will be supported and managed by the Most Noble the Marquis of Normanby") but in a moral sense also; the Marquis was a dedicated philanthropist who devoted a great deal of time and effort to the education and well-being of his

schoolchildren. The headmaster reports repeatedly in the 1870s that "His Lordship came in to open the school" (i.e., to take the morning assembly?); to "take prayers"; or to "give two lessons", and when he had to go away His Lordship wrote an affectionate open letter to the whole school wishing the pupils well. It could be expected, therefore, that when a pupil broke a window His Lordship should send his own joiner up to the school, to replace it. Thus, on March 2nd. 1864, "Mr. Watson put in the window which Puckett broke", and on May 26th. of the same year William is still referred to as "Mr. Watson" when he is "sent a desk to repair". On 10th. June 1864 it is still "Mr. Watson" who "repaired one of the desks".

By 23rd. February 1865, however, there is a note of "3 forms and 2 desks at the joiner's for the last 4 months, repairing", and it is strange that His Lordship should have allowed his head joiner - if he was indeed still merely his employee - to be so dilatory in repairing the equipment of the school with which the Marquis was so concerned. Finally, on June 5th. 1866, the headmaster writes that he "settled Watson's and Lovett's quarter's bills". Even assuming that for accountancy purposes the school repairs and those of the estate had to be kept separate, one would have expected the quarterly bill to have come from the estate manager on behalf of His Lordship, rather than from the estate joiner.

On July 13th. 1872, "The enlargement of the school" is "let to Mr. S. Wilson of Egton and Mr. Tho. Watson of

Lythe", and on May 31st. 1873 the "Abstract of a/cs for enlargement of school" shows Tho. Watson was paid "£112-10-0 for joiner's work" - which might be taken to suggest that this Watson was, on this occasion, self-employed and not merely His Lordship's man, at least in so far as the school extension was concerned. The theory would have been better supported if the joiner who received the contract for the joinery on the school in 1872 had been clearly named as William Watson of Lythe. The headmaster however twice refers to him as "Tho. Watson of Lythe". (See endnote 2).

There is no joiner or carpenter of that name in Lythe listed in the 1871 census. The two Thomas Watsons listed are stonemasons. There is a Thomas Thompson, carpenter, and a Watson or Watton living at the post office who is a carpenter, but his name is John. Kelly's Directory (1872) lists no joiners or carpenters in the village of Lythe for that year, so it seems there are two possibilities: either the joiner and contractor was a Tho. Watson who moved to Lythe in 1872 too late to be picked up by the census of 1871 or Kelly's Directory published in 1872, or else he was William Watson the joiner at Mulgrave Castle who had been there for nearly ten years, and Mr. Crowther the headmaster mistakenly thought he was called Thomas like his son, who was in Mr. Crowther's school. Both possibilities are mere theory, but neither is markedly more unlikely than the other.

Certainly it is so surprising that the family of a



joiner could afford to travel abroad extensively during the last decades of the 19th. century that it would seem they had sources of income other than their daily wages.

For instance, Annie Watson travelled with her father and her brother to Switzerland and other countries, and in 1902 she visited the Holy Land, Greece and Egypt. On her return she lectured throughout Yorkshire on the subject of her travels, illustrating her lectures by lantern slides from photographs taken by herself and her brother. For Tom Watson travelled too, and not only with his father and Annie: this was the "Golden Age" of the picture postcard (Holt, 1971, p. 37) and the craze for collecting these was matched only by the enthusiasm for visiting foreign parts in order to be able to send a postcard to prove one had been there. Some of the postcards held in the Watson Collection were posted abroad, and thus prove, for instance, that Watson was writing home from Switzerland in 1899, 1900 and 1902. His name is also printed in a tour operator's "List of Members" for a "Tour to Geneva via Dover, Calais, Paris, leaving London June 21st., 1898".

Other postcards were brought home as souvenirs, not inscribed with a message or posted at all, and from those initialled, for instance,

AMW 1893

TW 1897, 1899

it would seem that Annie visited the places depicted first, and told Watson, who visited the same place four and

six years later. Thus he records having visited Switzerland in 1897, 1899, 1900, 1902, and Paris in 1900. These were active tours: he writes of having "had a hard day yesterday, Plan Aiguille, over the Glacier des Pèlerins to Pierre Pointue, thence to Chamonix... just had lunch, we (now) go over the Mer de glace, Mauvais Pas etc." "We think of doing Pilatus tomorrow..." "Had tea here this afternoon and then joined a scratch team for a cricket match." (He was for many years a member of Lythe Cricket Club, back at home.)

He photographed on his tours, also, though how much can no longer be proved. But in 1902 he "photographed the panorama from Monte Rosa to Matterhorn", and on 14th. July 1900, in Geneva, writes "Have just changed my plates in a dark room in the Rue Mont Blanc (gratis)". His postcard from the Chicago World Fair on July 1st. 1893 says "Am photographing in the Fair today", and a positive of the Niagara Falls shows his tour did not end in Chicago. He travelled in England, too, visiting the Royal Arsenal in 1905 and photographing the old "Mauretania" in Liverpool in 1907.

The generally accepted view is that Watson satisfied his Wanderlust during the 1890s, and thereafter settled down after his marriage, and the birth of his daughter on 3rd. November 1904. "There is no record of his travelling abroad after the turn of the century", says Frank (1980), p.5. On the contrary, he was in Switzerland in 1902, and there is a quite amazing postcard from him written in Gornergrat

(Wallis) on 16.6.05, and sent by book post (i.e., half the usual postage) to his sister Annie. "Quite amazing" because his daughter was at the time seven months old, and it would have been most unusual for a young husband of Watson's working class and staunch Methodist background to have left wife and baby at home whilst he went off abroad on holiday. If they accompanied him, that would have been even more unusual for the times.

Annie cared for her widowed father until his death in 1911 - a not uncommon fate for the eldest daughter of Victorian families - and then within a year married (at the age of 52) a District Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Possibly their eight-months world-wide tour in 1920, visiting mission stations, was sponsored by the Society; a six-months tour of Africa after his retirement, however, must have been made at their own expense, largely.

Three at least of the tours Watson attended were run by Dr. H.S. Lunn, World Travel, from 5 Endsleigh Gardens, London. Research reveals that Henry S. Lunn, M.D., was the founder of the present travel agency Lunn Poly Ltd. The latter company's Marketing Assistant has been to considerable trouble to trace details of such tours as Watson went on, and it transpires that in 1901, for instance, nine-day and ten-day tours to Switzerland cost between £6.6.0 and £9.9.0. This seems very cheap today: in 1901 it was several times a man's weekly wage.

There is also amongst the papers in the Watson

Collection a programme for a "Re-union and Conversazione of the Polytechnic Norway, Baltic and Reindeer Cruises and the Holland, Ardennes and Paris parties of 1896 in the Queen's Hall, Langham Place. Chair to be taken by Quintin Hogg, Esq."

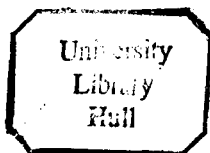
There is no positive indication of which of these tours, if any, Tom Watson took part in, but the re-union seems to have been a most prestigious affair with songs, organ recitals, views of towns and countries visited, and a "Selection by the Orchestra" after the Chairman's address.

Even bearing in mind that "Holidays away from home were now becoming popular and possible for increasingly large numbers of people" (Holt, 1971, p.34) and that many of these were organised "package tours" like those of Thos.Cook & Son, Naples, to the top of Vesuvius (ibid., plate 10), the cost was still considerable for a working joiner.

It is not known what the Marquis of Normanby paid Watson or his father, but on June 2nd. 1864 the Lythe headmaster notes that one of his free scholars leaves to work "in a brickfield, where he can earn 2/- per day" on piecework.

On June 28th. 1872 his trained assistant teacher "Rt. Harland went to Ripley, Derby, as assistant master at 50£ per annum".

"Coals" at the time cost 33/- per ton, delivered, so the joiners' wages could not have been high and could hardly



have been the sole source of finance for their extensive travels.

Watson used to say that his trip to the Chicago World Exhibition in 1893 cost 26 guineas (and for that he managed to stay a month and to take in Canada and much of the U.S.A.) and that his fortnight in Norway cost 9 guineas. Even as late as 1946, the luxury 5-day first class passage to America on the then brand-new liner "Queen Elizabeth" cost "only £91" (The Independent, 13 March, 1990, p. 5.) but at the time these were such sizeable sums as to suggest that Watson had perhaps received further support, encouragement and subsidy from his former employer the Marquis of Normanby. The late Marquis confirmed, by personal communication, that this is very probable. (See also pp.19 et seq.).

It is by no means impossible; the generosity, altruism and philanthropy of the Rev. the Marquis were phenomenal. He was both a patron and a close friend of Frank M. Sutcliffe's artist father, buying the best of his water colours and arranging for him to teach art at the small school at Mulgrave Castle. (The Sutcliffes' home at Ewe Cote Hall was only two miles away, across the Mulgrave estate.) In 1871, on the death of Sutcliffe père, the Marquis and a number of influential friends set up a trust fund for the widow and her family, and in 1874 he supported the 21-year-old Frank Sutcliffe in his desire to marry Eliza Duck, against his mother's wishes. He even offered to

perform the wedding ceremony, and later acted as godfather to Sutcliffe's first-born. (Hiley, 1974, pp.21 and 30).

As a point of interest, and to put into perspective the relative social standings of the two photographers, Tom Watson was in 1874 eleven years old, and an indifferent scholar at the village school, of which Her Majesty's Inspectors had noted ten years previously that "The offices require improvement. An (sic) urinal should be provided." (School log book, June 6th. 1864). This recommendation was repeated in 1875: " A urinal should be provided for the boys" (school log book, July 9th. 1875), so nothing had been done about it even during the school extensions of 1872-3. Perhaps the village boys were still without their urinal when Tom Watson left school in 1877.

## Chapter Two: "Photographer and Picture-framer"

The sources of information for this section are local newspaper obituaries, and accounts of interviews with Thomas Watson during the period 1946-1956. In particular use has been made of the article entitled "North East People": No. 120, by North Country Man, in the Northern Echo dated 22 June 1956, and of the handwritten notes, dated 31 January 1956, of a conversation between Watson and Mr. Percy Burnett. (See above, p.9) It is evident from the few short notes, preserved in the Museum, from Tom Watson to Mr. Burnett, that the latter was both a customer (perhaps personally and in his capacity as curator) and a friend.

Where additional information has been deduced, or theories and possibilities other than those arising from the newspaper articles and correspondence advanced, the sources have been mentioned individually.

Tom Watson served his apprenticeship as a joiner under his father's tutelage from 1877 until 1884, and remained working with him as a joiner at Mulgrave Castle for a further eight years, thus making up the "fifteen years working as a joiner" to which some of the sources refer. During this time they lived at the Lodge to Mulgrave Castle, in Lythe. During his twenties he acquired an interest in photography, buying his first camera for 7/6 (37p) at a Whitby sale in 1886. This seems to have had only

one dark slide, and he related in later years how, being asked to photograph a party of skaters at Goldsborough, a mile and a half away, he had to cycle back to his dark room after the first exposure, re-load the camera, and then cycle back for his second shot.

As a photographer he was completely self-taught: the only formal training he had was in re-touching, and that was at a three-week course at a technical college in London during 1895. More importantly, perhaps, he seems to have had comparatively little contact with the world of the visual arts, and although he recalled later (in a letter to Mr. Burnett of "Jan. 4 '45") attending the "drawing lessons" of Mr. T. Newbitt "about 1880 onwards", he says nothing of these except that he walked to them in Whitby through three and a half winters... "I think twice a week. I didn't go by bus." It seems he must also have attended an earlier class: a folio of pencil sketches signed and dated by Tom Watson is in the possession of Mr. T. W. Watson of Whitby, Tom Watson's grandson, by whose kind permission the reproductions in Appendix II were made for the purpose of this thesis. Mr. Watson believes that the sketches were made at a drawing class at Mulgrave Castle, where it will be remembered there was an art class originally run by F.M. Sutcliffe's father (see p. 26). This, however, was intended for the boys of the small school run at the Castle by the Rev. the Marquis of Normanby, not for pupils from the village school. (The late



Lord Normanby, by personal communication.)

It is possible that the drawings were done at the village school, where there were classes in needlework, for instance, and therefore presumably in other creative subjects too, in addition to instruction in the 3Rs. Certainly many were done when Tom Watson was still 13 or 14 years of age, and therefore pre-date the "drawing classes of Mr. T. Newbitt" from "1880 onwards," although the later ones may have been done at Mr. Newbitt's class.

They typically reflect the teaching methods of their day, in that they are mostly copies of models and pictures rather than imaginative, creative renderings of subjects individually observed by the artist, but from the selection in Appendix II it will be seen that at a very early age Tom Watson was, if not a creative artist, at least a very competent draughtsman.

The contrast with the upbringing and training of the young Sutcliffe, however - son of a distinguished artist, sleeping on a little bed in his father's studio, accompanying him on his painting trips, constantly discussing with him his absorbing interest in water colours, oils, etching, lithography and photography, (Hiley, 1974, chapter 1 ), is so marked as to need no emphasis.

On March 7th 1871 the Lythe headmaster noted in his log that "Lord and Lady Normanby visited the school and bade us "good bye" before going to Queensland, Australia"

(where Lord Normanby was to become Governor). The following year, on "Nov; 1st. Lord Mulgrave left Lythe, having accepted the living at Worsley". The administration of the estate suffered as a result, and in the closing years of the century, economies were being made at Mulgrave Castle. The British economy was in decline, and times were particularly hard for estates such as Lord Normanby's, whose prosperity - despite their mining interests - was heavily dependent upon agriculture. Times were, as Watson put it in his conversation with Mr. Burnett in 1946, so bad that he was dismissed from Mulgrave owing to shortage of work and funds, and there was no possibility of finding work as a joiner locally.

It was his father who suggested that Watson should try to make his living from photography for a year or so, to see how things went, and Lord Normanby who not only provided the facilities of a darkroom and photographic workshop for him at his parents' house at the Lodge, but from the outset gave him commissions to photograph family events, and scenes and happenings on the estate. Weddings, christenings, schoolroom teas, picnics and outings in Mulgrave woods - all these and much more were recorded by Watson.

In point of fact, photography had occupied his spare time so fully and for so many years before his "retirement" from joinery that he must have had darkroom facilities before the Marquis provided better ones on a more formal

basis in 1892. He had from the very outset more camera work on hand than he could ever accomplish, so much so that at one stage he left his lenses with his sister in Whitby so that he would be able truthfully to say to potential customers that he literally could not take on any more work at that moment. This of course was only the ruse of an amateur, not an excuse that he would have been able to put forward once he had turned professional. The lenses held by the Museum and attributed to Watson include one engraved "J.D. Dallmeyer No.16992 5D patent", and a Busch's Portrait Aplanat, No.4, Foc. 14 ins, Emil Busch A-G, Rathenow. His half-plate camera, held on loan from Mr.W. Walker of Lythe, now deceased, is devoid of any markings other than the words "Beck symmetrical lens" on the mount.

There is one reference in the Watson papers held at the Museum to his studio camera: this is a statement by Kenneth W. Baird, a former curator of the Watson Collection, that the camera was disposed of through auction at Christie's of York during 1973/4. Enquiries with Christie's in York and London produced the information that Christie's have no record of any such sale of Watson's camera. Mr. Michael Pritchard, FRPS, of Christie's camera and photographic equipment division in South Kensington, however, most kindly offered to attempt to identify and evaluate it from photographs held by the Museum, and is of the opinion that the studio camera is likely to date from the early 1880s, and the Dallmeyer lens ( see above) dates

by its serial number to late 1869. This would be in keeping with both having been bought by Watson second-hand.

As a professional, Watson continued to have more work than he could cope with, despite ( or perhaps because of ) his lack at this time of any formal training in photography, and this state of affairs continued throughout his long working life. Whilst still a joiner by day he had somehow acquired - from reading, by experience and practice, or in conversation with other photographers (though none is referred to) a complete mastery of the technical skills of his craft which never left him. Nearly all the surviving negatives of his are full-plate or half-plate glass ( only 150 are quarter-plate, and only 4 are sheet film), and they are carefully processed and most are accurately exposed so as to reveal a depth of subtle detail which would be unusual today. His best interiors and landscapes are " real f64 work", needle-sharp throughout the depth of field, and the original Watson prints still in excellent condition today bear witness to the care and patience which went into their processing and preparation.

He was, however, no business man, and although he worked hard and long at his photography, he "never made any money at it", as he told Mr. Burnett in 1946. Indeed, John Tindale, who knew and at one time worked with Watson, (see "Review of the pertinent literature", p.8), maintains (private communication) that, having in his later years no retirement pension, the old man died almost penniless.

Watson's granddaughter confirms that even after his death his daughter Mary, who continued to live in the same house, Gordon Cottage, (pl.180) continued to cook on a paraffin stove, in the kitchen with its one cold-water tap over a stone sink, and there is Mr. Burnett's evidence (Foreword, p.4) that "knowing something of the circumstances, I feel sure that something would be more than acceptable." Obviously Watson's financial situation in his declining years after World War II contrasts sharply with the relatively well-to-do circumstances of his early years in business when, it will be remembered, within a year of becoming unemployed as a joiner and taking the risky step of setting himself up in business as a professional photographer, he had been able to visit Chicago and prolong his stay into a month's sojourn in the USA and Canada. It might be surmised that in those early days Tom Watson had already made an appreciable amount of money from his amateur, spare-time photography, and this would raise the interesting question as to whether he was dismissed from the Castle because there was no work for him, or because the economic climate was so bad that the estate could no longer afford to employ him; or whether he had perhaps already decided to try his hand at something better paid than joinery, and was in fact not sorry to leave his Lordship's employ. The facts are, however, simpler than this theory: Watson's travels in Europe and America were almost certainly financed by Lord Normanby, as

already hinted at on p. 26. The present Normanby Estate Manager at Mulgrave Castle is certain of this, and on a similar topic, when asked if he could explain the "mystery" as to why the Marquis should have given all his photographic commissions to Watson, when the famous and more gifted Sutcliffe was living locally and already well known to his Lordship personally, replied that this was no "mystery": Watson was a former employee of the estate. Noblesse oblige, and the Lords Normanby would always look to the welfare of their people. The feeling of loyalty was mutual, and helps to explain the paucity of real social documentation in Watson's work, a point which is dealt with later (see p.214 ).

Another reason for Watson's lack of financial success was that he made a great many prints which never sold; he would cycle long distances with some 10 or 15 kg. of photographic gear lashed to his cycle in hand-made paniers ( pl.181), and the tripod slung across the handlebars, yet never charge except for the actual prints which he sold. Even in the later years of his work ("May 12, '47" ) he could write to a customer and friend "I have got an enl. of the mile stone I told you about, somewhere on the moor above Comondale or Castleton, you can keep this or not, as you wish but should have to charge not less than 3/3..." (3/3 was 16p). And likewise, in an undated, pencilled note to Mr. Burnett: "As I don't know when I can get any more prints done, I send what I have done ... .

I wrote the "Trade" firm about helping me out, but their charge to me, is just what I charge you, plus all cost of postages etc. so that is no good, I must do them when and as I can, am still very full up...there is one box I should like you to go through before I do anything about it, all Lythe church interiors, windows etc. As these are duplicates I think you won't want them all..."

He made no charge, either, for his time and energy spent in climbing the 1 in 4 and 1 in 5 hills of his home county on his way to and from a village wedding, fête or local event he had been asked to photograph, and if the bride or groom did not care for the prints he supplied there was no charge for the many left on his hands. Perhaps, too, Tom Watson was not always very business-like in his stocktaking, ordering of materials, or persuading his suppliers to provide a better service. Certainly in his later years ( e.g., 1945 ) he could write "I expected all my plates were used, and I was sending people away, then I unexpectedly turned up a box of plates I had misplaced and forgotten, so have had to start again..." He makes numerous references to having to wait two months and more for "supplies from Ilford", and complains that "I got none (glossy paper) in my last order, I am expecting the half-yearly order form any day now, and will include some in my order, though I am afraid it will be some weeks before I get it..."

What is surprising here is not the war-time

shortages, but that a man whose thousands of negatives were meticulously filed in hand-made cabinets and drawers in his studio, instantly available to him when asked for, should have misplaced any of his meagre stock and not known that he had or had not any plates in hand.

On Watson's death the Whitby Museum, having been promised his surviving plates when he should die, made a selection of those thought to be of value and interest to the Museum and received some 2,500 of these by kind permission of Miss Mary Watson, his daughter. (See Foreword, pp. 3-4 ). Mary Watson, who had often helped her father with his business and had always been interested in his photography, did not immediately abandon the little photography shop nor scrap the rest of the plates. According to personal communication with Mrs. Child of Lythe, a neighbour who knew the Watsons well, Mary stacked the rest of the glass negatives in her "front room", until on her own death the entire remaining contents of what had once been Watson's business were sent to Mickleby tip as scrap. This is at variance with the account by Cockcroft (1974, p.120), who quotes Watson's son William (who died in 1976) as saying that "about three tons of plates" were scrapped "when he (Tom Watson) died". " I had no place to keep that amount of glass and I knew the museum people had taken what they wanted so I called in a scrap merchant. He gave me five pounds for the plates and props in the studio and took them away. The larger plates were washed clean and



sold for greenhouse glass, and the others were destroyed." Mrs. Child also speaks of an attempt by local people to salvage some of the plates, but only for the sake of the glass in them, whilst her neighbour Mrs. Walker remembers how her late husband (see p. 32 ) salvaged Watson's half-plate camera literally from a rubbish bin because his young son had expressed an interest in it.

Whether the plates were scrapped on the death of Tom or of Mary Watson is not really important: the fact remains that the loss of material invaluable to the social and economic historian is incalculable. In the absence of almost all evidence of the other, creative, artistic side of Watson's work, the loss to his reputation as a photographer-artist will be equally severe.

Apart from his late son's testimony there is no indication of just how much Watson did photograph on his travels or what cameras he used. Postcards from him say things like, "photographed the panorama from Monte Rosa to Matterhorn", and (in Geneva, see p.23), "changed my plates (gratis)." It seems certain he was still using a plate camera, as he plainly continued to do until much later, e.g. in 1954 at the congress of the Institute of British Photographers (see plate 187). Indeed, there is no evidence that he ever did use roll film. It is also said that on his travels he was still carrying a portable darkroom (Cockcroft, 1974, p.115 and Tindale, n.d., p.2). There would seem to be no reason why he should have done this:

the earlier photographer's travelling darkroom was only necessary so long as he had to prepare and develop his wet plates on site. The dry-plate process had been outlined by Dr. R.L. Maddox in The British Journal of Photography as early as 8th. September 1871, and within months of Charles Bennett's article in the same journal (29th. March 1878) many manufacturers (e.g. Wratten and Wainwright; Mawson and Swan; Samuel Fry) were producing commercially the new, dry, very sensitive and long-lasting plates. "Now the photographer no longer needed to carry a dark tent and chest of chemicals when on an excursion" (Coe, 1976, p. 39). Moreover, there is the evidence of the postcard (above, p. 23) that Tom Watson changed his plates at a friendly Geneva photographer's: he could almost equally well have done so, or loaded his developing tank, under the sheets of his hotel bed after dark, or in a photographer's changing-bag. Not only negative materials but camera equipment too was being improved almost daily at this time: "With the general introduction of factory-produced rapid dry plates" (such as Watson undoubtedly used - see p.A3) "and small hand cameras in the 1880s snapshooting became a popular pastime for hundreds of thousands of amateurs..." (Gernsheim, 1986, p. 75).

So although Watson was still lugging his plate camera across glaciers in Switzerland, he probably was not carrying a dark-tent also. If one enquires what his rather more favoured contemporary Sutcliffe was doing at this time

too, the answer is that from 1897 until 1907 Sutcliffe was supplied (under his agreement with Eastmans) with every latest model of the new hand cameras Kodak were producing, given the opportunity to try each of them out, and supplied with free film for the purpose. (Hiley, 1974, p. 130). Watson married Martha Mary Storm of Fylingdales, and the first of their two children, Mary, was born in 1904. (She, like her Aunt Annie before her, was also to remain unmarried and care for her father in his last years - she is the "Miss Watson" who in 1957 invited the Curator of Whitby Museum to take over such of her father's negatives as he wished, these having been promised to the Museum many years previously by her father).

On his return from his travels Watson built his own photographic studio by the side of the road running through the village. This was built of timber, as one would expect of a joiner, and is still standing (see plate 182) and still showing its glazed roof. The Northern Echo reporter who visited it in 1956 found it spacious and well lit (see plate 183), with the camera still in place for the next sitter, and the walls lined with hand-made wooden boxes and drawers of negatives and slides, all carefully indexed and filed. Tindale (n.d., p.3) says that as "the workroom" was without gas or electricity, the prints were made by daylight, the printing frame or camera-back being fitted into a square hole in the north wall, which took the safelight when the exposure had been made, ready for the

development of the print. There is no sign of such a window in the workroom Tindale mentions, but the door on the left in the studio (plate 183) opens into a former darkroom, in the N.E. wall of which, at table height, is indeed a fixed light 8½" x 6½", i.e., "full-plate" size. (Plate 184).

This technique of printing or enlarging by daylight was common among the photographers of the day: Buchanan (1986), p. 19, describes an identical arrangement in the studio of William Hayes (1871-1940) at Hutton-le-Hole. (Also of interest is his statement that "electricity did not arrival (sic) at the studio until 1949": cf. Mary Watson's primitive cooking arrangements (p.34, above), which continued until an even later date).

For further details of Watson's studio camera and lenses, see pp. 32-33.

Chapter Two (contd.): "Lantern Slides made from Photos, etc."

According to his letter-heading, this was a service Watson provided for any customer who wished it. He also made a great number of slides for his own use, being an inveterate projectionist and lecturer who toured the local village and church halls giving lectures illustrated from his own projector, which he carried with him just as previously he had carried his camera.

Such of his slides as have survived fall into one of three main categories. There are the earlier, less professional and less sophisticated slides which he produced to accompany his "Lantern Readings", which were moral tales in prose or verse, with lantern slides at strategic intervals, illustrating "The Curse of Drink", "Lost in London", and "Found Again". These obviously relate to his life-long devotion to his Methodist tradition: it is said that he attended chapel in Lythe from the age of two until his death, and held every office it was possible for a layman to hold. Here again a comparison with Hayes springs to mind: see Buchanan (1986), p. 15.

Secondly, there are attributed to Watson one or two sets of coloured slides - again, relatively crude - designed to accompany a lecture on astronomy. One has a sliding overlay which can be pushed across the basic slide and produce the effect of the motion of the shadow across the moon during an eclipse. The most interesting aspect of these, apart from the ingenuity of the device, is the beauty of the workmanship in



Sutcliffe's photograph of Rigg Mill.

To face p.-43-  
( See line 13 )

the mahogany frames in which the 12"-long slides are set: one inevitably wonders whether these too are the work of T. Watson, Picture-Framer.

Thirdly, there are some very fine pictorial slides of scenes and activities in the Whitby area. These are still boxed, in the sequence in which they were arranged for the lecture they illustrated, and include landscapes with a wealth of subtle detail and delicate atmosphere; the activities of village artisans such as the series on "Hooping the Wheel" (plates 173 and 174), which must have been action-shots since there would not have been time to "pose" them; and a study of Rigg Mill (plate 81), which bears comparison by any criteria with Frank Sutcliffe's "early wet-plate study" of the same subject from an almost identical viewpoint (Hiley, 1974, p. 216). These seem to include Watson's best surviving work, and the condition of them is so good that the prints on plates 173 and 174 have been made by the writer from these slides, since the original negatives are no longer available.

Chapter Two (contd.): " Views of Neighbourhood and Groups  
photographed."

Most of Watson's work in these two categories was commissioned, or done in connection with his postcard production. In the first place the Rev. the Marquis of Normanby engaged him to photograph scenes and functions at Mulgrave Castle such as the christening of a Normanby heir, or the cannon being fired to celebrate the relief of Mafeking, (plate 117). There is also surviving evidence that Watson was asked to record not only the exterior and grounds of the castle (plates 1-2), but the dining room and the library at a Normanby residence ( plates 143 and 144), and some of the objects made in the joinery shop at Mulgrave (plate 105). Secondly, he was asked to photograph weddings and other functions in the surrounding villages: fêtes, the inauguration of a fresh water supply to Lealholm (plate 157), quarrying and development at Port Mulgrave for the Grinkle Mining Company (plate 192), and so on. Although technically excellent, these photographs tend to be prosaic, unimaginative, purely record shots. Some of this was inevitable, given the circumstances and the times: there are severe limitations on the photographer's imagination and creativity if he is told that his subject is to be a Victorian interior devoid of human figures and human activity. Many of his group photographs too were of necessity staid and rigidly posed: the happy informality of



present day wedding or child studies was nearly a century away still, and the common "bridal garter shot" of the permissive 1980s (see endnote 3) would have horrified the Victorian and the Methodist in Watson, who once refused to photograph even a christening on a Sunday, saying he had never taken a photograph on the Sabbath in his life, and he was not going to start now. It is sometimes said that his staunch Methodist traditions caused him to avoid photographing more than the one public house, too, but this is inaccurate. There are several inns on Watson's postcards, and at least one scene at a brewery (plate 200).

He was commissioned to record the building of the coastal road from Whitby to Sandsend in 1925, and he did just that, and no more. The pictures, in North Riding of Yorkshire County Council et al., (1930), show the different stages in the work, but are unimaginative in the extreme - see for instance plates 109-111. His account of the demolition and rebuilding of Lythe church, completed in 1911, ( see for example plates 97-100) was more to his taste - he once said he would have liked to photograph every church and monastery in Yorkshire, but never had the time - and this shows in the attention to composition of a few of the shots and, above all, in the inclusion and careful grouping of some human figures. These, as in the photograph of the cross and weather vane at the top of the steeple on May 30th., 1911 (plate 97), create a picture of improved value out of what would otherwise have been a

straight record shot. The pyramid of figures leads the eye to the focal point of the stonemason standing at the apex; there is a suggestion of the height at which the men are working in the way in which three of the figures have put out a hand to steady themselves. There is mortar left over, still mixed, on a mortar-board; the pointing is still wet, and shirt sleeves are still rolled up, showing that this is not a posed photograph taken the day after; and finally there is the delightful humorous touch of the mason standing at the very top of the steeple in his stockinged feet.

Another good example of an extremely competent and technically unexceptionable photograph which lacks only the human interest to turn it into a true picture is Watson's interior of the kitchen at Aireyholme Farm, Ayton (plate 147). The detail in the shadows has been preserved; the highlights are not burnt out; the fine detail is beautifully sharp; and the knowledgeable viewer can read a great deal of significance into such details as the cheap alarm clock showing that dinner time was five minutes ago; the dinner plate, keeping the meal warm, on the shelf of the range; the matches and tea-caddy kept as always on the mantelpiece, and the kettle and saucepans still resting on the fire. What is lacking is the figure of a patriarch in the corner of the settle, or the farmer's wife at the range, or the servant who had to clean and polish with blacklead the enormous expanse of the huge Yorkshire

range. The simple addition of human interest would have made a telling picture out of a fine photograph.

If it is true that some of Watson's landscapes and interiors could be improved by the addition of a human interest, it must be said that this is not true of them all. Some, such as his picture of Darnholme, Goathland (plate 65) and of Ramsdale Mill, Fylingdales (plate 186), even of the empty yard in Whitby (plate 88), are complete as they stand, and the absence of any human figure adds to the sense and atmosphere of solitude or desolation. In some others, where one would have said that human interest was essential, he has anticipated this criticism, as it were, and taken care to include a figure - witness his photographs of the aproned little girl standing at the street water tap (plate 156) or the barefoot boy standing on the flags of the "Street in Staithes" (plate 92). Best of all are his pictorial photographs where the figures are not obviously "posed": the action expressed in his "Hooping the Wheel" pictures (plates 173-174) gives a sense of movement and purpose which is lacking in the static poses of the figures in "A. Hemingway, Baker and Confectioner" (plate 185), for instance.

In fairness to Watson it must be said that much of his landscape photography was learned in connection with his production of postcards, and in this field the inclusion of human figures was thought to be undesirable and was actively discouraged by the producers and the

salesmen. In the early 1870s Francis Frith commissioned Sutcliffe to take a series of pictures for postcards of Yorkshire abbeys and castles; the young Sutcliffe was told, "Never be tempted to include any figures in your landscapes or architectural subjects." They already had scores of negatives, he was told, which were useless "because there were figures in them." Sutcliffe the artist knew better, of course, but Sutcliffe the employee of the postcard manufacturer did as he was told, but only when he was taking photographs for Mr. Frith. If Frith had told him that the inclusion of figures was likely to spoil a photograph, he might have listened to him a little more. What Frith said however was that "it is the view itself that they are willing to pay for, and all they want." Sutcliffe despised him for this view, and of course ignored it in his own photographs. (Hiley, 1974, p.25).

The bulk of Watson's photographic work was done between the establishment of his business in 1892, and the end of World War I. Thereafter the demand for postcards declined; economic depression set in; and the development of the snapshot, taken by holidaymakers with their own light, easily managed, roll-film box or folding cameras and leading to the development of photography truly within the reach of almost everyone, meant that the rôle and scope of the photographer in a little village a mile inland was much reduced.

Watson continued however to have a sufficiency of

work to keep him busy until he was well turned ninety years of age. He continued to take portraits and groups, and to sell postcards; he was still bidden to village fêtes and church and chapel outings, and asked to take photographs of them; there were still requests from Lord Normanby for photographs of the life at Mulgrave Castle. Three major commissions also occupied him: he made a photographic record of the building of the new Whitby-Sandsend road which opened in 1925 (see for instance plates 109-111), and he chronicled the rebuilding of Lythe church in 1910-1911 (see for instance plates 97-100), and of the bridge at Sleights which was carried away by floodwater in the early 1930s (see for instance plates 112-115).

He was guest of honour at a dinner given by the Whitby Photographic Society on 1st. May 1951 at the Royal Hotel, Whitby, where after the meal he presented "Reminiscences with his Pictures". On April 5th. 1954 he was still taking photographs (see plate 187) at the congress of the Institute of British Photographers in Scarborough. It is said (Northern Echo, op. cit., 20th. June 1956) that this body, as a token of respect and esteem for "The Senior professional photographer of England", made him "an honorary member - a distinction rarely awarded." The modern IBPP has no record of this, and insists (personal communication) that the name of Thomas Watson is not readily identifiable in its lists of members in the 1950s, and moreover that they had no honorary

members, only honorary Fellows. The present-day officers of the Whitby Photographic Society have similarly nothing to add to the scanty fund of evidence on Watson's life and work, and it is as if the reputation of the prophet who was not without honour (and indeed was accorded great respect) in his own county during his lifetime, did not long survive him. (See endnote 4).

He died in Gordon Cottage, Lythe, the house where he had lived for so long, on 15th. April 1957.

## Chapter Three: The Photographs

### Introduction

The Whitby Museum's prime motive in selecting which of the Watson negatives should be preserved (see Foreword, pp. 3-4) was to ensure for posterity what was perceived as a unique record of the social and economic history of a highly localised area, and thus the choice as to which plates could be accepted and housed in the Museum was made largely on the basis of their perceived value to students of the local history of the Lythe and Whitby areas. There is no mention of any plates being selected for their artistic value as pictures, or their interest to the student of the history of photography. Similarly, in selecting a limited number of prints for the Watson exhibition at the Museum in 1980, the emphasis was throughout on "prints which have a regional and historical bias" (Baird, 1980), and the list reads like a list of postcards: "Whitby High Light"; "Castleton"; "Beckhole", and so on.

Frank (1980), p.6) also describes the invaluable contribution the Watson negatives can make as a pictorial record of the late Victorian and Edwardian era, and describes them as "a most important source of historical information, most especially in a local and regional context, but also in some respects nationally, too" (ibid.), again without mention of their artistic characteristics or value.

Any attempt to assess the latter should be made in the light of the restricted and selective choice of the Watson negatives for the museum's collection, and in making a comparison with, say, Sutcliffe's work it should be borne in mind that the Watson prints accompanying this thesis are almost all untouched contact prints, whereas the Sutcliffe prints produced by Bill Eglon Shaw at the Sutcliffe Gallery, Whitby, are the end-product of much re-touching, copying and enhancement with the full use and benefit of a highly developed 20th. century technology.

The measures taken to conserve, document and protect the Watson photographs, whilst at the same time making them more readily available to the researcher not necessarily having easy access to the Whitby Museum, are described in Appendix I, pp. A3-A14.

### 1. Portraits

From three very old prints of Watson at work which are held (for reference only, and not to be removed from the building) by the Library of the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society, it appears that his studio camera was produced by Fallowfield of Central Photo Stores, Charing Cross Road, London, in the early 1880s (see p.32 and plates 181, 187). There was no shutter, the exposure being made by removing the lens cap, counting the seconds, and then replacing it.



Outdoors, as late as 1954 (plate 187, top, shows him at the age of 91 photographing the Yorkshire Centre Group at the congress of the Institute of British Photographers at the Grand Hotel, Scarborough), he seems to have used a similar but not identical camera, this one being equipped with a shutter that literally had the original type of bulb release.

His studio (plate 183) was fairly typical of its time, with its rustic seats (there was also a rustic bridge, the late Lord Normanby remembered) and at least three backcloths, here seen rolled up and stowed.

Watson's portraits, of which few seem to have survived outside their private collections, do little to suggest that he was at ease or at home when taking them. He is reported to have been meticulously careful with his focusing, taking a long time over getting the picture absolutely sharp, and disappearing time and again under his black cloth for a final check, to the discomfort, the late Lord Normanby remembered, of the bride shivering in her wedding gown on the wind-swept church steps on a cold March day. Baird (1977, p.6) goes so far as to suggest that "he was ill at ease in the portrait situation". Whether he himself was or no, his sitters look uncomfortable and wooden, (plate 183) and remind one that Watson still had a neck-restraint in his studio. His outdoor portraits too (plate 188), whilst somewhat less formal, argue no great rapport between photographer and his subjects; the

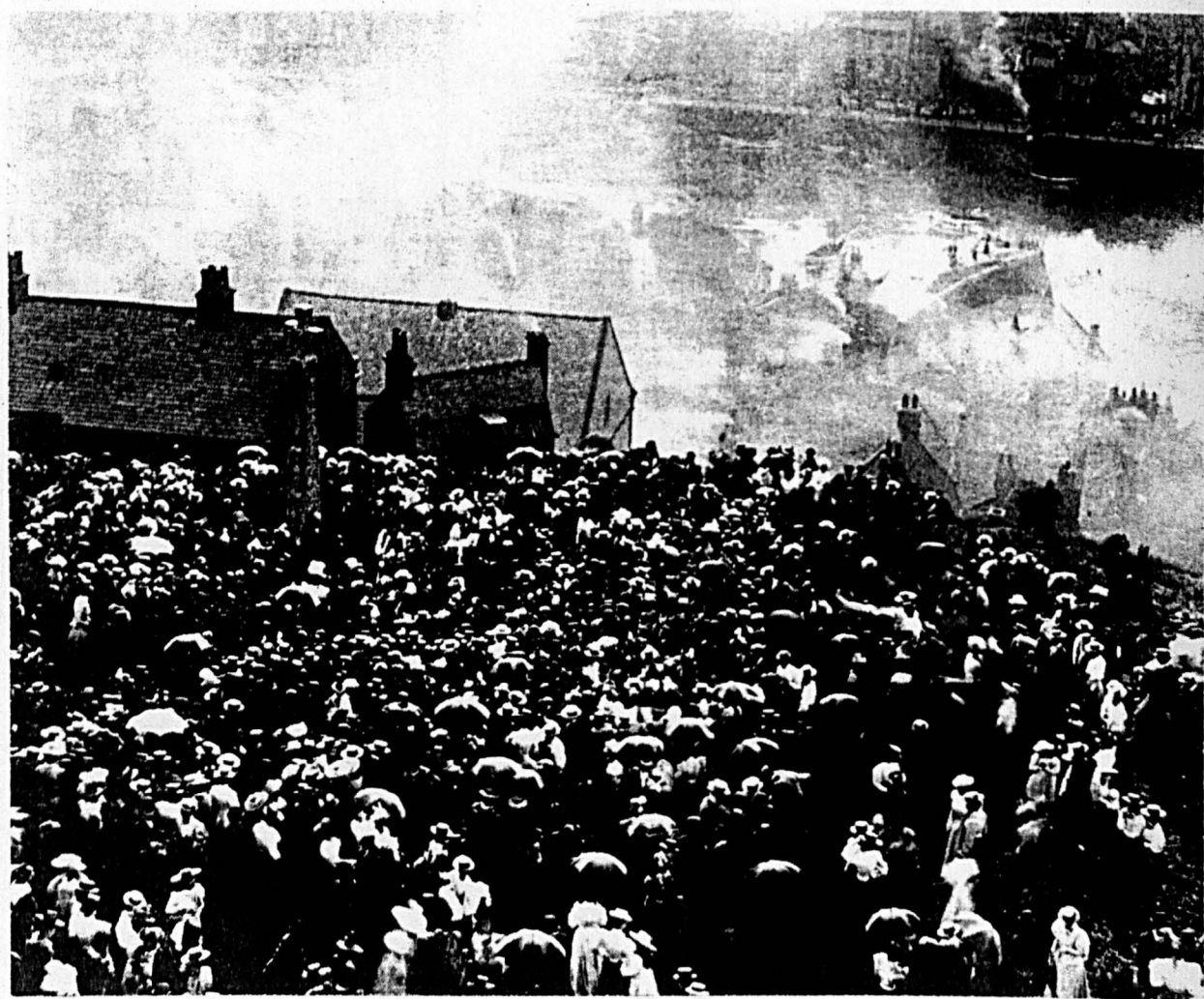
composition is careless, with a trio seated in a straight line or with a window-frame tangled with the hat of the vicar's wife; the subjects have not relaxed beyond an apprehensive half-smile, and the attempt (plate 188) to make two different exposures on the one half-plate slide, with the resultant loss of quality, seems strange in the case of a photographer who was in so many other instances a perfectionist.

Cockcroft (1974, p.117) has a photograph of "The christening of a new Normanby heir" which is slightly more felicitous; perhaps Watson himself was more at ease on the grander occasion, or the distinguished subjects were more used to having their photographs taken. Watson took a great many such groups for the Normanby family over the years: they are of course in the private and personal collection of Lord Normanby and there is no reason why they should be made available to the public.

A certain amount of discomfort and uneasiness at portrait sessions in the late 19th. century seems to have been the rule rather than the exception. Sutcliffe experienced the same difficulties as other portraitists, and wrote of them at length in Amateur Photographer and elsewhere (Hiley, 1974, p.46 et seq.).

## 2. Local events and fêtes

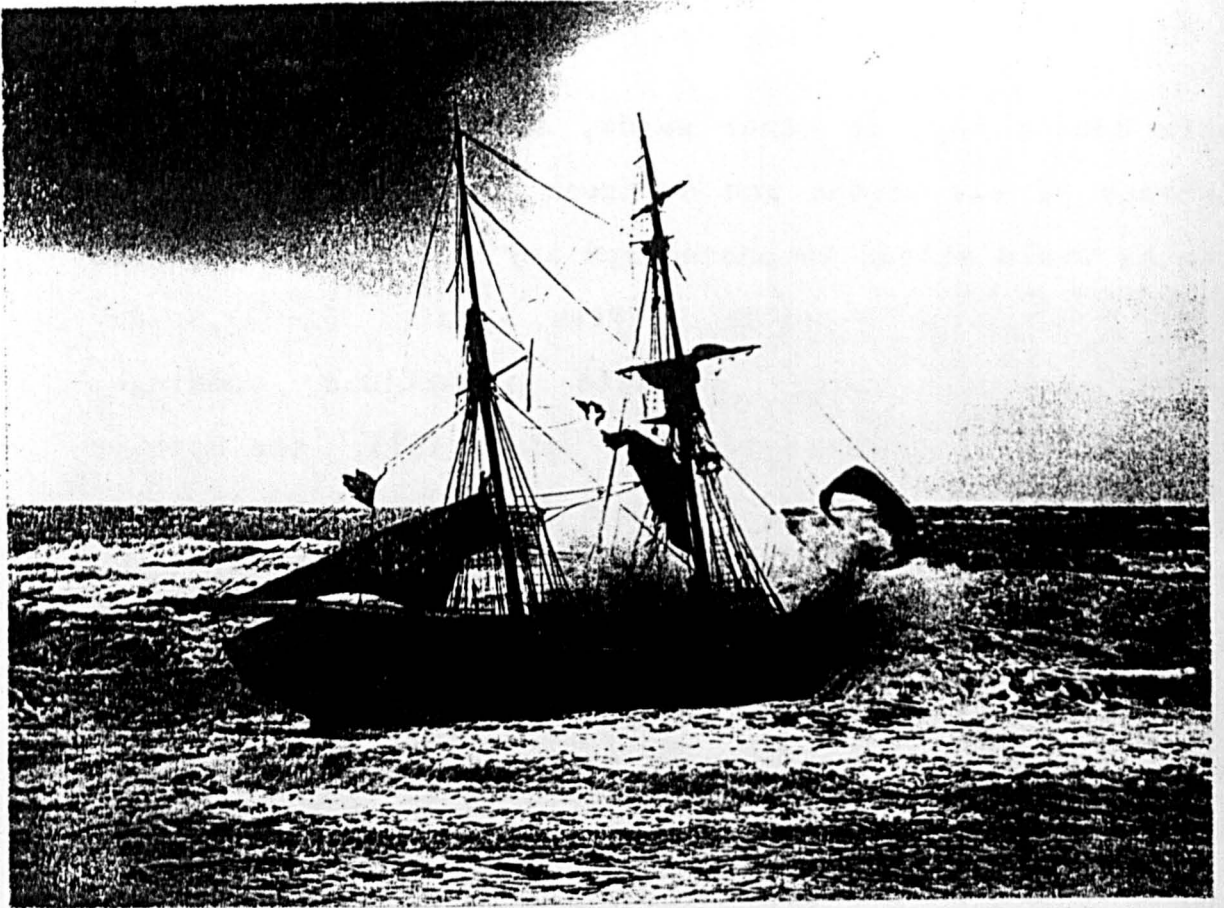
Watson's sphere of operation was bounded by a line drawn roughly from Staithes in the north to Westerdale to



To face p.-55-  
( See line 16 )

Robin Hood's Bay; in other words, anywhere within cycling distance of his studio and darkroom in Lythe. Within this area he would attend to photograph any function of which he was given notice - village fêtes (plates 51-53), Sunday School outings, amateur dramatic productions, weddings, christenings, temperance meetings (plate 168), the opening of a new road (plate 11), or the inauguration of a clean water supply to a village (plate 157), the firing of a salute at Mulgrave Castle to celebrate the relief of Mafeking, and the visit of the Daily Mail airplane to the beach off Whitby Harbour at the turn of the century (plate 84).

Amongst the records of such official events the unveiling of the Caedmon Cross by the Poet Laureate on September 21st., 1898 (plate 135) is interesting because of the existence of an almost identical shot by Sutcliffe (Sutcliffe Gallery ref.22-25; Hiley, 1974, p.212). It is sometimes said that although Watson and Sutcliffe were working at the same time in the same area, there is no record of their ever having met, yet on this day they were manifestly within feet of each other, both photographing this ceremony from the tower of Whitby Parish Church. Both photographs show the smoke-shrouded backgrounds so beloved of Sutcliffe; both have excellent definition (even though they are said to have been taken "blind" with a heavy camera held over the parapet); both capture the spirit of a happy occasion on a fine autumn day. Sutcliffe's negative was



To face p.-56-  
( See lines 12 and 22 )

12" x 8" (Hiley, 1974, p. 212), Watson's 8½" x 6½".

It was not only the official, formal occasion, however, that Watson could be relied upon to attend. He was present when a giant shark was brought ashore at Kettleness on August 27th. 1898 (plate 82), when motor cycle hill trials were held on Lythe Bank (plate 190), when the SS. Ben Corlick was stranded (plate 32), when housing in Whitby was damaged by shell-fire from a German warship on December 16th. 1914 (plates 178, 179). These are purely record shots, unremarkable for their composition or their impact: the picture of the Ben Corlick (plate 32) is very much less impressive than Sutcliffe's of the brig Mary and Agnes aground on 24th. October 1885 (ref. FMS 327, Sutcliffe Gallery ref. 10-29). It must be noted, too, that whilst Watson noted his photograph simply as that of the Ben Corlick aground, Sutcliffe gave his the title of "The Flag of Distress". This is a point which will be elaborated later: suffice it to say at this stage that in general (there are several exceptions) Watson tended to see and photograph a subject, where Sutcliffe saw a theme, a real meaning. He thus gives his photographs a title, frequently expressive of the theme. "Water Rats" means infinitely more than "Boys swimming at half-tide" would have done; "A bit of news" (FMS 81 or 91: S.G. 24-38) lends a whole new meaning to a picture which Watson would have referred to as simply "Tommy Baxter Street" or "R. Hood's Bay". Most of Watson's landscapes or pictorial photographs are identified

only by their location: Rigg Mill, Foss Mill, or Staithes. Only once in the negatives seen does he put the location into inverted commas, as though that were a title - photograph WHITM:WAT 475 (plate 191) is "Brick and Pipe Works" Comondale. The commas do not turn the words into a title, however, nor make the subject express a theme or a mood: the view remains one of the brick and pipe works at Comondale.

### 3. Trades and artisans

"Watson, obviously fascinated by the impact of a modern technology on a traditional landscape, documented painstakingly the building of roads and railways, portraying the new architecture of travel, garages, railway stations and the like. He photographed men within the context of trade and industry; in one photograph a slater sits astride the roof of a new church; in another, he depicts the mining industry of the North Yorkshire coast." (Williams, 1980, p. 201).

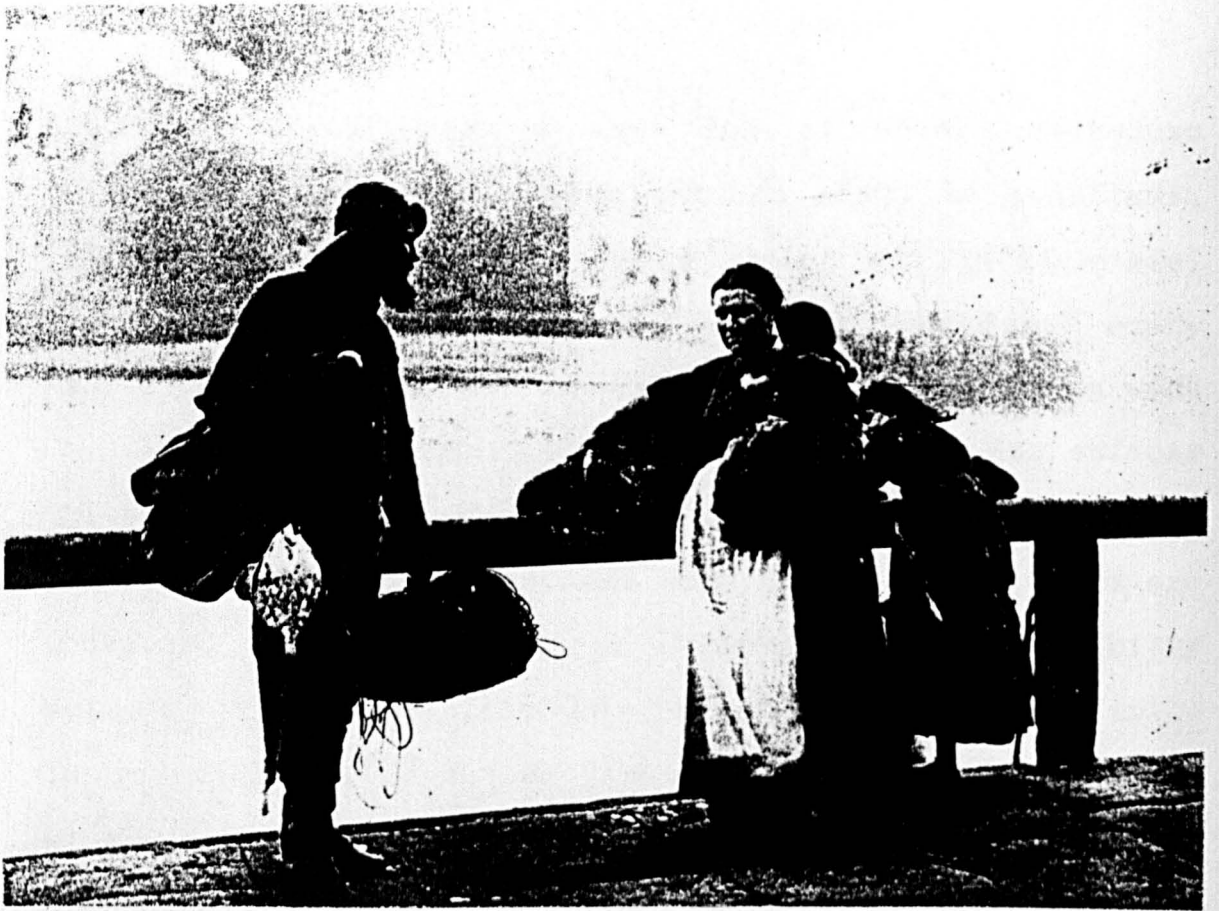
There is perhaps an element of exaggeration and of generalisation in the comment, which accompanies seven reproductions from Watson negatives in Creative Camera, May/June 1980. The only evidence the writer has been able to find of "a modern technology" in the Watson Collection has been the steam traction engine hauling timber waggons on plate 29 and the steel dumper-trucks on plate 109, which were horse-drawn as they had been for decades if not

centuries. There is not even a crane involved in the rebuilding of Lythe church, only a small block-and-tackle (plate 189); the joiner's shop at Mulgrave (plate 105), where Tom Watson and his father probably worked, does not show any electricity, and even the lathes and the mortising-machine are powered manually or by treadle.

Although Watson did indeed "document painstakingly" the building of roads, this was only on one occasion - the building of the new coastal road from Whitby to Sandsend, which he photographed for the official booklet on the project, with "Photographs by T.Watson" (North Riding of Yorkshire County Council, et al., 1930). He has nothing to record of the "building of railways", which of course were completed in the Whitby area before Watson left school; nor did he "depict the mining industry of the North Yorkshire coast", apart from one or two posed record shots for the Grinkle Mining Co., Port Mulgrave (plate 192). One photograph which is apparently thought to depict mining operations (plate 109), and compared with photographs of mining camps during the North American gold rush, in fact records the digging of one of the cuttings on the Whitby-Sendsend road, which, being undertaken largely to relieve the high unemployment in the area during the depression, relied much more on picks, shovels and muscle than on "modern technology". So did the repair of the sea-wall at Sandsend after the storms of 1910 (plate 193).

Still less true is it that "Watson's photography was





To face p.-59-  
(See line 24 )

a pointer to the diminishment of man before machine; in the photographs, his figures are tiny, they are seen.... standing at the edge of a pit or at the end of a railway line, seemingly helpless, they are figures from the past in an age which was moving rapidly towards the future... they are adjuncts to the paper landscape rather than participants" (Williams, 1980, p. 201). No men are diminished by machinery in Watson's world, if only because there is so little machinery: Watson's artisans use hand-tools that have been in use for centuries, like the hammer and watering-cans on plate 173, or the mason's maul and trowel on plates 97, 98. The tiny figure posing in the quarry (plate 192) is not some labourer dwarfed by his mechanical excavator, but the site foreman or quarry manager, smiling comfortably in his overcoat and trilby.

Nor are Watson's workers demeaned or diminished by their labour; these are skilled artisans wearing not only the aprons (plate 97) or overalls (plate 174) of their trade, but also, many of them, collars and ties, and demonstrating pride and pleasure in a job well done. "Sutcliffe's figures", Williams maintains, "are busy and full of life...catching fish, farming, gossiping, while Watson's are ant-like... they are adjuncts....rather than participants" (ibid.,1980). Sutcliffe's fishermen were more often pictured carefully posed against the harbour railings (e.g., "Saturday Afternoon", FMS 397, Sutcliffe Gallery ref.. 24-49 ) than actually "catching fish", just as his



To face p.-60-  
( See line 1 )

farm labourers (e.g., "Dinner-time", FMS 347, S.G. 4-32) are not working but posed during a break in their labours.

This would apply to many of Watson's photographs too, but not to the sequence entitled "Hooping the Wheel" (plates 173, 174). This quite remarkable (for its time) series of action shots must have been taken as the work progressed, and anyone acquainted with Watson's working-class origins would guess that he never offered a bribe or a tip to anyone for posing for him. (To do so would have seemed to him to be condescension and an insult to a fellow-worker - a point made quite independently by the late Lord Normanby, in private conversation with the writer).

Hiley (1974, p. 67) details the circumstances in which Sutcliffe's "Saturday Afternoon" for instance was taken. Watson would never have detained a tired-out fisherman just back from the sea and eager to get home to his bed, still less "poured a handful of coppers into the hands of the woman and the girl." But Sutcliffe's "Water Rats", it will be recalled, were each "given a penny apiece and told to be good lads", and elsewhere (ibid., p. 71) Hiley speaks of "the bribing of the boys to strip off and their posing." "The fishermen who had acted as models for Sutcliffe for years found an increasing demand for their services as 'old salts' to feature in photographs taken by amateurs", (ibid., p. 129). Sutcliffe seems to have thought that half-a-crown was a not unreasonable tip, but one of the 'old salts' (ibid., p.129) describes "one daft chap, who gave me half a

crown." "Daft", presumably, for giving the fisherman a half-day's pay for standing still for five seconds.

#### 4. Record shots and commissions

As was recorded by Mr.P.Burnett (see p.3) Watson photographed all the many successive stages of the excavation and building of the new coastal road, as he did the demolition and rebuilding of Lythe church, which was completed in 1911. The Watson Collection includes 85 and 113 plates devoted exclusively to each of these projects respectively. They are for the most part purely record shots, intended to chronicle the events as they unfolded rather than to present pictures with mood and atmosphere. Sometimes they are obviously taken to satisfy the demands or wishes of the persons commissioning them (e.g., plate 192); sometimes (e.g., plate 97) they are not devoid of artistic merit. Other photographs were taken as commissions from other persons, in particular the Marquis of Normanby, who asked Watson to take a great many photographs of the estate at Mulgrave, of both the interior and the exterior of Mulgrave Castle, and of scenes at Windsor. Any professional photographer works within the parameters set for him, and in the writer's opinion Watson's commissioned work and recording projects prescribed - sometimes to an undesirably narrow extent - his landscape and pictorial work. As Baird (1980) puts it (p.1), "This direct confrontation with his subject through the camera lens could indicate either a lack

of interest in pictorial style or that he had to cater for the requirements of a small village practice which required unsophisticated photographs to be made for the local people and the growing number of tourists."

It is only fair to add, however, that others have seen greater depth and meaning, and also greater modernity, in the landscapes which Watson produced for his commissions. Baird (1980, p.6) states, "As a contrast certain images have a reductive appearance, the views of the roads with their minimal content and simple composition give them a strong modern look." This is presumably somewhat akin to what Williams (1980, p.201) has in mind in defining Watson's work as "Ironic Topography", if one accepts the Oxford Dictionary's definition of "irony" as "use of language that has an inner meaning for a privileged audience and an outer meaning for the persons addressed or concerned."

Thus Williams (ibid.) is tempted to suggest a parallel between Watson's commissioned landscapes and the "New Topographics" of Robert Adams, Lewis Balz, or Joe Deal. The work of these photographers was first shown under the collective title "New Topographics" at George Eastman House in 1975: "...since the photographs appeared to encompass both traditional landscape and man-made constructions, though nearly always excluding people, it was difficult to locate the work within the existing categories. It seemed that for this new generation of photographers, seriousness and credibility required an appropriation of architectural

imagery to landscape photography, though without fitting into either genre as they had hitherto existed" (Arnolfini, 1981, p.3). So "Robert Adams works literally from the Missouri to the Pacific, where evidence of man is seen in relation to large expanses of sea and sky. Lewis Balz moves from distant landscape views of a new city, to close-up inspections of the buildings themselves" (ibid.).

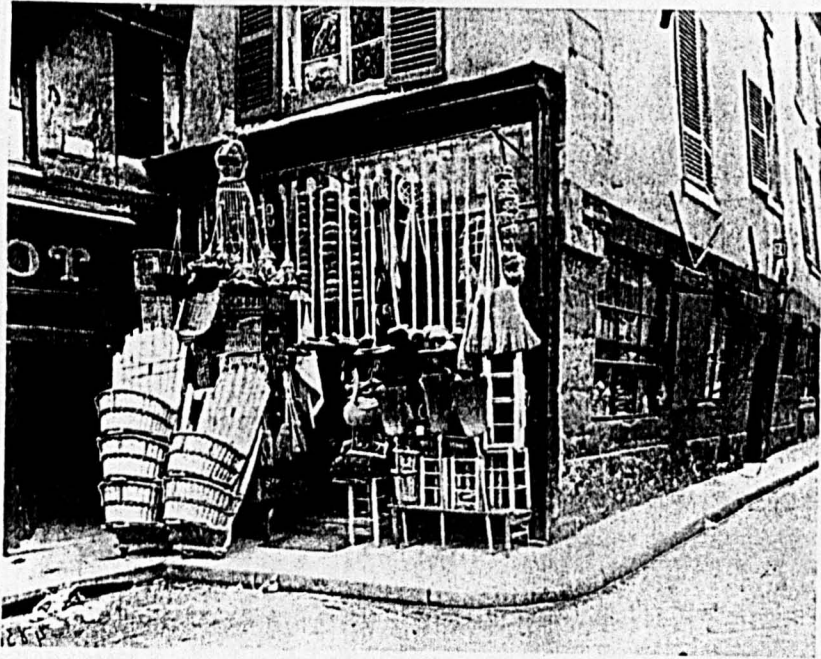
If this is an accurate description of the new movement in landscape photography, and if (as Williams, op.cit., apparently believes) Watson was a man "whose technique in the composition and arrangement of form, light and space was to mark the beginnings of a movement in landscape photography which, sixty years later, was to become consolidated in the photographs of Robert Adams and the new American landscape photography", it needs to be said that any similarity between the work of Adams and that of Watson, if it exists at all, would be purely coincidental and completely unconscious and unpremeditated on Watson's part. His photographs of the Whitby to Sandsend highway (e.g., plate 194) and of the petrol pumps at the side of the new road (plate 195) are not intended (as Adams' views are: Arnolfini, 1981, p.6) to "locate us within vast spaces" and at the same time to "record in precise detail the natural terrain" and show "man's imposition on the land through the accumulation of evidence". They were intended solely as a record of a new road he had been commissioned to photograph. If it is argued that he nonetheless

unconsciously foreshadowed a movement of sixty years later, it must be said that only these few commissioned photographs show these characteristics, which are not common in Watson's landscape work. The latter (see for instance plates 57-70), is concerned almost exclusively with small corners of a secure agricultural English environment not then thought of as having been exploited in the past, nor under threat for the future. Nor was Watson at all like the urbane, articulate, well educated and prolific writer Sutcliffe who did indeed help to found a new school of photographic (naturalistic) thought.

Whilst denying Williams' suggestion of a connection between Watson's work and the New Topographics, it should perhaps be pointed out that it would be possible to make a better case for this imaginary connection, by choosing from the Watson Collection more appropriate examples than those she quotes. The landscape on plate 196, for example, is similar to Adams' landscapes in its wide, open spaces and its hint of the line of a human track. But one could as well maintain that the two photographs on plate 196 are early Watsonian attempts to express an abstract, as that the top one is akin to the New Topographics. Watson was not deliberately and consciously producing an abstract in the lower photograph: he was photographing the harness in the tackroom at Mulgrave.

Similarly, any attempt (such as the one Williams seems to hint at) "to compare the photograph of the park at





To face p.-65-  
( See line 16 )

Mulgrave Hall with Atget's enigmatic and classical portraits of French gardens" (such as those at Versailles, St. Cloud, or Sceaux) would be both "overstatement" on a massive scale, and misdirected. The photograph referred to (plate 201) is not of "the park at Mulgrave Hall"; it is of the lawn only, at Mulgrave Castle, and this is as far removed from a classical, geometrically laid out French château garden as it is possible to imagine. Watson did not photograph the gardens at Mulgrave: he photographed the wild, uncultivated parts of the grounds such as Mulgrave woods and the dells and waterfalls in them.

If, however, one did wish to make a rather forced comparison between some of Watson's work and some of Atget's, one might with greater force and validity point to the similarity between Watson's alleys (e.g., plates 92 and 156) and Atget's studies of similar subjects (e.g., "Exterior of the Church of Gervais, Paris, c.1900") in his beloved Paris.

## 5. Interiors

Although these could be listed under Watson's record shots, it is obvious that to Tom Watson they were much more than that. It is in this genre that perhaps his major interest lay; he is on record as saying that it was his ambition to tour his native Yorkshire and photograph every church, chapel and abbey in it, but he never had time to fulfil it. The church interiors - there is in the Watson

Collection a particularly impressive one of the interior of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, where Watson had been sent by the Marquis of Normanby to take photographs - show the patience and meticulous care with which he approached this area of photography. The depth and wealth of the detail, much of it only visible under the magnifying glass or in enlargement from the full-plate negative, argues a very small aperture and a long exposure, yet this was so accurately calculated that the detail is fully preserved in the shadows whilst the highlights are still accurately rendered. (It will be seen that plates 127, 130, 159, 197 and 198 are contact prints from the full negative, without shading or burning-in of any kind.)

The social historians will wish that the picture of the schoolroom (plate 159) had shown pupils as well as the furniture, but this may not have been possible in the lighting conditions prevailing; there is no means of telling. It would seem that there was daylight from one side only, and that the artificial lighting, gas jets high in the room, was not lit. In the case of the study and dining room interiors on plates 143 and 144 the lens has not been stopped down so far, and there is loss of definition at the edges of the negative. The same is true to a lesser extent of the joiner's shop photograph (plate 105), where the delicate little easels on the central workbench have aroused curiosity. Frank (1980) conjectures that they were made by the Watsons for the display of delicate china

objects at the Castle: the late Lord Normanby on the contrary thought it much more likely that they were made during woodwork lessons by boys from the small school which his grandfather had organised and run at the Castle, and where Sutcliffe's father used to give some of the art lessons. The boys used to come down to the estate joiner's workshop for their woodwork lessons.

The easels could equally well have been intended for the display of small photographs of course, but it was thought most unlikely that they could have been made by either of the Watsons for that purpose.

## Chapter Four: The production of Picture Postcards

As has been seen, Watson's letterheading listed "Views of Neighbourhood" and "Local View Cards, Letter Cards and Albums" amongst his products, and his postcard production might well have been dealt with in chapter three under the heading of "6. Postcards and views."

A separate chapter is however devoted to the topic, and for three reasons:

(1) In the "Golden Age" ( c. 1894-1918) of the postcard, the latter were collected and preserved in their millions, so that they offer a large body of valuable social evidence still available to the historian.

(2) These picture postcards were produced not only by the large firms such as Judges, Valentines and Friths, but by a vast number of small-time photographers in every seaside town in Britain - there were at the turn of the century at least thirty-five of them in Whitby alone. An analysis of the production methods, business practices, profit margins, financial success or failure, social standing, choice of subjects, and anticipated viewing and purchasing public of these men would, if the relevant information were available, provide further evidence as to the economic and social conditions of their time and locality, in addition to being of interest to the historian of photography.

(3) If the photographer's prime intention was to make a saleable picture postcard, his perception of his public's tastes, motives, wishes and social standing would prescribe both his approach to landscape photography (see p.47 ) and the extent and type of his social documentation. (See Foreword, pp. 5-6.)

A study of the picture postcard therefore forms a valid introduction to Part II of this thesis.

In the event the information sought under (2) proves extraordinarily difficult to come by, if indeed it still exists. What would be required would be ledgers, invoices, bills and receipts, brochures, advertisements and price-lists: one might also hope to find in the local press obituaries or accounts of the individual's work, perhaps even the occasional article on techniques or processes in a photographic periodical or a postcard collector's magazine.

It is precisely this archival material which is almost completely lacking; what has survived are the large collections of the picture postcards produced at the time. Thus Mr. Colin Bullamore of Sleights, for instance, has 300 postcards by Ross of Whitby, produced as the "J.T.R. Series", whilst all that is at present known about Jackie Ross is that he is rumoured to have worked in the Whitby docks until economic depression forced him into the production of photographic picture postcards, and that in 1902 he had a studio and workshop in Haydock's Place.

Sutcliffe's life and work (though only incidentally

his postcard activities) are brilliantly dealt with in Hiley (1974): those of Watson less well in Richardson (1991) and (1992). The two most widely read local newspapers of the North East, the Whitby Gazette and the Northern Echo of Middlesborough, have both produced obituaries of Sutcliffe and Watson at the appropriate times, and features on them since, but the other postcard photographers of the area receive no mention: the only surviving traces of the life's work of all but one of these photographers are their postcards, and these reveal only very limited indications as to their technical and financial backgrounds.

The famous postcard producer James Bamforth of Holmfirth was the subject of an obituary in the Holme Valley Express of October 28, 1911, and of an account of his funeral on November 4 1911. There were also accounts of his lantern-slide production in the Optical Magic Lantern Journal of April 1988, Vol.5, No.3, and a description of some of the wartime postcards produced by his firm after his death, in The Military Chest, 2 (3), May/June 1983. There is however nothing on the technology of his postcard production, and enquiries as to this or to the business side of his undertakings are referred from the Bamforth Postcard Museum at Holmfirth to the Kirklees Metropolitan Council's Tolson Memorial Museum in Huddersfield. Here the extremely helpful Senior Museums Officer much regrets that he has no relevant records, and can only suggest an approach to the printers who took over Bamforth's postcard production,



To face p.-71-  
( See line 25 )



Dennis Print and Publishing ( E.T.W. Dennis & Sons Ltd.) of Scarborough. The latter firm in turn refer one back to the Kirklees Metropolitan Council's Museum in Huddersfield, pointing out that they "have no members of staff at Scarborough or Huddersfield who have experience of Victorian pricing and costings, etc., nor realistically could they be expected to". (By personal communication, letter of 25th. November 1994.)

The one exception, mentioned above, to the statement that "the only surviving traces of the life's work of ....these photographers are their postcards", was William Hayes of York.

Hayes, (1871-1940), was "an ordinary photographer earning a living from the craft he loved", and ..."postcards were always the most important part of William Hayes's work." ( Buchanan (1986), pp.5 and 14). What makes him exceptional, however, is the fact that he is survived not only by his postcards, but by "his letters, daybooks and diaries, studio, and of course his negatives, many of which were used for postcards and are signed, dated, and given brief description of content for that purpose... the remaining day-books, in which he detailed daily assignments and wrote of the trials and tribulations connected with his work, are vital in giving a background against which the value of his negatives can be seen . The 'Studio' is also an important survival and remains virtually the same in 1986 as it was in 1911 after its removal from York and re-erection

at Hutton-le-Hole, possibly as a unique example of photographic architecture" (ibid., p.5). (See endnote 5 ).

Moreover, Hayes is survived by his son, born in 1909, who in his youth helped his father with the printing of his photographs on occasion. It might have been hoped, therefore, that personal communication with Raymond Harland Hayes, and examination of the Hayes studio and materials at the Ryedale Folk Museum in Hutton-le-Hole where they are lodged, would yield valuable information about the technical and financial sides of Hayes' postcard production. In the event such information proved to be disappointingly scanty.

In 1904 Hayes wrote in a letter that "The demand for postcards is still enormous, we cannot print them fast enough, letters come every day from all the villages I have taken. 3 dozen were sold at Croton." On 30 October 1904 he writes, "Mr. Dunwell is well on to 2,500 in his sales." (Since it is not known over what period Mr. Dunwell sold his 2,500 cards, this information is not particularly valuable.) But these were obviously photographic prints, made by Hayes himself or under his direct supervision, by exposure to daylight, and almost certainly using Printing Out Paper. In the same letter he writes, "Printing light is short in the dull weather, yet during the past two weeks we have finished over 800 cards - over 72 per day is our average finishing." Hayes' son Raymond has no recollection of other details of the production process and can supply no indications of prices or costings, but the curator of the

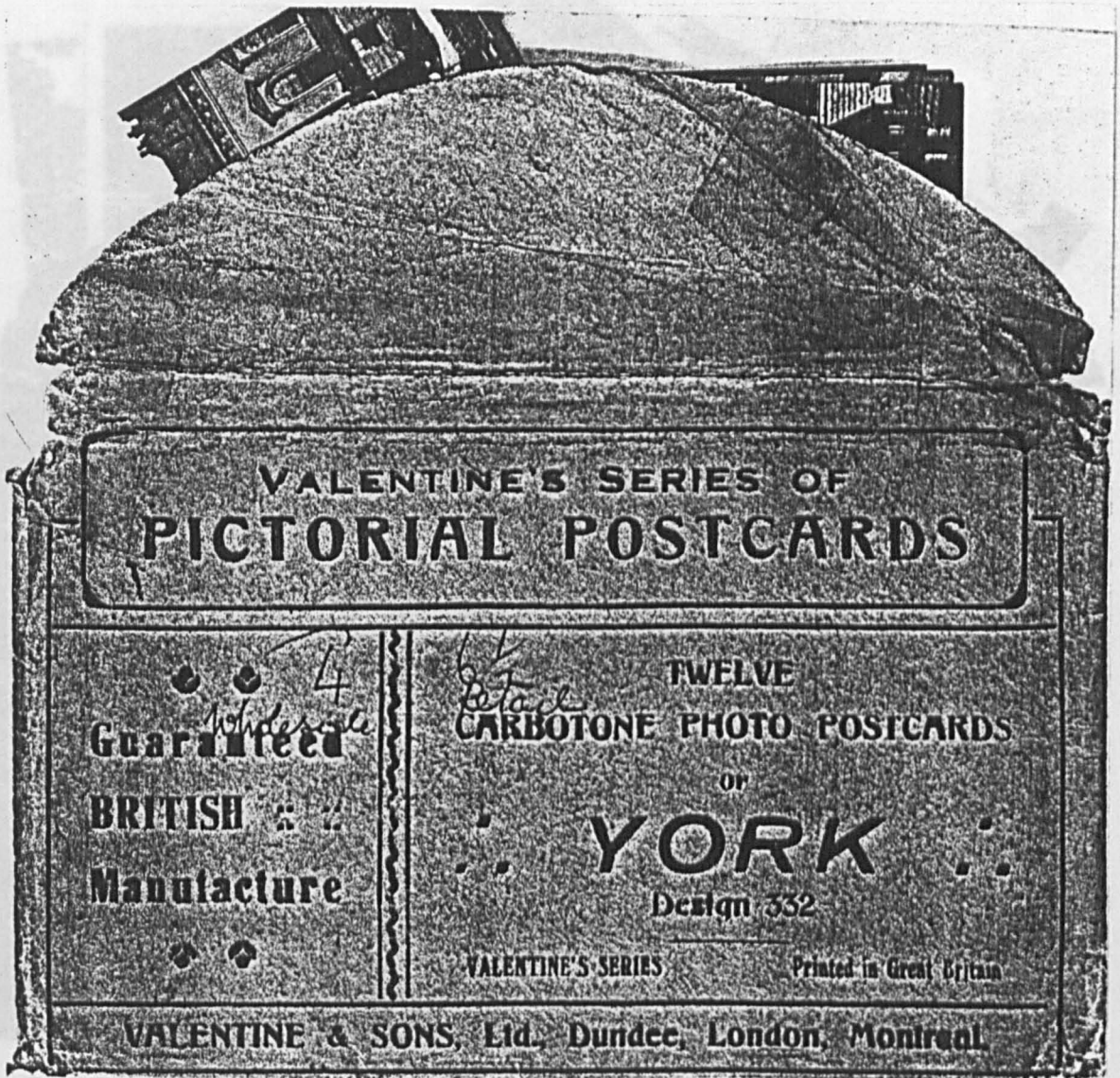
Ryedale Folk Museum reports (personal communication) that Mr. Raymond Hayes once said that his father used to print ten or a dozen postcard-size photographs in succession on one large sheet of paper, which was already printed on the back with the postal details and space for the address. This would be cut into the individual postcards on completion of the printing, and the use of large sheets of photographic paper would be in line with information from Ilford Ltd., see p. 79.

Mr. Raymond Hayes also apparently said that during sunny weather he would be press-ganged into helping with the printing when he would rather have been out playing cricket with his friends, his father being anxious to press on with the printing whilst shorter exposure times were possible: Hayes plainly had production difficulties in dull weather.

There are two ledgers in the Ryedale Museum which reflect the prices Hayes charged for his picture postcards, but none refers to a time earlier than 1939, and so strictly speaking the information lies outside the scope of this study. But it is interesting to see that Hayes' prices seem to have varied considerably - perhaps with the quality of the prints, their subjects, or the quantities in which they were sold. Thus on December 9 1939, "Sepia matt postcards" were invoiced at "4/- per dozen", whereas on Sept 2 of the same year other cards had sold at 1/6 per dozen to outlets such as "Stamper Post Office" or the "Abbey Stores". Strangely enough, cards were selling much later (September

23 1951 and Nov.8 1951) for one penny each - there are records of sales for those dates of " 4 doz. postcards 4/-" and "36 Postcards 3/-" respectively.

Picture postcards in the Victorian era sold for one penny or even less. There is a full-page supplement to the Whitby Gazette of Friday June 30th. 1899, for "Hornes' Penny Album of 36 Whitby Views (neatly bound in a tastefully designed cover), photographed, printed and published by Horne and Son, Bridge Street and 15 Skinner Street, Whitby. An edition of 20,000 has been printed. On sale at one penny each." Hornes and Son were and are the printers who published amongst other things the weekly newspaper the Whitby Gazette, and could be expected to turn out large numbers of mechanically printed postcards at a price lower than that of the hand-printed photographic prints of the photographers. The bargain offers which the printers made from time to time, however, must have presented the photographers with impossibly stiff competition: Hornes on another occasion offer "3 coloured views on a postcard: 3 cards for one penny", and on "August 11 1899" they advertised in their newspaper a "Cheap View Album: 12 reproductions of photographs (by Mssrs. Carl Norman, including the famous view of the Abbey and cows), beautifully printed and tastefully bound, reduced from 6d to 4d." This price of one third of a penny per card seems to have been the wholesale price of a packet of twelve screen printed cards by Valentines (see page 75); the "City



VALENTINE'S SERIES OF  
**PICTORIAL POSTCARDS**

*Wholesale*  
**Guaranteed**  
**BRITISH**  
**Manufacture**

*Retain*  
**TWELVE**  
**CARBOTONE PHOTO POSTCARDS**

or  
**YORK**  
Design 332

VALENTINE'S SERIES

Printed in Great Britain

**VALENTINE & SONS, Ltd., Dundee, London, Montreal.**

POST CARD

Printed in Great Britain

This space may be used for Communication

The Address, to be written here

BRITISH

MANUFACTURE

Valentine's Series



CITY SERIES.

**I/-**  
Packet  
of  
**SIX**

**YORK VIEW  
POST CARDS**

**I/-**  
Packet  
of  
**SIX**

REAL PHOTOGRAPHS.

- No. 7—City Walls
- 8—Shambles
- 9—Bastion City Walls

- No. 10—York Minster from N.E.
- 11—City Walls
- 12—Fossate

**SERIES B.**

Any view can be had separate.

POST CARD

BRITISH MADE PRINTING

Copyright 1914

The Address only to be written here

City Series No. 3 P.D.V.

Illustration by J. G. S. G. S.

Series" of "York View Post Cards" (see p. 76), were photographic prints on sensitized bromide paper which nonetheless still sold at 7½d for six, wholesale, or 2d. each retail.

Harker (1982), p. 22, points out that "Initially picture postcards were made by photographic printing methods until the invention of photomechanical reproduction. It is interesting that "real photograph" postcards were still being produced in the 1950s."

It is difficult to see how the photographers could show a worthwhile profit on photographic cards selling for 2d. or - as in the case of Hayes and doubtless many others - for one penny each. Perhaps the legend "This is a real photograph" on the back appealed to many, but the producers must surely have largely written off the true cost of their labour, and it would be interesting to know what they paid for their plates and photographic paper. There is very little information as to this, nor is the present author alone in experiencing difficulties in researching the topic. Thus Holt and Holt (1971), p.36, say "Very few of the major producers of cards have any records of their products at the turn of the century. A decline in the postcard trade in the 1920s, two World Wars, fires caused by bombing and the cost of allocating floor space to the storage of papers have all contributed to the destruction or disposal of records." This confirms the reaction of all the postcard producers, printers, libraries, archivists and

museums approached by the author (including the Royal Photographic Society and the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television), all of whom have been to a great deal of trouble and effort to meet his enquiry without, however, being able to suggest any further possible sources for the archival information needed - see p.69, above.

The lack of documentation probably applies a fortiori to the small-time postcard producers (even more than to the larger firms.) Neither Kodak Ltd. nor Ilford Ltd. (from whom it is known that Watson obtained his plates and paper) have records of the prices of their products at the turn of the century; the few papers surviving from Watson and Hayes make no mention of these, and none of the other photographers of the time and the region seems to have left any documentation at all from which their costings and profit margins might have been deduced.

One possible source for some of the necessary information comes in a copy of Hercock and Jones (1979), most generously sent by Mr John Halliwell of Ilford Ltd.(Mobberley) with a note of apology for not having "any materials specific to your needs." This is not surprising: Hercock and Jones (1979), p.68, makes clear that before the outbreak of World War II "All important documents (at Ilford) were microfilmed and buried. (There seems no trace in the records of their later retrieval.)" However, an estimate of the prices of the plates and paper used by Watson and the other small producers of postcards can be



arrived at from the information in Hercock and Jones. For instance, Ilford plates in 1873 cost 2/6d per dozen (p.13); in 1886 the price (then 2/- ) was reduced to 1/-. This was for Ordinary plates in the quarter-plate size: Watson habitually made full-plate or half-plate sized negatives, so his plates for postcard production would cost him perhaps between 2/- and 4/- per dozen.

It is reported (loc. cit.,p.21) that "Printing papers at the time (1887) were sold in rolls and were cut to the required size by the user", which may lend some credence to the suggestion on p.73 (above) that Hayes made his postcard prints ten or twelve to a large sheet of paper, later cut into postcards. The price of these rolls is not known, but in about 1888 POP was sold by Ilford in sheets 24½ in. x 17 in., from which a photographer by careful cutting and laying-out might obtain a maximum of 20 postcards. These large sheets cost 7s/6d per dozen, so the paper alone for a postcard photograph would have cost the small-time photographer at least 0.375d., and if he added in the cost of his time, plates and chemicals the profit margin must have been very small indeed if he sold his cards for a penny, yet this he was forced to do if he was to compete in price with his peers and with the large firms. In 1908 his task was perhaps lightened somewhat when postcard-sized paper was made available after "three printing presses were ordered for the production of sensitized postcards and, a year later, a steam guillotine for cutting paper." (ibid.,

p.50). The price of this Ilford postcard-sized paper is not known. (See endnote 6.)

Small discounts from the manufacturer's prices quoted were available to "dealers and professionals" under an agreement dated 1 April 1897. Subject to prescribed conditions, ( and "Goods would not be supplied to any dealer who broke the rules" (Hercock and Jones, 1979, p. 114), plates and films qualified for a discount of 5% on orders of £2 worth per month, 7½% on orders worth £5 per month, and 10% on £10 per month. There was a discount of "not more than 10%" on "printing out and bromide papers", and on all the above prices an additional discount of 5% for settlement before the last day of the month.

Despite the small profit margins inherent in the production of photographic picture postcards, the activity furnished the main income of photographers like Watson and Hayes. It was viable solely because the number of postcards sold was so large; "Although the product sold for pennies, the amounts purchased were so enormous that the business became extremely profitable " (Klamkin, 1974, p.44). "In 1912 the production of postcards was said to have been 15 million" (Hercock and Jones, 1979, p.94), and this was merely at Illingworth's, a smaller company later amalgamated with Ilford Ltd. Nonetheless the profit margins for the smaller postcard photographers were so small that they must have been very relieved when "The development of the phototype process in Germany around 1892" (the year in

which Watson set himself up as a professional photographer) "enabled the printers to produce more faithful pictures, and to do it more quickly" ( and more cheaply). "Cards were exported by the million to countries all over the world, including Britain, and colours began to replace the earlier black and white and monochrome views" ( Holt and Holt, loc.cit., p.35). The outbreak of the Boer War, and the feelings of patriotism it aroused, saw the combined sales of the view cards and the newer artistic design cards soar to 500 million (ibid., p.37).

Watson of all the small postcard producers was perhaps particularly glad to switch over from his early "real photograph" postcards, made by himself by contact printing onto POP, to the coloured products printed by photomechanical means. This was because - as he told Mr. Burnett in a conversation of January 1946 - the German firms from whom he ordered them would not only produce a postcard more effectively than any others, but would do any necessary re-touching free of charge. This must have been an inducement to Watson who, although skilled in re-touching ( the only photographic skill in which he had had any formal training) hated the task. In a letter of "Aug.28.'46" he writes, "I am busy this aft. spotting up the three small ones. Oh what work, those mildew spots, I have been many hours on them. If you look at the one of Union Mill....you will have an idea of the work to clean up the sky, and the

foreground too was very bad."

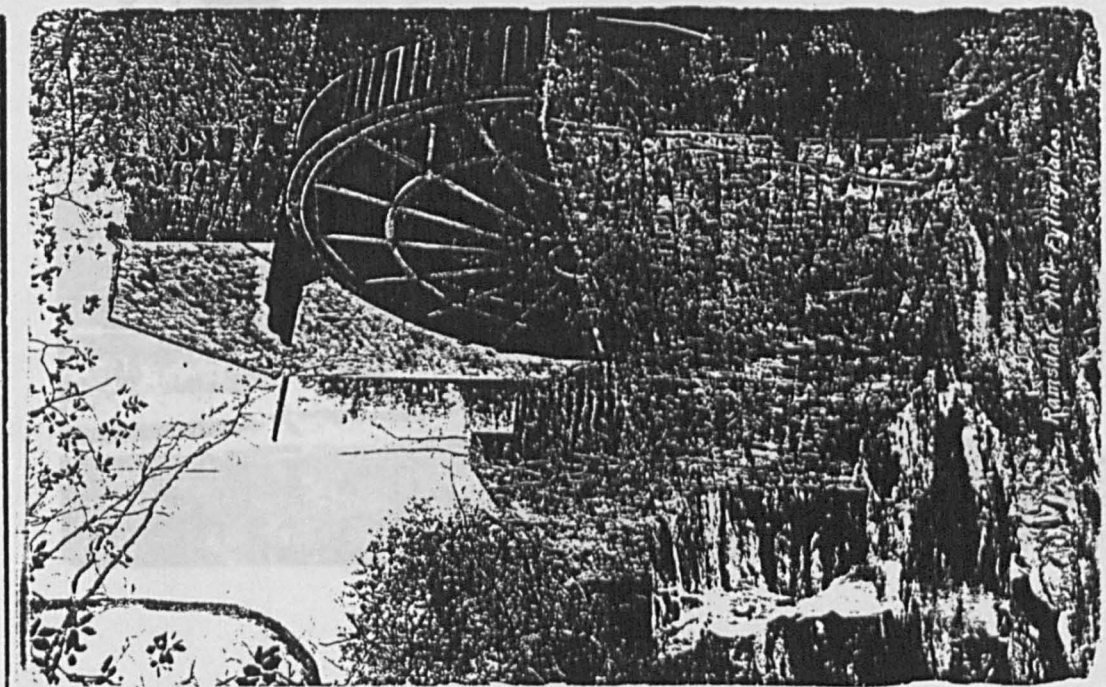
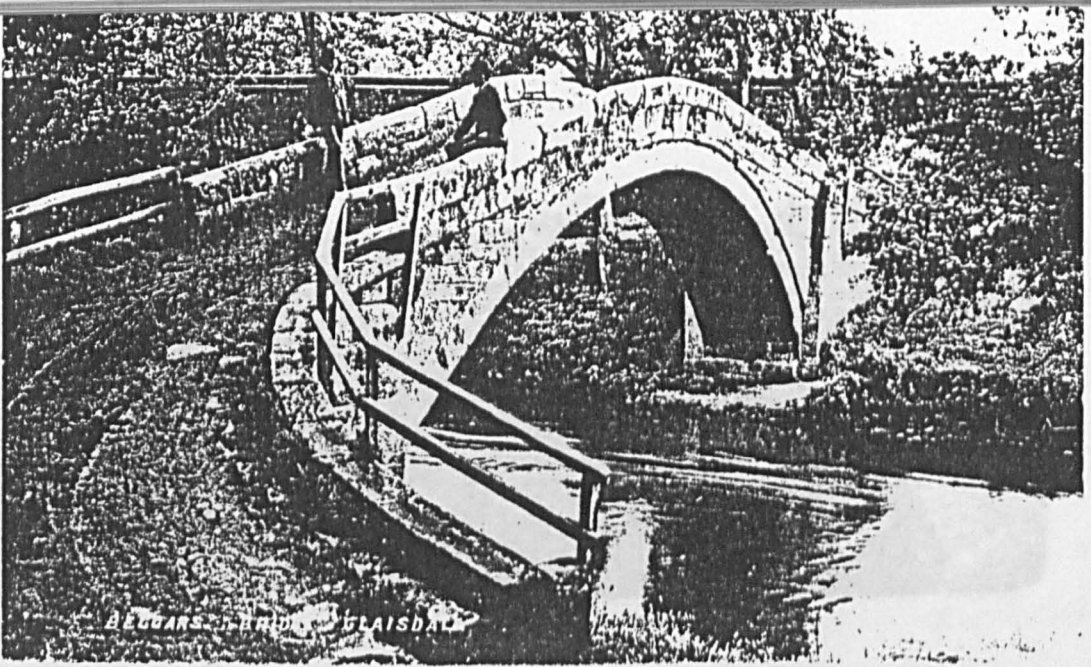
Having his postcards colour-printed in Germany thus saved Watson "many hours" of distasteful labour, and was therefore a better economic proposition as well. He took other steps to ensure that he did not lose money on his postcard business, too: he would never photograph scenes he personally thought would be in demand, never speculate himself as to what would sell best. Instead, he would load his camera and other gear onto his Rudge Whitworth cycle, do the rounds of the region's villages, and ask at the Post Office or of the village shopkeepers which scenes or landmarks could in their opinion most profitably be stocked as postcards. He would then take a photograph of the scenes recommended, more or less secure in the knowledge that the shopkeepers would be pleased to buy copies from him when they were processed, and that they would sell well. It is suggested (p. 47. ) that this technique and this way of allowing others to specify his subjects for him influenced Watson's landscape work in general: it also suggests that nothing was further from his mind than social documentation.

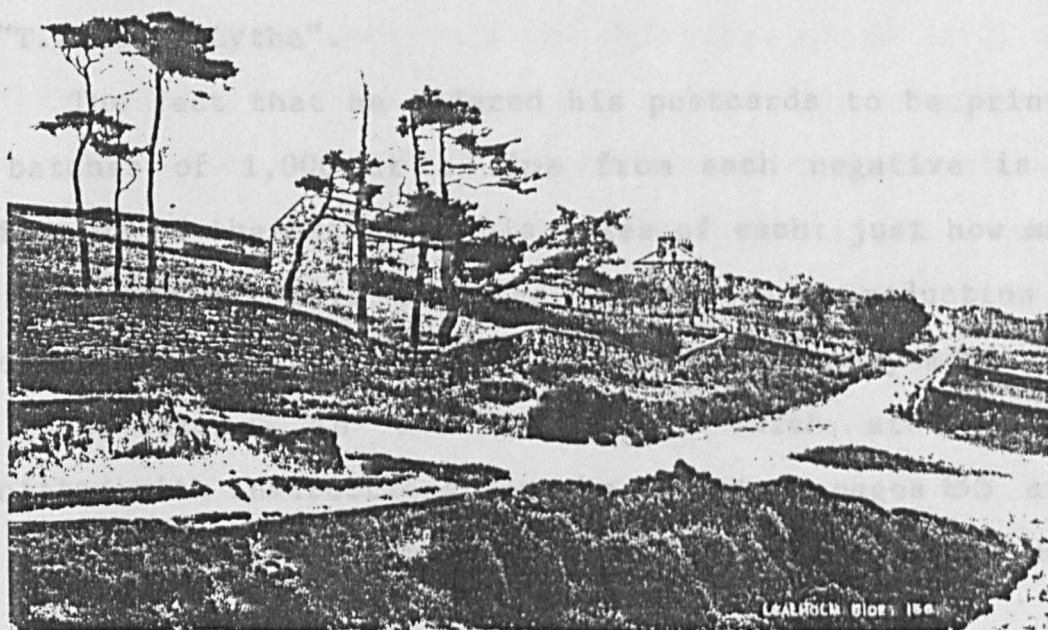
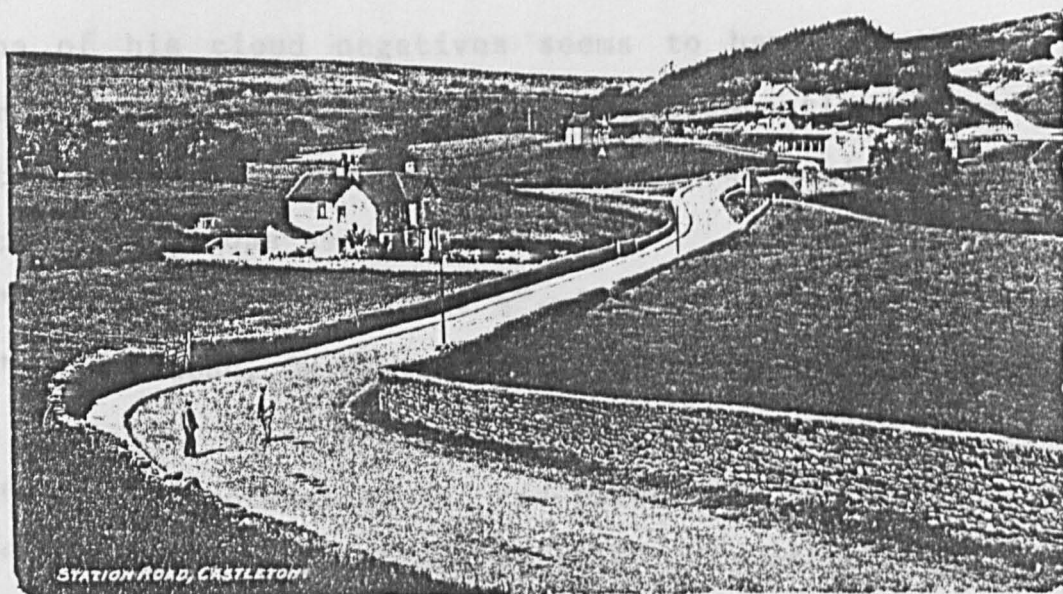
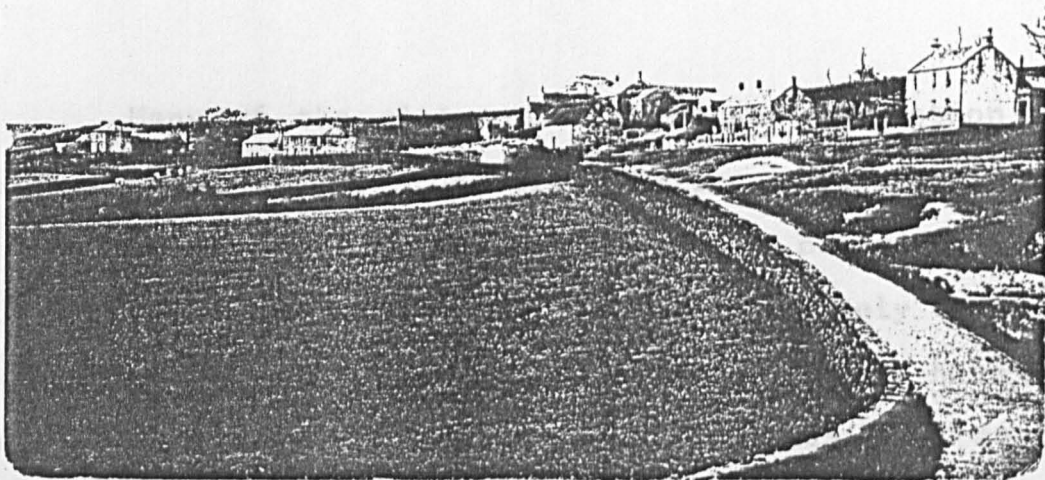
It seems that Hayes' approach to his postcard work was in some ways similar to Watson's: "He would photograph a village, put the series of photographs into a small hand-made album and leave it with the village post office for display to likely customers." (Buchanan, 1986, p.27). He too was "a familiar sight around that place with his camera strapped to the back of his bicycle" (ibid., p. 28), and

"The postcards were always the most important part of William Hayes's work" (ibid., p.14), just as they were of Watson's. But Hayes seems to have retained a more selective and more independent approach than did Watson: "Apart from being popular the freely chosen subject matter allowed him to exercise his skill and judgement over the way it should be photographed and presented" (ibid., p.14), but whilst this may have led to more creative, imaginative, and original landscape work on the part of Hayes, it is difficult to see how he made a good living from his photography if postcards were indeed the major part of his output and if "each and every one was either printed by him or under his direct supervision" (ibid., p.14). We have seen (p.79) that the paper alone for each postcard would cost him 0.375d. Allowing the minimum for his labour and chemicals it is difficult to see how he could have produced any postcard for less than ½d., yet he was selling them at 1d. each. To examine his own figures from his daybook entry of 30 October 1904: "During the past two weeks we have finished over 800 cards and Snainton ( Post Office ) have sold 450 in one month - over 72 per day is our average finishing" (ibid., p. 14). If he sold all of the 800 cards mentioned, his two weeks' work would nett him less than £2, and the Post Office's impressive-sounding sales were worth less than £1 for the month. He seems pleased to have achieved 72 cards per day in the dull weather, yet this represents an income of only some 3/- per day, (say £50 per

annum), at a time when one of the Lythe school's free scholars left school, at 14 years of age, " to earn 2/- per day in a brickfield," and a carpenter employed at Ilford Ltd. in the same year was paid £120 per annum, office clerks £100 per annum and junior clerks entering the company £60 (Hercock and Jones (1979), p.106). The inescapable conclusion is that the small-time photographers who continued to produce only "real photographs" as postcards must have made part of their income from sources other than postcards, and that those like Watson who sent their negatives to Germany to be reproduced by photomechanical reproduction methods, were well advised. (See endnote 7).

It was coincidental, but providential, that the year 1892 should see both the development of the phototype process and the establishment of T. Watson, Photographer, of Lythe. Tom Watson was obviously able to profit from the beginning of the incredible boom in picture postcards which took place between 1890 and 1910. Thereafter the postcard industry tended to be in the hands of the immense firms like Friths, Valentines and Judges, and the demand for cards by the Watsons, Rosses and Sutcliffes of the world dropped off. By 1918, when the Post Office raised the inland postage for cards to 1d., the craze was dying out and ever increasing numbers of amateur photographers were taking their own holiday views with the cheap and manageable box and folding cameras then flooding the market. Fortunately for Watson, he still had no shortage of other work.







Many of the plates in the Watson Collection were intended for postcard production. Watson sometimes blanked off the sky area with a profile of dark cartridge-paper: this may have been in order to leave a completely white sky on which to print a title or greeting, or it may have been done to facilitate the printing-in of clouds from another negative. ( On the rebates of some of his landscape negatives there are notes such as " clouds 23-27", though none of his cloud negatives seems to have survived.) The limits of the postcard format are frequently marked out with stamp-edging strips which bear in Watson's handwriting such instructions as

"Cut to this, rest about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " off top, 1,000 collotype"

"Station Road, Castleton, title in white in foreground,  
1,000 Artotype"

"1,000 Chromotone: stone: red tiles" "

"Include to this, cut not quite  $\frac{1}{2}$ " off bottom"

and, invariably,

"T.Watson, Lythe".

The fact that he ordered his postcards to be printed in batches of 1,000 at a time from each negative is an indication of the extent of his sales of each: just how many of his negatives were intended for postcard production is however not known. Certainly these totalled many more than the half-dozen in the Collection which are clearly annotated with instructions for the printer: pages 85 and 86 , for instance, show but six examples of the many

coloured postcards by Watson for which the negatives, which exist in the Watson Collection, are devoid of any such instructions.

Perhaps Watson anticipated that most of his landscape negatives would make a postcard - it is difficult to see how the view of Lealholm-side ( p.86 ), for instance, would have much appeal except as a postcard purchased simply in order to prove that one had been there.

In addition to the interiors of Mulgrave referred to above, there are in the private collection of Lord Normanby and in the Museum's Watson Collection a large number of negatives of events and scenes on the Normanby estate. There are photographs of the old Mulgrave Castle, of fallen trees and crumbling walls (plates 3 and 4), of parties and picnics in Mulgrave Woods (plate 85), of teams of horses hauling timber (plate 28), of workers on the estate admiring massive, newly built wheelbarrows (plate 36), of the lodges on the estate (plate 136), and of staff firing miniature cannon to celebrate the relief of Mafeking (plate 117). All of these would seem to come under Baird's description of having to "cater for the requirements of a small village practice which required unsophisticated photographs to be made for the local people and the growing number of tourists" (see p.62 ): there were very many of these, and the grounds of the castle, being open regularly to the public, would be of interest to them.

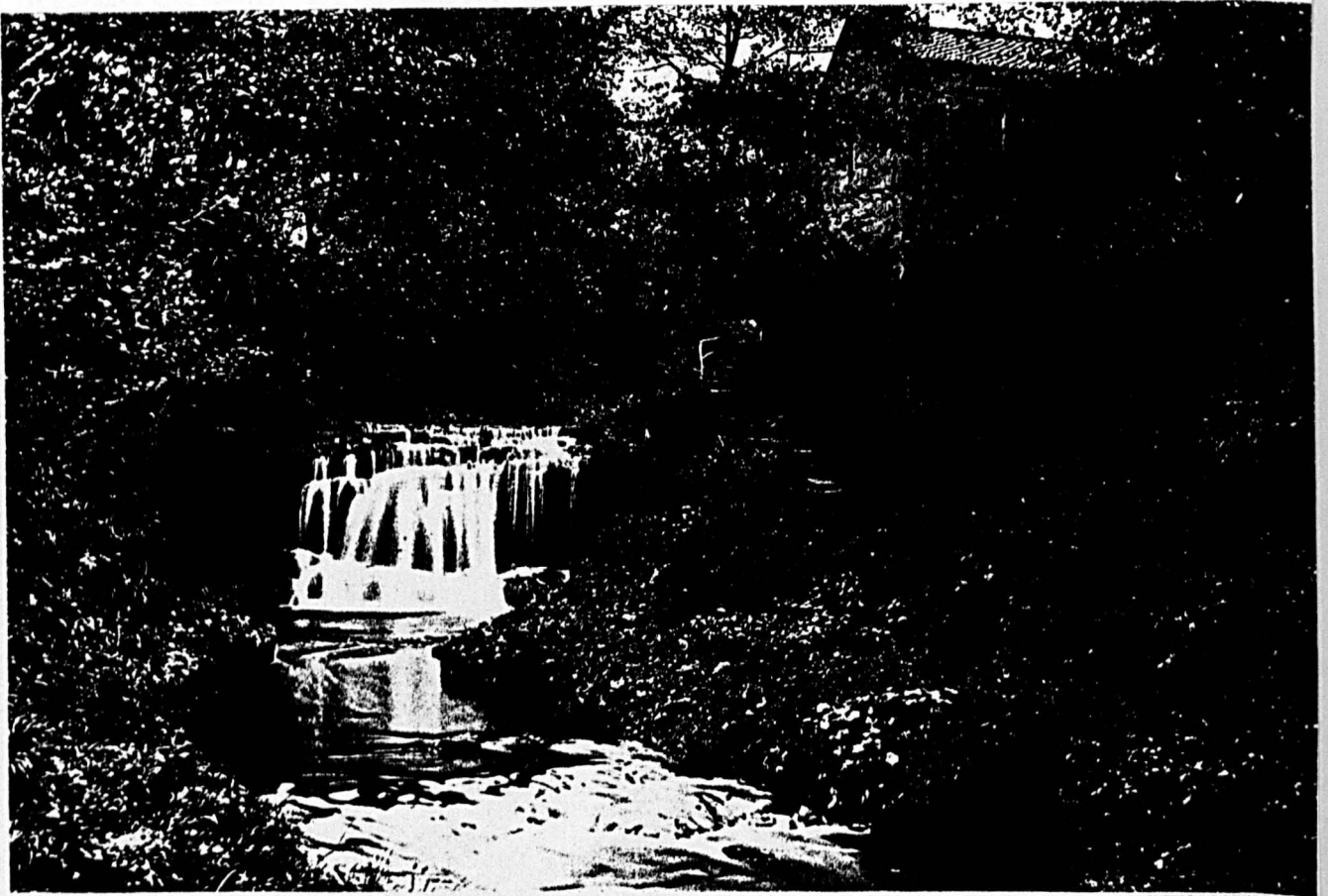
If a postcard was to sell, it had to provide what the

public wanted, and no more. The public, according to Frith, (see pp. 47-48), did not want human figures on its postcards, so there tend to be few or none on Watson's views (and in his landscapes) even when their addition would have made for a much more effective photograph. The public wanted every detail to be sharp and clear, so Watson's landscapes tend to be invariably "f64 work", sharp throughout from foreground to horizon. Indeed, apart from his studio portraits, he seems rarely to have used differential focusing or to have pictured a blurred or hazy distance: plates such as 135 and 91 are exceptions. The public, after all, wanted a view of scenes visited during their holiday, and that meant a view as they thought it "really was", i.e. sharp in every detail as the eye moved from viewing one to the other, not viewed with only one clear centre of interest, as the eye would see it at any single moment. It meant too that Watson would take more of the view than would figure in the final postcard (with its rather unfortunate format), and mark out his choice of the limits of his subject on the negative before sending it to the printers: (see plate 202). There was always, therefore, not only the opportunity but the real necessity to finalise his composition of his subject at a later stage, not as it were in the camera, filling the frame. Moreover, it meant that he was in the habit of recording subjects, for other people, not seeking out and expressing themes, to interpret his own view of life and the world.

The contrast with Sutcliffe's approach in all this is obvious. Sutcliffe not only experimented extensively with contre-jour lighting and differential focusing (at a time when the latter was not to everyone's taste - the new naturalistic school met initially with considerable opposition) but saw his subjects as expressive of an inner meaning. He thus gives his photographs a title, frequently expressive of the theme: see pp. 56-57.

In general it remains true to say that Watson tended to see the scene as his camera did, and the camera sees too much: there are in many of Watson's views two or three good pictures trying to get out, if only he had applied some of the selection and re-emphasis which are essential if art is to be created out of mere representationalism. As Williams (op. cit.) puts it, "Topographical photography was a distinct Victorian and Edwardian passion. To those who view it today, it is often disappointing; buildings are photographed because they were there, and because they were said to be interesting. So very often, nothing was proved with the camera except existence."

Watson's photography was always technically sound, however, and on occasion he chooses his subjects and his viewpoint with the flair of the true artist; on these occasions he produces a picture of real and often outstanding aesthetic value. The homestead at Darnholme (plate 65) is one example; Staithes (plates 90 and 92) and Robin Hood's Bay (plate 199) are others. Watson was in the



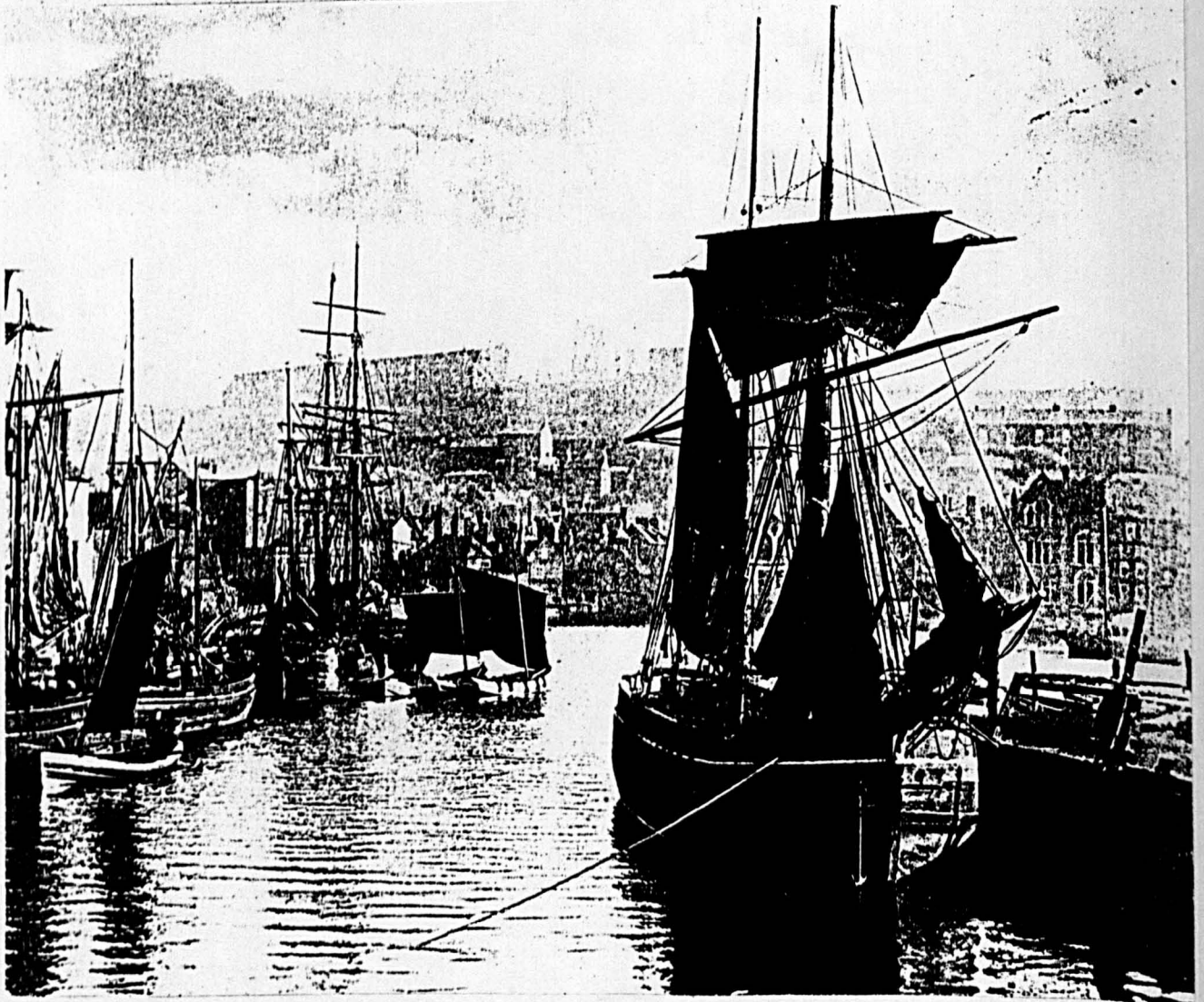
To face p.-91-  
(See lines 10 and 20 )

habit of masking off the sky down to the horizon with paper, and printing in the blank sky from a second cloud negative, the reference number of which he noted in the rebate of the main negative. One may safely assume, therefore, that these pictures would have been further improved before they left Watson's hands. If one imagines clouds printed in on "Rigg Mill" (plate 81), it becomes a photograph which bears comparison with Sutcliffe's landscape work. A direct comparison is in fact possible in this instance, since Sutcliffe had earlier photographed the same scene from an almost identical viewpoint. Sutcliffe's picture is of horizontal format (ref. FMS 618; S.G. 7-38), which gives it the impression of having been taken closer in towards the mill, but it is by no means certain that the inclusion of more detail to either side of the main focus of interest is an advantage. Watson's vertical format lends his picture a sense of height and airiness, and the larger foreground is so beautifully detailed that it is an excellent lead-in to the waterfall and the wheel.

"Ramsdale Mill" (plate 186) is another of Watson's successes which was also photographed by Sutcliffe at an earlier date. Here again Watson has hit upon a "view" which has a unity and a homogeneity which make it a picture of one thing only, instead of a postcard view of several disparate subjects. In this case Watson's picture is improved by the blurring of the branches in the background and at the top of the picture (perhaps because they moved during the



( See p. 92, lines  
9 and 13 )



To face p.-92-

exposure?) and by the absence of the fallen tree which in Sutcliffe's photograph lies right across the face of the mill-wheel. (Sutcliffe Gallery ref.8-39A, and Shaw (1974), p. 51).

Watson's studies of alleys and yards in Whitby and Staithes (plates 88, 92 and 156) would have been improved if the figures involved had been engaged in some other activity than peering at the photographer, but are still fine studies even if inferior to Sutcliffe's "Argument's Yard" (S.G.4-43A, Shaw (1974), p.41) . Two studies of Whitby harbour from similar but yet vitally different viewpoints, however, illustrate tellingly the difference between the two photographers. Sutcliffe's "The Dock End, Whitby" (S.G. ref. 13-17A, Shaw (1974), p. 14) illustrates the artist's genius for composition, choice of viewpoint and lighting, whilst Watson's, (plate 83), taken from only a few yards too far to the left, remains a postcard - a good seaside postcard, but no more.

There is sometimes conjecture as to whether it is possible to arrive at a true assessment of Watson's standing as an artist-photographer (his status as a master of the technology has never been in doubt) in the absence of so much of his work. Cockcroft, for instance (1974, p.113) speaks of "The missing art of Tom Watson", and suggests (ibid., p.115) that "There is clear evidence to suggest that a photographer of real importance, maybe even outstanding artistry, lurked beneath the surface". So many of Watson's



negatives were destroyed, and so many of his albums of prints went missing when he died, the argument goes, that "unless those missing albums turn up one day, the world will never know just how good a photographer Tom Watson was." (ibid., p. 120) ( See endnote 8.)

This may be doubted: there are in fact more viable Watson negatives surviving than there are of Sutcliffe's (some 2,500 as against some 1,500). The difference is that with Sutcliffe the prize-winning exhibition print seemed to be the rule rather than the exception. It is argued that there is now no means of evaluating the kinds of pictures which Watson took when he was photographing at leisure and for himself, not working to a commission or producing for the authorities purely record shots. It is however known that what he most enjoyed photographing were the churches and abbeys of Yorkshire, as he said to Mr. Burnett in 1946. Presumably, then, the "missing art" of Tom Watson would have been along those lines, and superb though his church interiors are, there is no reason to suppose that the missing albums would have been superior to what has survived.

One can but assess the evidence as submitted. It is known that "Sutcliffe was awarded over sixty gold, silver and bronze medals at exhibitions as far afield as New York, Tokyo, Berlin, Paris, Chicago and Vienna as well as at major exhibitions in this country". (Sutcliffe Gallery, n.d.) "Tom Watson", says Cockcroft (op. cit., p.113), "did not

enter any of his ( work)." Perhaps not: but there is in the Watson Collection an envelope over-printed as "our invoice No. 4056" from Marshall and Co., (Nottm) Ltd., Photographic Wks., Ford St., Nottingham. It once contained a "neg. for Watson, Lythe," ordering a 15 x 12 print IFL "For Exhibition". Whatever the negative was, however, and wherever it was submitted, if at all, it does not seem to have won any medals.

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## PART II: WATSON'S WORK AS A SOCIAL DOCUMENT

### INTRODUCTION: An evaluation of the importance and reliability of photographs in general as social documents

It is a platitude that photographs such as the picture postcards examined in Chapter Four of Part I, or the topographical "views" of a G.W. Wilson or a Watson, can provide social documentation: many of them manifestly provide ( albeit often unintentionally ) valuable information and evidence as to the conditions, customs, manners and achievements of their time and place.

Sometimes, however, too much is claimed for the importance and reliability of the evidence thought to be thus provided, or the claim is too easily made, even facile. Thus, whilst it is incontestable that "the early photographic postcards of various areas of the world.... are important documentation of how the area looked at the beginning of this century" (Klamkin, 1974, p. 117), and that "changes in the environment (natural and man-made) over periods of time are particularly well revealed in photographic imagery" (Harker, 1982, p.8), one is bound to regard more sceptically statements such as " The Boer War, the Russo-Japanese War, and of course the First World War

are fully documented on the picture postcard" (Holt and Holt, 1971, p.16).

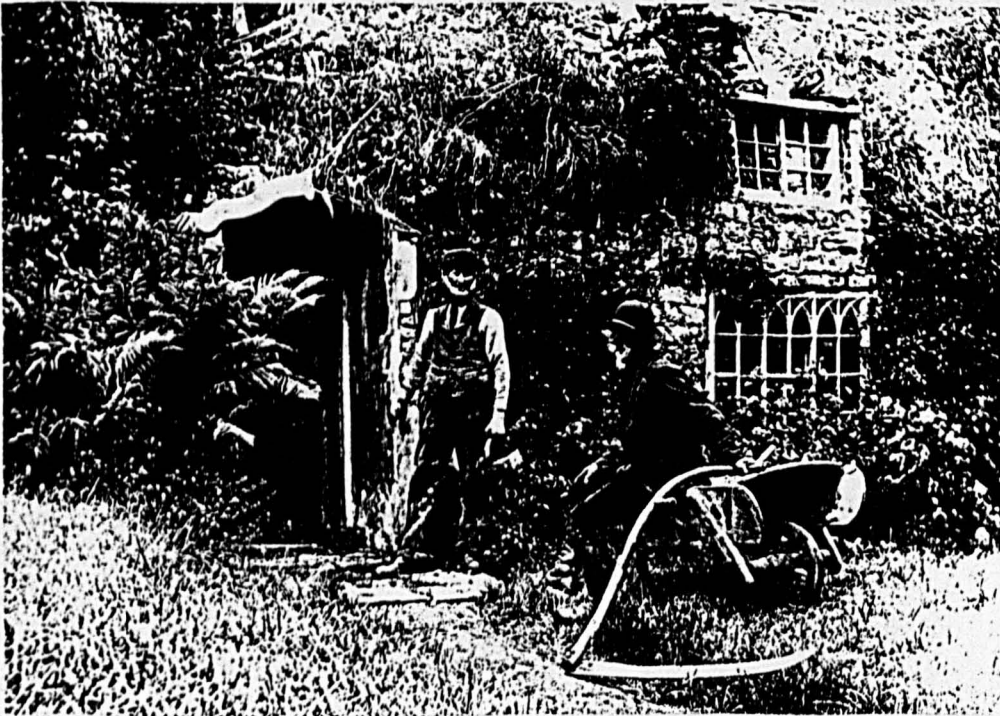
These wars were anything but "fully" documented on picture postcards; the visual element in the postcards sent home from them was rigidly selected and sanitised, and if the message written on them had attempted to convey anything approaching a true description it would have been immediately censored, or made the excuse for disciplinary action, or both. Holt and Holt (loc. cit., p.17) seem to miss the contradiction inherent in their statement that "The way our Victorian and Edwardian forebears lived, dressed, and spent their leisure, whom they admired, where they spent their holidays, what they wrote from the trenches to wives and sweethearts, their politics, what made them laugh, their artistic values, all these facts (sic) can be gleaned from an average-sized collection", and their admission three lines later that "there are few hints to be found on the postcard of the hard conditions and poverty that the mass of the people had to endure to make this elegance possible for the few. The seaside resorts are always peopled with fashion plates in their Sunday best - the scruffy urchins only crop up on the comic cards as appealing little ragamuffins, and the horrors of the First World War produced some of the most beautiful cards."

The truth of the matter is that there are two kinds of social documentation which can be gleaned from

photographs. The evidence in the first category is hard, incontrovertible proof that, for instance, "changes in the environment... had taken place over periods of time" (Harker, loc.cit.,) or that the given picture is a true indication of "how the area looked at the beginning of this century" (Klamkin, loc. cit.). Thus, if one of Watson's photographs shows the railway viaduct over the Esk, (plate 72), it is a reasonable assumption that it is a fair representation of the structure as it existed at that time, since it was not likely to have been superimposed or faked. If another (plate 35) shows a steam train climbing the cliff-top above Sandsend, and the date of this railway's completion is known from other sources, that may be taken as proof that certain other features or activities portrayed in the photograph existed or were continuing at that date.

It is similarly beyond reasonable doubt that Watson's picture of cobbles beached at Staithes (plate 87) proves that such boats fished out of that village, but were registered in Whitby, as the "WY" on their bows shows.

The second category of information apparently conveyed by a photograph is that which suggests an interpretation which is at best a reasonable supposition, but one not susceptible of proof, and which at worst may be misleading. To quote but one example at this stage, the photographs of what Watson called "Robson's Old Cottage" are highly relevant.



To face p.-98-  
(See line 2 )

The cottage was photographed by both Watson (see plate 151) at an unknown date, and by Sutcliffe, who had taken what Shaw (1978), p.61, calls "a charming picture on a wet plate probably dating from the mid 1870s." It would be easy to assume that the derelict hovel in Watson's photograph is indicative of the deplorable housing conditions of the Victorian poor: the point is that the picture in itself is not proof of this, whilst the possibility remains that it is precisely that. There is however no certainty that this cottage was still inhabited, nor that the old man standing outside it lived there: (the charming, well dressed young lady in Sutcliffe's picture almost certainly did not - why then should the old man's presence there suggest that he did?) We do not know for certain that he was "Robson", nor is there any proof that the cottage was - as Shaw says - "on the Mulgrave estate". The late Lord Normanby could not remember or locate it, nor can his present Estate Manager. It would also have been surprising if the Lord Normanby of the time had allowed any tenant-occupied property of his to fall into such disrepair, since (as several of Watson's negatives prove) he was at the time having repairs done to cottages in far better condition near Watson's own house in Lythe.

The possibility exists, then, that both Watson's and Sutcliffe's views of the cottage (especially, perhaps, Sutcliffe's sanitised version) were intended not as documentary proof of anything at all, but merely as



picture postcards or "views of the district" which would sell to the Victorian holiday-makers in Sandsend.

Even when Holt and Holt's "scruffy urchins" (loc. cit., p. 17) apparently receive a more realistic and representational treatment, as for example in Watson's "A Street in Staithes" (plate 92), the question remains as to the validity of our first impression that they are truly representative of the poor of the day. The fact that this boy was barefoot when photographed does not prove that he had no boots, any more than Sutcliffe's "Water Rats" suggests that the boys had no clothes. It is of course highly probable that the lad had no footwear - a photographer of Watson's working class background and strong religious convictions would have been very unlikely to bribe him to take off his boots and pose barefoot for a photograph - but if we need proof of the poverty of some Victorian children we must turn from the purely visual, which could have been faked or staged, to the written evidence of the Lythe headmaster's log book (March 1st., 1864) that "Tho. Hepton of Sandsend has no clothes to come to school in", and to the regular entries (e.g., "27th March 1874", "Oct. 9 1874", "June 12 1875", that "Mr. White the relieving officer paid the bill for the pauper children." See Endnote 9.

Thus, in evaluating the importance, validity and reliability of the social documentation in the photography of Watson and others, it will always be necessary to

decide whether the photographs can be proved to carry historical information, or whether they merely confirm already written history, or perhaps even give a false impression of the historical truth as provable from other sources. It is a principle which will be borne in mind throughout the ensuing analysis and evaluation of Watson's work as a social document.

## PART II

### The importance of Watson's photography as a social document

#### Chapter Five:(I) Watson's Yorkshire: a description of Whitby and the surrounding area in Watson's lifetime.

Watson's area of operations was bounded by a line drawn roughly from Staithes in the north to Westerdale and Robin Hood's Bay, i.e., anywhere within cycling distance of his studio and darkroom in Lythe, since this was his usual mode of travel.

This is the "county of broad acres", much of it in the ownership of what Frank (1980) calls "the provincial aristocracy" like the Marquis of Normanby at Mulgrave Castle ( see endnote 10 , and plates 1 and 2) and other wealthy landowners whose estates were exemplified by Watson in such photographs as WHITM:WAT 125, 126, 128, 137, and 130-134 inclusive, all showing Wynyard Park, the seat of Lord Londonderry. (See plates 139 and 140). Watson's landscapes range from the fertile lowland farms and steep-sided, wooded valleys to the steep hills leading to exposed clifftops or bleak moorland, impoverished hill farms and exposed villages like Lealholm (WHITM:WAT 127);

Castleton (WHITM:WAT 138); Ainthorpe (WHITM:WAT 145-146); Danby (WHITM:WAT 147) or Glaisdale ( WHITM:WAT 551-552), (see plates 5-10 inclusive), and include of course the township of Whitby itself.

Writing in 1957, Daysh (1958) observes (p.51), "The ancient seaport and more recent holiday resort of Whitby has grown to a town of a little over 11,000 inhabitants." For more than a hundred years, then, and spanning Watson's lifetime, the population of Whitby had remained almost constant: in 1831 there were 10,399 inhabitants; in 1861 12,051; in 1871 12,460, rising to a peak of 14,086 in 1881 and dropping again to 11,451 in 1931. (Census of England and Wales).

The reasons for the population remaining in general roughly constant, and for such fluctuations as there were from time to time, emerge from a study of Whitby's location and the potential of its industries. First, although the mouth of the River Esk had from earliest times provided a much-needed haven in a busy sea-route along a forbidding coast where such harbours of refuge were and still are few and far between, the river's shallow and narrow bed had always impeded communication with the interior, rendering navigation towards the hinterland impossible except for smaller boats and at High Water, and then only as far as Ruswarp (see p.10, Part I). Secondly, the steep-sided valleys of the area, itself not richly productive, rendered the immediate hinterland difficult of access and

presented great difficulties in the building of the roads and railways.

Early Whitby had thus depended for its livelihood almost exclusively on the sea. The busy sea-route, carrying coal between Wear or Tyne and London, existed as early as Elizabethan times, and had received a great impetus with the discovery of alum shales (notably at Sandsend and Saltwick) in the seventeenth century. Exploitation of these depended on an abundant and cheap supply of coal, because as Turton (1938), states, "The alum shale was calcined on piles of wood, but the boiling of the alum solutions was best effected with coals" ( p. 78). The ships loading coal at Harraton carried it down the Wear to Sunderland and if not proceeding direct to London, off-loaded it for the alum works at Whitby, Sandsend or Mulgrave. They thence carried alum to London and on the return voyage brought back to the alum works large quantities of London urine, still used at the time in the production of alum, the chemistry of the process still being imperfectly understood. Turton (1938) has many references (e.g., pp.93, 108) to Luke Fox, in his day a Whitby mariner as famous as the Scoresbys two centuries later, being in the coal/alum/urine trade, e.g., "The Allomes Amye of Whitby, Master Luke Fox, a well-known Whitby Mariner, who commanded in succession many vessels of that port, brought 23 tons of urine from London and transported thither on her return 28 tons 18 hundredweight

of Alum."

This trade, and the fishing and whaling activities of the port, had given rise to Whitby ship-ownership and to ship-building and its associated industries such as roperies, mast-, spar-, and sail-making, ship-repairs and boat-building, and as the whaling, ship-building, alum and other industries declined and finally ceased altogether the holiday industry, fortunately for the prosperity of Whitby, developed greatly in compensation.

Whitby acquired early the reputation of building fine ships: Cook for instance insisted that all his vessels be Whitby-built, along collier lines. Its reputation in the heyday of the wooden ships also appealed to visitors from the interior who, coming as early as the 18th. century for the putative medicinal benefits of the chalybeate springs (which had already given Whitby a reputation as a spa) later learned to appreciate the scenic delights of the hinterland and (later still), the pleasures of the "Whitby Sands" which ran all the way to Sandsend. The added attraction of the increasingly popular seabathing, already established in Whitby by 1850 and at Scarborough even earlier, needed only the development of the railway services to Whitby before developing as the town's third major industry.

## The decline of the Whitby ship-building industry

Despite the fluctuations in activity due to the trade depressions of the first half of the nineteenth century, shipbuilding and fishing remained important sources of income for Whitby until 1902, when the major yard, the Whitehall Shipyard, ceased production and many skilled men left the town to seek employment in shipbuilding elsewhere. (See endnote 11.)

The decline and eventual cessation of shipbuilding in Whitby has however been due not primarily to economic factors, but to the geography of the locality. The major limitation was always the restricted width of the sailing passage between the Upper Harbour in which almost all the building yards were situated, and the Lower Harbour (where the fishing fleets berthed) and the open sea. During the heyday of the sailing ships there was adequate space for launching, and passage past the swing bridge over the estuary in the town centre presented no great problem whilst the ships remained relatively small and of relatively shallow draught. (See however endnote 12.)

But the 19th. century saw a greatly increased demand by the owners for ever larger ships: the figures quoted by Daysh (1958), pp. 66 and 71, show that between 1851 and 1870 the average gross tonnage of vessels launched at the Whitehall Shipyard had nearly doubled ( from 221 to 401 ); between 1871 and 1875 nineteen ships averaging 1,357 tons gross were launched, and in 1901-1902 three steel ships of average tonnage 5,087 were produced. These ships were

manifestly too large to be profitably produced in an estuary with the physical limitations of the Esk. Ship owners were demanding not only larger ships, but vessels built in iron or steel, and the expense of obtaining these materials in the Whitby shipyards made competition with yards such as those on Tyneside, situated nearer the source of supplies, difficult. Launching too proved difficult in the context of the geography of the Upper Harbour, and although in 1892-1902 the Whitehall yard built ships over 300 feet long and more than 40 feet in beam, the sighting of the slips and the shallow bed of the Esk meant that they could be launched only at exceptional High Water Springs, and even then had to be moved elsewhere to be fitted out and engined. The bottleneck of the passage between the two harbours had been eased in 1835 by the building of a new swing road bridge giving a width of 45 feet for sea passage, but after 1902 the Whitehall yard built no more ships (as distinct from boats) and the Whitby ship-building industry ceased to exist. At the height of its prosperity it had employed 700-800 men, and this skilled labour force was now lost to the town and forced to seek employment elsewhere. In 1908 building commenced on a new swing bridge which eventually increased the sea passage to 70 feet, but this failed to restore the industry to the town: the other limiting factors were too strong and further expansion of the Whitby shipbuilding industry would in any case have been impossible.



Boat-building survived precisely because the limitations of size and materials did not apply to smaller vessels, but ship-repairing declined commensurately with ship-building. The old dry docks were too small and too inconveniently sited to accommodate the new large ships: the smaller trading vessels faced increasing competition from the developing railways, and it is ironic that it was precisely one of these, the North East Railway Company, that bought up the land and filled in the dry dock in Hobkirk's bankrupt yard, along with others, in 1862.

Ship-owning and maritime trading had kept pace with ship-building, or rather, the health of the latter had reflected the extent and prosperity of the former. Throughout the 18th. and well into the 19th. century Whitby was one of the first ten UK ports as regards numbers of ships and tonnage registered; the trading peak was reached in 1866 - three years after Watson's birth - when Whitby owned 414 vessels totalling 75,417 tons, but all but three of these were sailing vessels, and the demand for larger, steel, steam freighters had already made itself felt and caused the closure of Hobkirk's, Barrick's, and others' yards. As was to be expected, ship-building had gone into its terminal decline before the trading in older, smaller, sailing vessels followed it.

Although the major component of the trade of the sailing ships had been the transport of coal from Tyneside and Sunderland, earning the "Whitby colliers" an enviable

reputation for seaworthiness and robust construction, there was also a thriving trade with Scandinavia, whose timber was much in demand in the days of ship-building in Whitby, and some of the larger sailing vessels had also carried emigrants to America and Canada.

The alum trade declined after the discovery of aniline dyes and the growth of an improved technology, and ceased in the Whitby area in 1871 (see p.134 ). The transport of ironstone from the mines at Grosmont to Whitby, made possible by the opening of the Pickering - Whitby railway in 1836, gave a short-lived boost to the trade in shipping it to Tyneside for smelting: "By 1846 30,000 tons per annum were being sent to the Birtley Iron Company, carried mostly by colliers returning empty to Newcastle from the Thames" (Daysh, 1958, p. 250). This however declined with the development of the Cleveland ore, which was of better quality and much nearer to the foundries, and ceased with the closure of the last Grosmont mine in 1915. The transport of stone from local quarries at Grosmont and Aislaby was taken over by the railways after 1836, and the Arctic Whaling "fishery" trade ceased in 1837, having made considerable wealth for a few ship-owners and masters since its inception in 1753 ( see endnote 13 ) and its heyday in 1777-78, before the fall in the price of whale oil made it unprofitable.

Other small industries had a short-lived success: there was brick and pipe manufacture at Comondale (see

plates 67 and 191 ) and earlier bricks were made from the clays at Egton, but these works were abandoned during Watson's lifetime (Daysh, 1958, p. 19). Jet, which had been known to occur in many coastal and inland sites in the area since the Bronze Age, had a vogue soon after the discovery about 1800 that the stone could be turned in a lathe. The Great Exhibition of 1851, and the well known preference for personal ornaments of jet voiced by Queen Victoria, lent further popularity to the product for great occasions like the funeral of Wellington in 1852 and of Prince Albert in 1862. The total jet labour force in Whitby was about 1,000 between 1854 and 1860, rising to a peak in 1870 of about 1,400, or some 11% of the population. There were jet workshops all over the town - Sutcliffe set up his studio in part of one after his return from Tunbridge Wells - but after the period of royal and national mourning for the Prince Consort was over, the fashion for jet jewelry declined, cheaper jet than the genuine Whitby product was imported, and the industry had all but died out by the end of the century.

With the collapse of the industries mentioned and of the associated sea traffic, Whitby had only its fishing to sustain it. As Daysh (1958) puts it, "Throughout this century the trade of the port has declined until the present time, when except for the fishing it has virtually ceased altogether" (p. 251). It was fortunate, therefore, that Whitby's fishing continued to flourish - Daysh

(1958), p.67, maintains that "the herring fishery was increasing rapidly in the early 1860s" - and that the holiday industry was poised to develop rapidly and successfully as soon as the railway connections with the rest of Britain were built.

#### Whitby's fishing industry

"Whitby as a port is primarily and almost exclusively a fishing port", according to Daysh (loc. cit., p.121), yet in 1956 the Whitby fleet consisted of 16 keel boats (only 12 or 13 of which were active) and 12 cobbles, of which 8 laid up for the winter. Broadly speaking, then, it consisted at the end of Watson's lifetime of a tiny fleet with a total workforce of perhaps 100 men and boys, and of which perhaps only two-thirds were in use at any one time. (See endnote 14).

The only increase in these numbers occurred during the late summer, when the Scottish fishing fleet, following the herring shoals along the English coast, regularly used Whitby as a base from which to fish and at which to unload their catch and to re-provision. They of course brought income to the Harbour Authority, to ancillary trades and to the lodging-house proprietors and shopkeepers. From the end of July to late September they formed an addition to the fishing fleet of as many as 120 fishing vessels, which according to Daysh was the number in harbour one week in September, 1848 (loc.cit., p. 121).The same authority

points out ( pp.122-126) that herrings and shellfish (crabs and lobsters) accounted for much the greater part of the fish landings at Whitby, and whereas the shellfish catch increased steadily between 1938 and 1955, the amount and value of wet fish other than herring was very small indeed, representing the outcome of traditional inshore fishing methods such as the long-lining portrayed by Sutcliffe. In years when the herring catch failed ( he quotes 1937 and 1938 ) the value of wet fish landed in Whitby was a mere £8,000, a figure equalled by the value of shellfish caught: it was therefore indeed fortunate for the town that a large new industry developed as the old ones disappeared.

The development of the holiday industry in the Whitby area.

The earliest holiday makers were drawn to small resorts such as Scarborough and Whitby not by the attraction of the seaside but by what were reputed to be the medicinal qualities of the spas. Scarborough had had its spa in the early 1700s; Whitby's is mentioned a century later, when there was apparently a "spring issuing at the foot of the cliff about half a mile west of the Battery" (Daysh, loc. cit., p.147), with "conveniences for drinkers on the spot." These "conveniences" were destroyed by the sea and the location all but forgotten, but a plan to revive interest in the medicinal properties of the spa waters was implemented in 1844 when a pump-room and the

Victoria Spa were built over another chalybeate spring in Bagdale. The main attraction of Whitby as a holiday resort was however not its spa waters but the new-found passion for sea-bathing. "Ever since George III (d. 1820) had set the mood by swimming off Weymouth to the accompaniment of a chamber orchestra, a string of resorts had grown up along the coasts of England, ornamented with elegant squares and piers, as sea-water became fashionable for the purposes of health. These were unique to England. Salt water was a novel alternative to spa waters as a cure for almost anything. One drank several tumblers of it, or dipped in it before breakfast." (Sprawson, 1992a).

By 1817 ( see p.161, below) Scarborough was well developed as a bathing resort, having started as a spa in the early 18th. century. In 1810 Redcar was beginning to be known as a health resort, and Whitby by 1827 was already complaining of a shortage of accommodation for many holiday makers wishing to enjoy the Whitby Public Baths. It is interesting that at about the same time Kirby (1828) was of the opinion that "the local position of Whitby will always recommend itself to lovers of the picturesque" - an early hint that the Whitby tourist trade would not be dependent solely on the attractions of salt water and Whitby Sands. The tourists came to Whitby primarily for the sea-bathing, it is true, but increasingly also for the scenery in the district. Writers and artists were attracted for the same reason, and came to enjoy the

inspiration of a port community with its specialised trades and occupations and its unique historical setting. Scarborough achieved its railway link in 1845 and a great increase in business based on the holiday industry immediately followed. In the case of Whitby the Whitby and Pickering line had been completed in 1836 but proved unsuccessful until 1846, when it was sold to the York and North Midland Company at a great loss. In 1848 it was acquired by the "Railway King", George Hudson, who had grandiose plans for the development of the North Yorkshire coast. His first step in the fulfilment of these was the building of the "West Cliff Estate" to provide hotels and boarding houses of impressive quality, calculated to cater for a wealthy middle-class clientèle. Boarding-house accommodation expanded rapidly, and in 1854 there were about 300 rooms available; by 1869 the figure had risen to 1,050 and thereafter tended to level off. In an attempt to stimulate demand and growth, the West Cliff Saloon and the Promenade were added to the West Cliff Estate, and with the opening of the coastal railway links with Middlesborough to the north and Scarborough to the south in the 1880s, the whole coast was thrown open to the large population of Tees-side.

By 1850 sea-bathing was well established at Whitby and "nine bathing machines were stationed on the Sands from May to December" ( Daysh, op. cit., p.149 ). When Watson photographed the Sands ( see plates 79 and 80,

unfortunately undated ), there were more than a dozen machines and at least 25 "Bathing tents for hire". "Nor were the beauties of the surrounding countryside neglected: 'The picturesque scenery leads, in the summer season, to the formation of picnic parties and the sea to trips by steam-boats, yachts etc.... Pleasure carriages, gigs, phaetons and post-horses can be obtained... . ' The demand for natural scenery was now insatiable" (Daysh, loc.cit., p.149 ). Redcar and Saltburn continued to develop, and Scarborough, attractive to a fashionable public, also appealed to the middle-class visitor.

The railway link with York ( and therefore with the rest of England) had initially gained for Whitby a national clientèle: the coast line just referred to attracted a more local one, so that whereas in 1885 the resort had attracted as many visitors from London as from Yorkshire, by 1909 the appeal was much more local and almost two-thirds of Whitby's visitors then came from the North of England. (Daysh (1958), pp.151, 153).

#### Development of Whitby as a resort, 1914-1957

During World War I Whitby Urban Council acquired the foreshore rights and purchased the Spa, and immediately after the war became an active and progressive partner in the development and promotion of the town as a holiday centre. More outdoor facilities and sports fields were developed: after 1922 the Spa and its theatre gained an

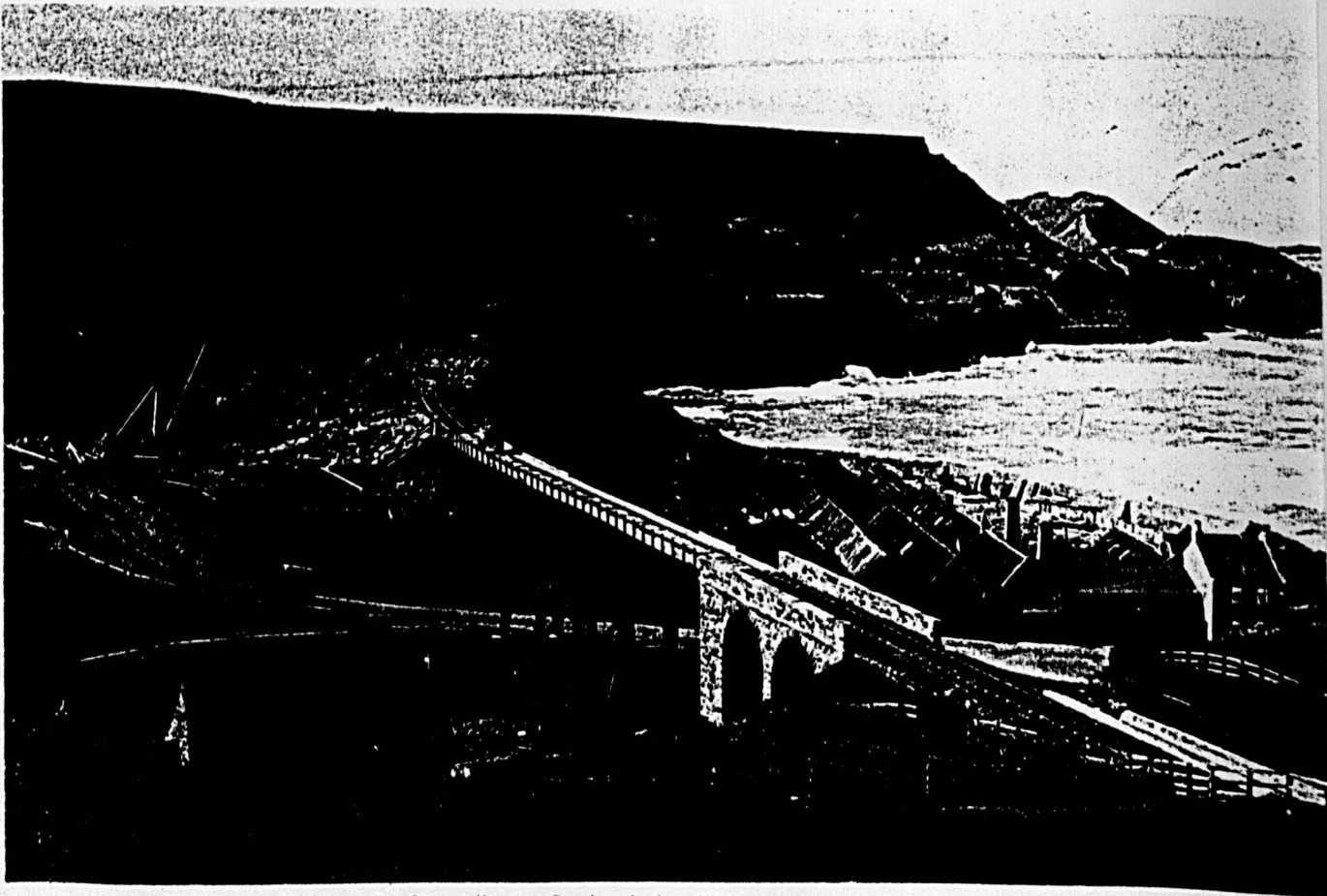


Orchestral Pavilion at which orchestral concerts of high quality were the rule until 1939. Hard tennis courts were built on the West Cliff Estate; golf, putting greens and bowls were provided; Pannett Park opened in 1928, and despite the general national depression of the 1930s the Whitby seasons were unexpectedly good and successful. New private hotels on the West Cliff and the North Promenade were built, and day trips from the West Riding of Yorkshire and Tees-side became increasingly popular. Whitby Golf Course was purchased by the Council; amusement arcades and the swimming pool at Upgang developed under private ownership; there were further developments to the Spa, and the sea-wall was further repaired in 1935. As Daysh (1958) puts it, "At the outbreak of war in 1939 Whitby had just completed a most successful season, with facilities and amenities equal to the best of the small British coastal resorts" (p. 154).

The year 1939 was however the high-water mark in the prosperity of Whitby as a holiday resort, and from then on decline set in. World War II saw much of the accommodation in Whitby requisitioned, properties in disrepair and empty, and almost all the holiday trade lost. After the war re-development was hindered by delays in de-requisitioning and repair; defences and the beach had to be cleared; much re-building of accommodation and amenities was necessary, and the necessary investment was not readily forthcoming. After the war increasing numbers took their holidays

abroad, the latter proving especially popular among the middle-class, professional and managerial classes upon whom the prosperity of the Whitby holiday trade had previously depended. The residential family sea-side holidays of old tended to go out of fashion, and people who did still take them tended to favour holiday camps or caravan sites rather than hotels and boarding houses. The Whitby holiday trade did not recover its pre-war prosperity and promise in Watson's lifetime.

( See page 117, line 14 )



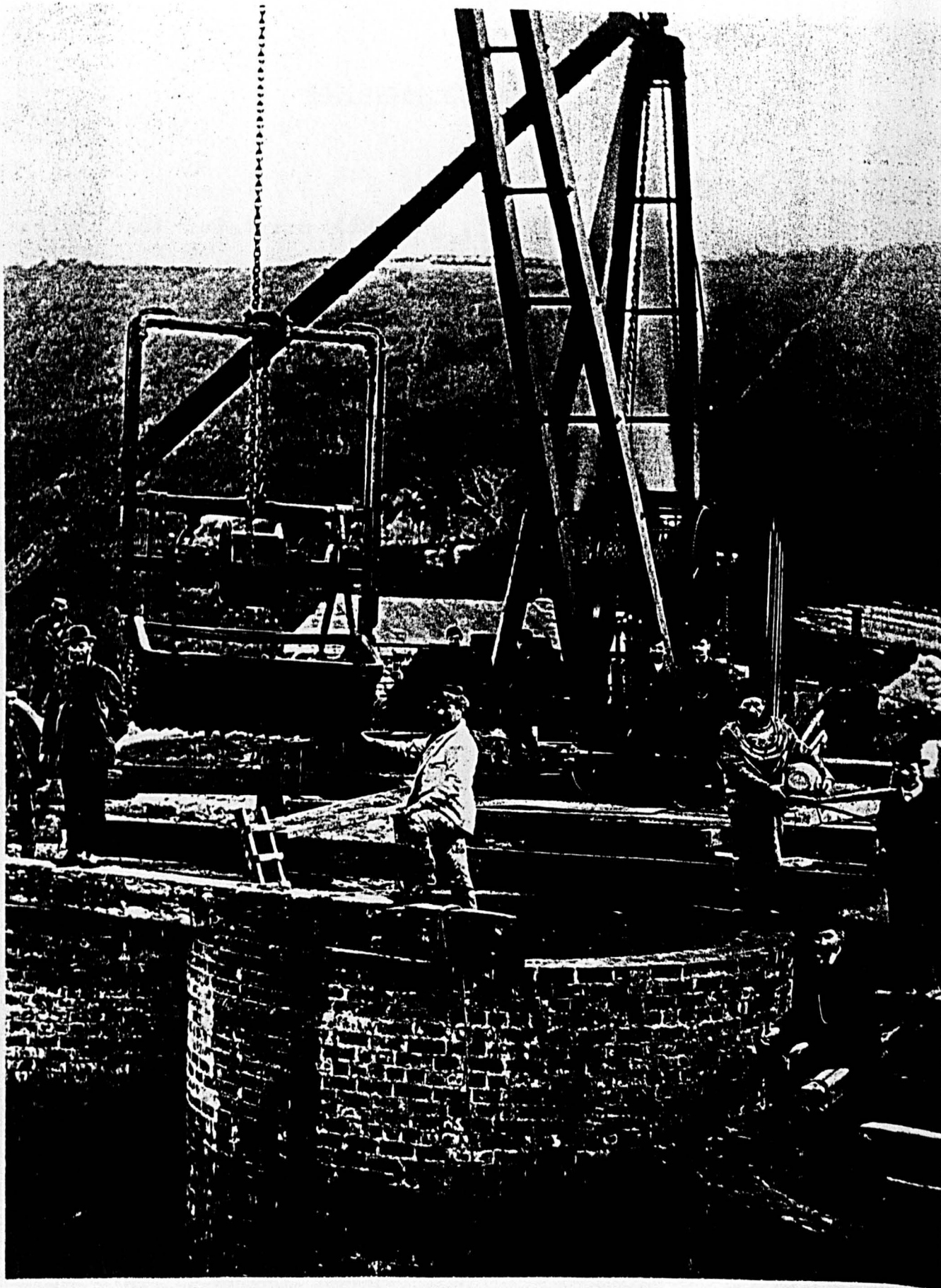
Building the Whitby to Stockton railway at Sandsend, circa 1874.

## Chapter Five: (2) The infra-structure

### (i) The railways

Williams (1980), p. 201) maintains that Watson "documented painstakingly the building of roads and railways" in his neighbourhood. In fact Watson documented painstakingly the building of only one road, (the Whitby - Sandsend road, opened in 1925 - see plate 11), and he did not portray the building of any railways. In his area such building had been completed before he was out of his apprenticeship as a joiner. His nearest railway, the Whitby-Loftus line, was one of the latest to be built, and it was opened on 3 December 1883 by the North Eastern Railway. (Lewis, ed., (1991), p.172).

Sutcliffe, on the other hand, born an all-important decade earlier than Watson, was active photographically whilst the railways were still under construction. He accordingly has pictures of the Whitby -Stockton railway under construction at Sandsend "circa 1874" (Shaw (1978), p. 40). Shaw's dating is probably correct: the line being built at Sandsend in 1874 was originally promoted by the Whitby, Redcar and Middlesborough Union Railway, and the extension eastwards of the coast line from Stockton was undertaken by the Stockton and Darlington Railway, which amalgamated with the North Eastern Railway on 13 July 1863. (Lewis (1991) pp. 172, 175.)



To face p.-118-  
( See line 24 )

When the much larger North Eastern Railway Company took over from these two smaller companies the further development of the line, it found fault with the design, ironwork and workmanship of some of the development so far. Viaducts, for instance, had to be re-designed and strengthened (doubtless the Tay Bridge disaster of 28 December 1879, in which the railway bridge blew down, was very much in the North Eastern Railway Company's mind) and this took several years. Hence the delay in the opening of the line until 1883 by the North Eastern Railway Company. (J.Morfin, North Eastern Railway historian, by personal communication.)

No one could claim that there is evidence of an explanation for this delay in Watson's photography, but once the reason is known, WHITM:WAT 1315 takes on a new significance. Plate 71, unfortunately undated, is a view of the railway viaduct at Staithes, showing clearly the additional bracing thought necessary by the North Eastern Railway Company.

Sandsend was a favourite location of Watson's: the Watson Collection includes at least 230 photographs of it, but at the time this railway was being built (and photographed by Sutcliffe) Watson was only 11 years old. Similarly, Sutcliffe has photographs of the construction of the railway viaducts over the Esk at Whitby, dated "around 1882" (Shaw (1978), p.41, and Shaw (1974), p.48.) Watson's photograph ( WHITM:WAT 1848), entitled "The viaduct,

Whitby", shows the completed structure. (See plate 72.)

It is no less interesting for that. What Watson photographed were the railways not under construction, but completed and in their heyday. His "The Viaduct, Whitby" shows a superb structure, crafted in brick to last a century and more. The 0-6-0 steam locomotive at Castleton, (WHITM:WAT 417) is spotlessly clean, its paintwork gleaming and glossy, and the well dressed sightseers who have clambered over it can apparently lean back against the boiler without fear of soiling their Sunday-best clothes. (See plate 12.)

The small railway halts at Kettleness (WHITM:WAT 884 and 1533), Sleights (WHITM:WAT 839), Castleton (WHITM:WAT 996) and Egton (WHITM:WAT 109) show stations in the best days of the steam railways. ( See plates 13 and 14. ) The platforms are free of all litter; graffiti is non-existent; the booking offices, stationmaster's house and signal boxes are substantially built in stone and well maintained; the uniformed staff dignified and the platform flower-beds well tended.

This picture of the excellent quality of British railway surveying, engineering, construction and management emerging from Watson's photographs, however, is not due to any deliberate intention on Watson's part to portray these aspects of the railway industry. On the contrary, he probably intended the above photographs solely as material for picture postcards which would appeal to holidaymakers in

the area. The fact that he takes the high standards and quality of what he sees for granted, in no need of comment, suggests that this is what the late Victorians and the Edwardians expected of their transport system, of which they were justifiably proud but at which they were not surprised. In the absence of any direct comment by Watson, who has for instance no photographs of massive vibrant steam locomotives in action, one is forced to glean from his photographs information which he would have thought hardly worth remarking on. Thus, the excellent design and robust durability of the iron viaducts over the becks between Sandsend and Whitby are evidenced, for instance, by WHITM:WAT 326. Annotated "East Row, Sandsend, May 20th 1910" by Watson, this was taken to show the riverbed blocked by the debris of the stone roadbridge carried away in the recent flood. Without emphasis or comment, however, the iron railway bridge in the background stands unscathed. (See plate 175.)

Not even the superb engineering and building of the Victorian railways, however, invariably survived such extreme weather conditions, and Watson's photograph WHITM:WAT 1097 shows the demolition of a stone railway bridge in the Esk valley between Glaisdale and Egton Bridge during the disastrous flood of 1930. This bridge was only one of several carried away: see also WHITM:WAT 2058 and 2068 and plates 176 and 177.



### Summary and evaluation: (i) the railways

Documentation in this section all lies within the category of "already written history" (pp.99-100, above). The photography here does not add to our already existing knowledge of the building and condition of the railways of the area and the time; indeed, a knowledge of the local history is often necessary to explain certain details in the pictures, such as the additional strengthening on the railway viaduct at Staithes.

Once this is known, however, it is sometimes possible to ascribe an "earliest possible" date to the undated photographs, and the latter can then be used to supply useful approximate dating of other details in the images. There is, for instance, a steam train above Sandsend in plate 35. The railway here was not completed until 1883, so it is justifiable to describe the condition of the old alum works in the foreground as being "as they were in 1883 or later." For how long before 1883 the works might have been in the same condition is of course not ascertainable from the photograph.

### The infra-structure (contd.)

#### (ii) The roads.

It was anticipated that an analysis and description of roads and road transport in Watson's day would form an important part of this research, and accordingly "roads" and

"road surface" were designated keywords related to key fields in the content-outline section of the documentation. In the event no fewer than 520 (some 21%) of the photographs in the Watson Collection proved to provide evidence on this topic.

Spratt and Harrison (1989) describe the development of the road network in Watson's area. "The unsurfaced medieval roads were frequented by horses and pannier-trains, small two-wheeled carts and in a few cases by four-wheeled ox-waggons" (p. 188). When this unsurfaced track became deeply rutted, or so miry as to be impassable, a fresh track on temporarily firmer ground was trodden out alongside the old. Later on, causeways or pannier-ways of stone flags were laid for the foot- and horse-traffic. It is amazing for how long this system of very primitive roads lasted: until the middle of the 19th. century "communications were not much improved from their condition in the Middle Ages" (Spratt and Harrison, *op. cit.*, p.193). By the end of the century, however, all of the principal roads in Watson's area had improved from the miry, unsurfaced moorland roads referred to: Watson's photographs show that they were now at least macadamised (though not yet tarmacadamised).

John MacAdam, who died in 1836, was the Scottish civil engineer who lent his name to the system of road construction invented by him, under which broken rocks were compacted by rolling into a firm base, and then surfaced with small stones, gravel and chippings to form a well

drained surface which withstood wear surprisingly well. All of Watson's roads up to about 1924 were of this type: his photographs (WHITM:WAT 1145 and 1146, plate 15 ) of Stonegate, Lealholm, show piles of chippings by the roadside waiting to be applied as re-surfacing, and WHITM:WAT 1004 shows a steam roller which has just been used to compact a newly laid road surface. (See plate 16.) The slight ridges of wet gravel pressed out at the sides of the roller during previous passes can be clearly seen.

Neither the roads between villages, nor those through the villages themselves, were yet surfaced with tar. The horse-drawn traffic they carried could climb steep hills (see plate 5, WHITM:WAT 504, of Lythe Bank) though the surface was cut up badly during wet weather ( WHITM:WAT 263-67; WHITM:WAT 504, plate 5) and in the village streets, where the wear was heaviest, was frequently appalling (see plates 17-24, and WHITM:WAT 1206 of Roxby). Dr.R.W.S. Bishop, who began practising in North Yorkshire in 1894, i.e., two years after Watson set himself up as a professional photographer, states (Bishop 1923,p.10) that "before the local District Councils Act was passed for their improvement, 'bad' does not describe the condition of the roads. Many of them were damnable." He describes the first steam roller, too, as the cause of "much excitement and wonder among the moormen" (p.13).

There is an interesting echo of the flagged causeways laid over the moors to supplement the unmade

tracks ( see above, p.122), in many of Watson's photographs. There is frequently a sidewalk of single flagstones, sometimes in addition to a continuous, apparently newer, pavement on the other side of the road, as for instance in WHITM:WATS 221, WHITM:WAT 1140 ( dated by Watson July, 1928), which was, it seems, used by pedestrians and perhaps by horse-riders, when the road proper was too soft or too dirty. Judging by the well-worn condition of the flags, this occurred frequently and they were much used. (See plates 20-23).

None of the roads pictured by Watson is indisputably coated with tarmacadam, though the smooth and shiny road surface of WHITM:WATS 52 ( dated "Near Lythe, Aug. 17. 1931") suggests very strongly that it was in fact tarmacadam. It does seem, however, that the roads in the area were macadamised and not tarmac until 1925 at the earliest - a short stretch of the seafront road at Sandsend (WHITM:WAT 363 dated Jan. 27. 1902, and plate 24) appears to have been patched with asphalt, but all the other photographs of Sandsend seafront show a macadam road. The earliest proof positive of tarmacadamising which Watson's photography provides is negative WHITM:WAT 1594. Dated by Watson July 7 1924, this shows the "New" Road from Whitby to Sandsend under construction, and reveals not only the heaps of ballast, but also barrels of tar waiting to be spread, and the four-wheeled mobile boiler in which the tar was heated. It seems reasonable to suppose that the "new"

Whitby-Sandsend road (opened in 1925) was tarmacadamised throughout and was one of the first in the area to be so treated. ( See plates 11 and 25. )

This would be in line with the opinion of Spratt and Harrison (1989), p.213, that the local roads "have been steadily improved since the early part of the (twentieth) century. Many have been widened, with gradients eased, bends removed, and tarmacadam applied."

It seems that tarmacadam may have come to the Whitby area later than elsewhere, perhaps by as much as a quarter of a century. The Ready Reference Encyclopedia Britannica, (1990), Vol.7, p.601 and Vol.10, p.99, suggests that it was the increasing demands of cyclists for a smoother road surface which led to tarmacadam being introduced "in the latter years of the (nineteenth) century". Most of Watson's photographic outings were by bicycle, it will be remembered (Richardson (1990), p. 30), so he must have endured poor road surfaces until the end of World War I at least. On the other hand Winter (1966) p. 105, has a photograph of a road gang in Lincolnshire tarring a road as early as 1910. It was about this time also that the motor car began to establish itself as a means of transport. According to WHITM:WAT 391, "Willoughby Jardine Esq." had an early limousine by "Jan. 19. 1910" (plate 26): DVLC Swansea refused to divulge the registration dates of the vehicles in Watson's photographs when requested, but the earliest possible date for the registration of the bus PW 9884 in

WHITM:WATS 24 is January 1923 (Library Researcher of National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, by personal communication 15 March 1993,) and vehicles U 519 (WHITM:WAT 472) and DN 8120 (WHITM:WAT 470 and plate 30) date to approximately 1910 or slightly earlier (Transport Curator, Whitby Museum, by personal communication, March 1993.)

WHITM:WAT 1188 (dated by Watson June 14(?) 1922) reveals the relative importance of the various modes of road transport anticipated for the "new" road Whitby - Sandsend, and the tolls applicable. (See endnote 15.) "Until the Second World War, many of the old moorland roads remained unsurfaced except for periodic dressings with rubble limestone or, quite often, iron slag from the old workings; the motor car was still a middle-class luxury." (Spratt and Harrison (1989), p.198). Watson's photographs make it abundantly clear that in his day the horse remained the main means of road transport. His roads are littered with piles of horse droppings at frequent intervals, even in the village streets: two-wheeled carts and two- and four-wheeled carriages ( see plate 31) abound. Two-wheeled carts and four-wheeled drays transported the "Lythe Mutual" picnickers on their outing from Lythe every year (see plates 51-53): on "Aug.11. 1899" (WHITM:WATS 197) there were at least eighty members on "Ugthorpe moors". Horse-drawn drays delivered goods locally (WHITM:WAT 392, 504, 1787, and plates 5,27 and 66); three-horse teams hauled timber waggons bearing massive trees from the Mulgrave

estate (WHITM:WAT 297 and plate 28); even heavier loads of timber were hauled by a steam traction engine (WHITM:WAT 394, 1245 and plate 29) on "Sept.25. 1901", but lorries were nowhere to be seen, and the tractor was not yet heard of in Watson's area.

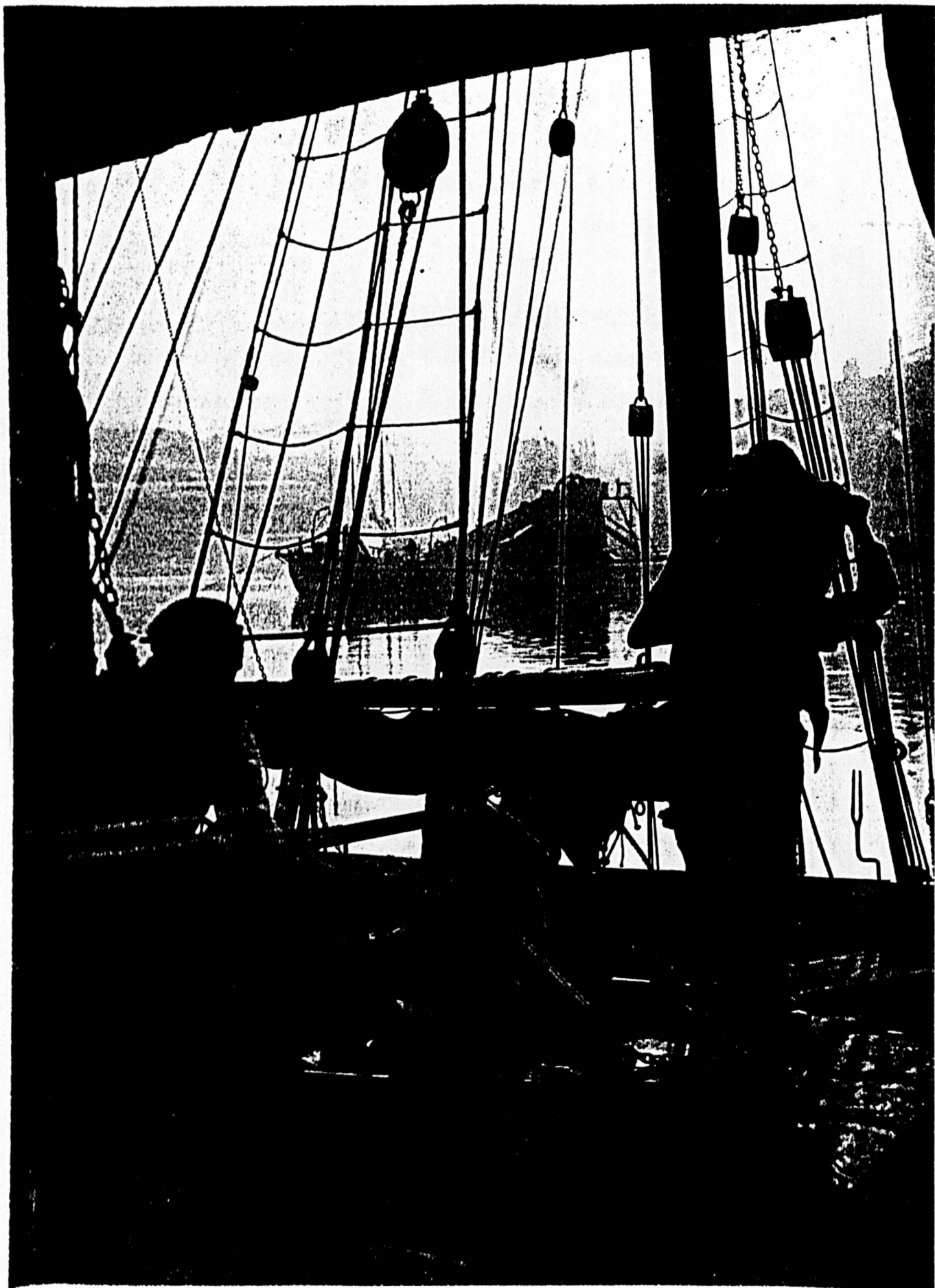
Summary and evaluation: (ii) the roads

Here again most of the photographic evidence merely confirms what is already known to the local historian, but the latter finds useful confirmation of the survival of old road-building materials and techniques (see pp. 122-3, above), and those photographs which are dated by Watson (e.g., plate 25), or which can be dated from details portrayed (e.g., as on p.121,) are invaluable in enabling the historian to confirm or improve his dating. The dated photograph at plate 25, for instance, is useful proof that tarmacadamising was being carried out in Watson's area in 1924, though there is no indication as to how much earlier it might have been the practice, and the photograph must not be thought to supply one.

The infra-structure (contd.):

(iii) Sea traffic.

The nineteenth century saw the major development of a north-south coastal trade that had existed for centuries. Coal had been shipped from Newcastle to London since the



To face p.-128-  
( See line 14 )

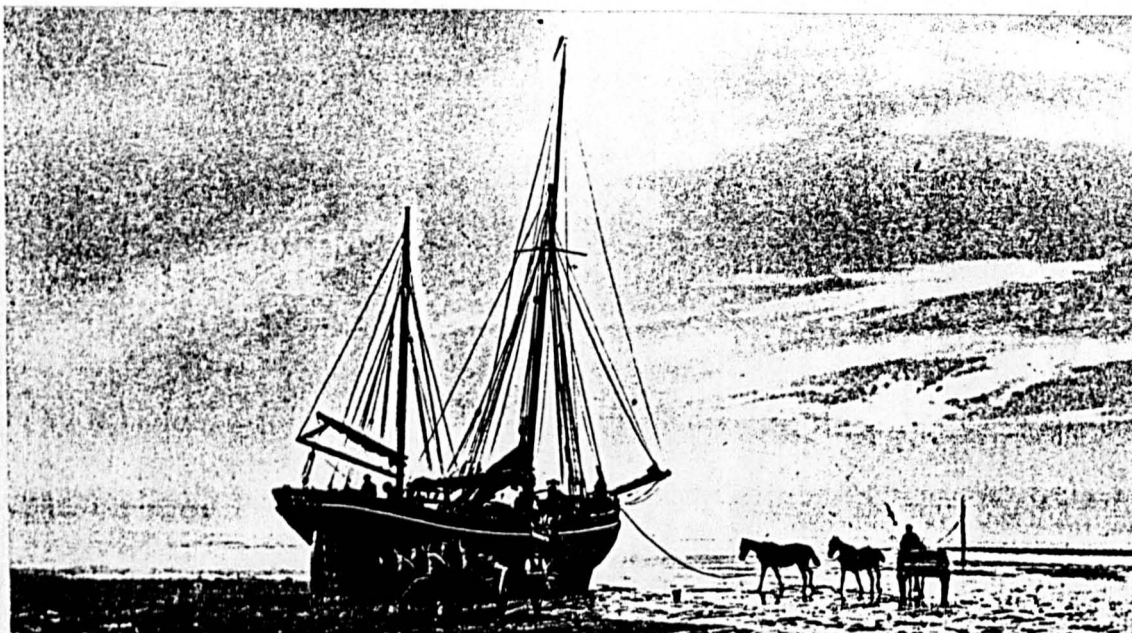


sixteenth century; in the nineteenth century it was necessary to transport coal from Newcastle to the Whitby area for the calcining of the alum shales to the north and the south of the town, and for the smelting of the iron ore from North Yorkshire. In addition, alum and ironstone had to be carried south to London and north to the smelting works on Tyne and Tees respectively.

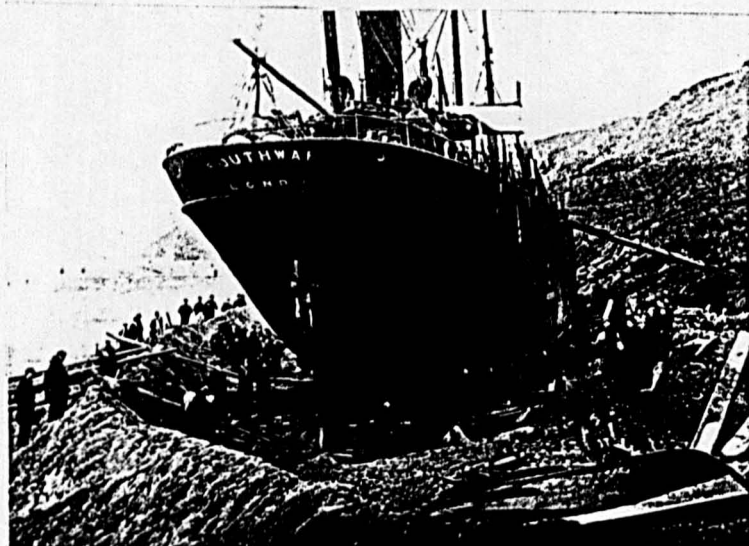
Accordingly, Whitby and Scarborough became the main bases for collier-ownership, and in the absence of a possible canal system (the river valleys were too steep, and in any case ran west-east, instead of north-south) all of this trade was carried by sea.

There is no direct evidence of any of this shipping trade in Watson's work, though Sutcliffe recorded it in a brilliantly executed contre-jour shot of men unloading coal-sacks in Whitby harbour in a picture in Shaw (1990), p. 5, and in a photograph in Shaw (1974) p.9, of a collier unloading on Sandsend beach. This was a common practice in fair weather, as it saved both harbour-dues and further transport costs.

Lewis ( 1991), p.53, adds the information that "At unknown dates..... Sandsend acquired a pier, adjacent to the final sites of the alum works, and where the car park is today", and under the magnifying glass Watson's WHITM:WAT 479 and WHITM;WATS 103 reveal, immediately beyond the washing line, the remaining piles of what was probably once a jetty at which small coasting ships could tie up as



( See p. 129, line 1 )



To face p.-129-  
( See line 20 )

an alternative to drying out on the open beach. It was almost impossible for ships to find a sheltered beach from which to discharge cargo on this coast, which between the Tyne and the Humber was and is notoriously devoid of any shelter for shipping apart from Whitby harbour, which is itself inaccessible if a strong wind has any north or east in it.

Consequently the whole coast is littered with the wrecks of hundreds of ships. Two of these were chronicled by Watson, and two at least by Sutcliffe. WHITM:WAT 400 shows the steam vessel Ben Corlick aground near Upgang (see plate 32) and WHITM:WAT 2011 and 2012 show the dismantled wreck of a sailing vessel, the Athalia, "Near Whitby" (plate 33). These are not dated by Watson, but it is known that the Ben Corlick stranded on 3 May 1902, bound from the Tyne for Barcelona (Transport Curator, Whitby Museum, by personal communication). See also endnote 16.

Sutcliffe's "The flag of Distress" shows the brig "Mary and Agnes" aground in 1885, and his picture of the steamship Southwark being salvaged, in Shaw (1974) p.15, is from 1893. It would seem that in 1885 sailing ships were still plying along the Yorkshire coast ( and still becoming embayed during north-easterly gales ), whereas in 1895 the transition to steam power was well under way ( although even steamships evidently ran aground at Upgang, as they still do on this coast: the INDEPENDENT of Tuesday, 2 March 1993, reports "Salvage crews were last night hoping to pull

the 97,000-ton oil tanker Freia Svea off the rocks at Redcar, Cleveland." (INDEPENDENT, loc.cit., p. 2). Watson makes no mention of the coastal trade apart from these two wrecks. There is a very oblique hint at it in WHITM:WATS 48, which shows the Sandsend Rocket Brigade in 1893, and at the other rescue services, which were numerous and heroic, in his photograph of the lifeboatmen's memorial in Whitby Parish Church, WHITM:WATS 163.

Summary and evaluation: (iii) Sea Traffic

As stated (p.128 , above), "there is no direct evidence of any of this shipping trade in Watson's work." Plate 32 merely identifies (by the note in the rebate) the vessel and the locality. Otherwise it is interesting chiefly for its record of the crowds who turned out to see the wreck, their dress and pastimes (one man carries a camera-tripod). All of this is well documented history, and Watson's photograph makes no great contribution to further knowledge.

Plate 33, which is not dated, carries only the note that this is the "Wreck ATHALIA near Whitby." It may be surmised that she was carrying a deck cargo of unsawn timber poles, but this is "unprovable supposition" (see p. 97 ). Of more interest to the historian of photography and of Watson's career is the proof that this was one of the rare occasions on which he used a quarter-plate camera.

The windmill structure on deck could well puzzle the layman, whose interpretation of its function might progress no further than the surmise that it drove a pump of some kind. This of course would be one more example of an "unprovable supposition", and add little or nothing to historical knowledge.

The two photographs are in fact an excellent example of an image which in itself does not add to historical knowledge, but which is useful confirmation of "already written history" once the background is known. It seems likely that Georg Kähre's observation, that "All old wooden vessels leaked. The more cheaply they had been built and the harder they had been worked the sooner they leaked more", was valid at least in the case of the ATHALIA. (See endnote 17.)

## Chapter Five (3) Industries in Watson's area

### (i) Alum

The first English production of alum dates from the 1560s; by the 1570s alum shales had been discovered in N.E. Yorkshire, notably on the coastal cliffs from Ravenscar to Saltburn and on the steep inland slopes of the Eskdale valley, i.e., in Watson's area, and much of it on the estates of his former employer the Marquis of Normanby. For the next three hundred years the alum industry was to have fluctuating fortunes, bringing successively immense riches and desperate ruin to its investors and owners: by 1871 the last of the alum works had closed and the industry in Watson's area was dead. This was twenty years before Watson set himself up as a professional photographer, so it is inevitable that what he photographed are merely the remains of the industry: many of these survive more than a century later.

A typical cliff-top alum quarry was one "vast continuous working, almost 3.2 km. ( 2 miles ) long and up to 61 m.( 200ft.) deep". At Kettleness the "ness" was quarried away, "tens of millions of tons of earth, rock and shale being moved by pick, shovel and wheelbarrow, which totally changed the landscape." (Morrison (1988), p.1)

"A similarly quarried landscape can be seen to the north-east of Sandsend", note Spratt and Harrison (1989), p. 172. This can be seen in plate 34. Below the quarries were

the calcining clamps, and lower still the "pans" for the liquors, the vast spoil heaps, and the Alum House itself.

Much of the resultant desolation is now overgrown: much (especially at Kettleness ) is so windswept that it remains a desert.

It is this environmental damage ( though there is no proof that Watson saw it as such ) that is portrayed in WHITM:WATS 13, "The Cliff Road, Kettleness" (see plates 10,34,35), and in WHITM:WAT 1780 and 1782. Unfortunately these are not dated, but the absence of all traces of surviving machinery or buildings suggests they were taken long after the quarries closed in 1871.

The First Edition of the Ordnance Survey Map of the area (survey 1849-1853, publication 1860-1861) shows the Sandsend Alum Works by the shore immediately north of the beck, below where the railway station was to be built c.1874 and where there is now only a car park. In c.1850 the alum works were evidently still in production, or they would have been designated "Alum Works (dis.)" on the Ordnance Survey.

Sutcliffe's photograph of the building of the railway at Sandsend c.1874 (Shaw (1978), p.40), shows the alum works derelict, partly unroofed, but with two chimneys standing. In Watson's photograph (WHITM:WAT 479, and plate 35), the roof has collapsed further, and only one chimney remains of the works. This photograph shows a steam train climbing the cliff-top line, so it is certainly later than 1883, the year in which that railway line opened.

(Lewis (1991,ed.) p.172.)

Therefore, although other sources prove that the Sandsend Alum Works closed c. 1867 and the Kettleness quarries in 1871, (Lewis (ed., 1991), p.55), none of this is proved by Watson's photograph, which cannot be dated more accurately than "post 1883".

Summary and evaluation: (i) Alum

This industry has been so well chronicled, by for instance Morrison (1988), Lewis (1991) and Turton (1938), that Watson's photographs add nothing to the written history. It is fortunate that two of the views are titled "Sandsend Ness" and "The cliff road, Kettleness" respectively. Without this information they would have been of much reduced value to the historian, since they might have been taken in any one of a variety of similar locations. As they stand they do however bear out the statement by Morrison (1988) that the whole "ness" was quarried away, and that "the desolated landscape remained years after alum production ceased in 1871". It is in fact not greatly altered today.



## Chapter Five: (3) Industries in Watson's area

### (ii) Roman Cement.

Roman cement set rapidly, even under water, and was therefore used in the repair of storm damage to Sandsend sea-wall, where it could be relied upon to set hard between tides. In modern times it was first made from nodules found in the London clays in the eighteenth century: similar nodules (known locally as "doggers") were later found in the alum shales of North Yorkshire and at first discarded as being merely spoil which interfered with the production of a purer alum.

In 1811 Lord Normanby established on his estate the Mulgrave Cement Works at Sandsend, using "doggers" from his alum quarries, and as the alum industry declined in the latter half of the nineteenth century other cement works were set up adjacent to the alum quarries, where the cement nodules were easily separated from the alum shales. At Sandsend many "doggers" fell out of the shale cliffs onto the sand below, whence they were retrieved in fishing cobbles and taken to the Sandsend works at Eastrow: ( WHITM:WAT 587,588, and plates 36-41). There they were calcined in a kiln and crushed to powder under rollers driven by the old machinery which had once served to grind corn at the mill.

The kiln, mill and warehouse, with the leat supplying the mill, still stand today, and were photographed by Watson in "about 1892", according to his note on

WHITM:WATS 95.

The date is important in view of others' attempts to date the closure of the Sandsend cement works much earlier. Rushton and Pybus, for instance, in Lewis (ed) (1991), p. 55, speak of cement being produced at the East Row mill "c. 1810-1871." In 1871 Watson was only eight years old; he is unlikely to have taken his photographs of the mill earlier than 1892 ( the year in which he set himself up as a professional photographer.) It seems reasonable to conclude that the mill was in full production in 1892, when Watson says he photographed it, and probably until much later. See endnote 18.

Watson's photographs provide no evidence of the actual manufacturing processes, but WHITM:WAT 1538 ( plate 37 ) shows the mill leat behind the building, which was in its time a water-powered corn mill and later a saw mill; WHITM:WAT 331 and 1603 (plate 38) show the kiln, with massive wooden barrows ( presumably for barrowing the rock and calcined cement.)

WHITM:WAT 1602 (plate 39) shows a pile of square-sawn timber posts in the foreground, suggesting that in 1892 the building on the left was still in use as a saw mill. WHITM:WAT 328 and 587 (plate 40 ) show a four-wheeled dray laden with sacks and barrels, labelled "J.J.Griffiths" and certainly containing cement. It is not surprising that the powdered cement should have been carried in both barrels and sacks: alum crystals too were "bagged or casked for

transport." (Rushton and Pybus in Lewis (ed.) (1991),p.50.)

The carters have dark trousers and jackets, and bowler hats, which seem to have been the uniform of their trade. Winter (1966), pp. 46, 51 and 93, quoting Thomas Hardy and "Far from the Madding Crowd", states that at the hiring fairs which were common until 1914 tradesmen would wear for instance a twist of whipcord round their hats if waggoners; woven straw if thatchers; and carry crooks if shepherds, and so on. The practice goes back at least until Elizabethan times ( see Shakespeare, Julius Caesar, Act I, sc.1, 1.4). The other four labourers lack any "mark of their profession", and their clothes are almost white with cement dust. If this is a measure of the atmosphere in the crushing mill, dust extraction was non-existent, and the incidence of respiratory troubles must have been high.

WHITM:WAT 333 (plate 41) is the only interior shot of the mill. It depicts the loft with its heavy beams and wooden roller windlass; in the background are filled sacks over-printed "ROMAN CEMENT."

Two other Watson photographs show evidence of alum and/or cement quarrying. These are WHITM:WAT 341 and 439, both entitled "Rock Hole, Mulgrave Woods. T.W." (See plates 42 and 43). Spratt and Harrison (1989), p. 171, mention a Rock Hole alum quarry "Near Guisborough" at Ordnance Survey Reference NZ 6411600: this was a large and well known quarry in its day, but had been closed before Watson began photography. It could not in any event have been the "Rock

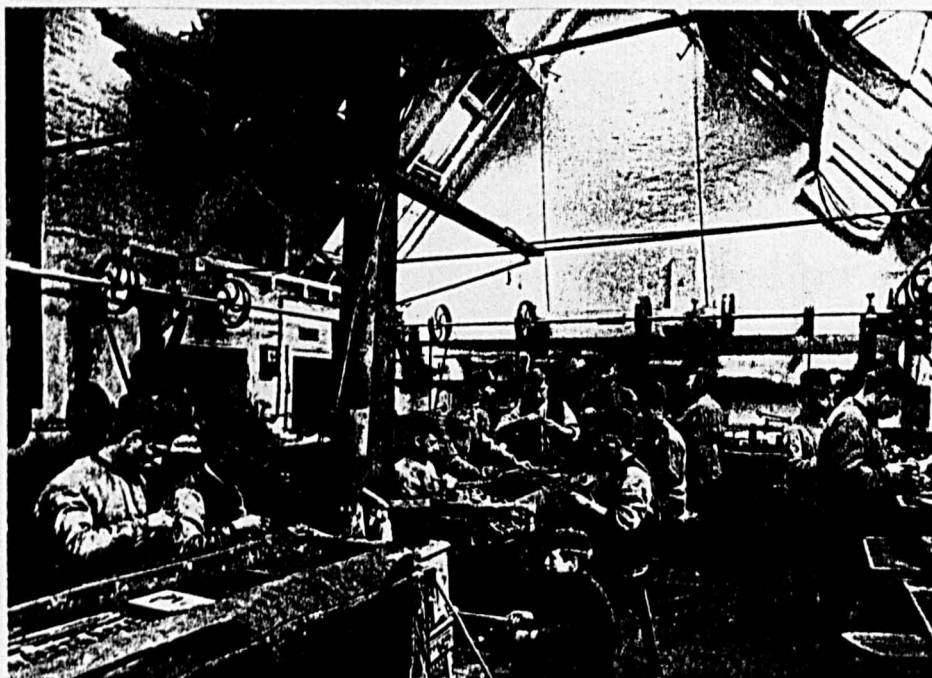
Hole" in "Mulgrave Woods" photographed by Watson, who knew better than most that the latter were on the estate of his employer and patron the Marquis of Normanby, and conveniently situated near to Sandsend for the processing of both alum, and cement "doggers".

The remains of planks and a dumper-truck on WHITM:WAT 439, and the fact that the spoil heaps, although in a sheltered valley, are not at all overgrown, suggest that relatively recent mining had been carried out. Alum mining in the area had ceased by 1871 at the latest; the former alum quarries were however then at peak production of "doggers" for cement production, and it is known from personal communication with Lord Normanby that "Rock Hole, Mulgrave Woods" was an old alum quarry, on the Mulgrave Estate, recently re-opened for the quarrying of cement nodules. Watson's photographs, being undated, can supply no more certain evidence than this.

Summary and evaluation:    (2) Roman cement

This minor industry has been much less comprehensively chronicled than the alum industry, and Watson's photographs in this section provide valuable information on the Sandsend works when it was in production. They prove for instance that the building was at one time a water-driven mill, with the strong likelihood that the wheel once drove a saw mill, (plate 39 and page 136); they give a hint of the production, storage and transportation of the cement, and above all provide dating which has not previously been correctly assessed by the historians (page 136).

This dating is hard, incontrovertible evidence of the kind referred to on p. 97 as "category 1", but it may be noted at the outset that the rest of the "evidence" is "category 2 ", i.e., a series of reasonable assumptions which cannot however be fully proved. It should also be said that they are presented completely without intention by Watson. There is no comment or criticism from him; the suggestion that the cement mill lacked dust extraction plant, for instance, is one made by a 20th. century observer from observations gleaned from the 19th. century photographs.



To face p.-140-  
( See line 17 )

## Chapter Five: (3) Industries in Watson's area

### (iii) Jet.

The other minor industry, which might be held to be connected with alum and cement production in that the raw material for all three was found in close proximity to the alum shales, was jet.

Watson makes no mention of the mining or working of jet: the only record of it in his work is a very oblique reference in WHITM:WAT 1275, which is a photograph of Whitby harbour with a building on which it is possible to make out a sign reading "The Whitby Jet Works."

Sutcliffe makes a more direct comment, which is not surprising since on his return from Tunbridge Wells in 1876 he set up his studio in what Hiley (1974) calls " a converted jet shop ( workshop) up a smelly back alley off Flowergate in Whitby." Here, amidst the din, dust and flies he could produce photographs like that of William Wright's jet workshop (Hiley (1974), p. 47), but he, too, has nothing to say of the mining of the raw material, nor of the characteristics of the finished jewellery made from it.

### Summary and evaluation (iii) Jet

There is no production by Watson for evaluation in this section.

## Chapter Five (3) Industries in Watson's area.

### (iv) Whinstone and silica

Watson has a series of photographs of Castleton (WHITM:WAT 65, 408, 430, 526, 932, 938, 1215 and 1246) which show evidence of extractive industry having taken place at some time. Various minerals had long been mined in this location: "thin seams of low-grade coal" had been mined since 1643 in North Yorkshire, and "a group of pits was sunk to the north of the Esk, mainly on the Danby estate, between Castleton and Danby", according to Spratt and Harrison (1989), pp. 167 and 168. Hundreds of vertical shafts were sunk, interconnected by galleries 1m. (3 feet) high, to reach seams less than 30cm. (1 foot) thick. The working conditions "beggared description", and the techniques involved "remained primitive to the end" of the life of these pits (ibid.). Coal extraction in the Danby/Castleton area began in 1749 and reached a peak in 1812-1813, though it continued until the 1890s at collieries such as the appropriately named Poverty Hill (Spratt and Harrison, loc.cit.). Atkinson (1891), p. 121, confirms the wretched conditions of the Danby miners, many of whom walked more than four miles over "a trackless expanse of moor" from their homes to the pits in order to dig inferior, impure coal out of a pit where "a seam of fully 18" in thickness is, I should say, almost a thing unknown."

The workings to the north of Castleton, however, are



plainly quarries, not pits ( see plates 44-47), and the rock extracted was not coal, but silica and whinstone. (Spratt and Harrison, op. cit., p.165; archaeology curator, Whitby Museum , by personal communication; and Ordnance Survey maps of 1856 and 1892). The 6" to 1 mile Ordnance Survey map of the area dated 1856 shows the quarries to be "whinstone", whereas the 1:2500 ( 25" to 1 mile ) map surveyed in 1892 and published in 1894 shows a "tramway" leading to a "silica quarry". (See p.148).

Whinstone is a hard igneous rock which was much in demand locally, and also in the industrial Yorkshire cities such as Leeds, as road setts for surfacing the city streets. The whinstone quarries extended WNW to ENE across North Yorkshire from Eaglescliff on the Tees to Blea Hill near Robin Hood's Bay.(See also Atkinson (1891), p.147). The extraction of whinstone started relatively late - c.1850 near Gt. Ayton and in the 1870s in Glaisdale. The Langbaugh quarry near Gt. Ayton did not close until 1964 and is shown as "Quarry (dis)" on the 2½" to the mile Ordnance Survey map of 1988. The same map shows the workings ENE of Gt.Ayton (Grid Reference NZ 574117) as "Cliff Rigg Quarry (whinstone)", so presumably this location was worked even later.

Four of Watson's photographs of the Castleton workings (see plates 44-47 ) are particularly interesting since under the magnifying glass they show, in addition to the large quarries to the west, a miners' incline leading from

the railway line due north to the top of the moors. This is not the "tramway" shown on the 1894 Ordnance Survey map, but a later development. Watson's photographs (see plates 44-47) show it starting from a new three-storey building not shown on the 1894 map, but lying to the east of Castleton station, and passing close to the western edge of Park Nook Farm and to the east of the enclosure numbered "parcel" 2576 in the 1894 map. It is thus possible to "fix" the route of the incline as being approximately as indicated by the dotted line on p.148. Using plate 44 and the 25" to 1 mile map it is also possible to deduce approximate distances: in the photograph Finchen Row (in parcel 2577 on the map) shows neither of its gable ends. It must therefore have been at right angles to Watson's line of sight as he took the photograph, and its true length is therefore as seen. On the Ordnance Survey map the building proper measures 5mm. long, and at 1:2500 this equates with 12.5 metres "on the ground". This would place the incline (approximately seven house-lengths away from the house on the photograph) about 85-90 metres east of the house Finchen Row and thus only 200-250 metres to the east of the old tramway.

It is not possible, however, to estimate the length of the incline nor the exact location of the quarry it served. Nor is there any evidence as to what mineral was quarried there. This incline, which is still shown on the 1983 2½" to 1 mile Ordnance Survey map at grid reference NZ 685098, is complete and in use in WHITM:WAT 430 and 938

( see plates 44-46 ), with a heap of rocks at the foot of the incline perhaps waiting to be loaded into the railway waggons, but WHITM:WAT 932 (plate 47) shows the incline incomplete. It was at first assumed that this was because it had fallen into disuse at the end of the life of the quarry it served, and that an attempt to date this from Watson's evidence might be possible and advisable. These Watson photographs are unfortunately not dated: they are however numbered by Watson, and on a first examination it was hoped that this documentation might by cross-referencing provide an approximate date. WHITM:WAT 430 for instance was numbered "CASTLETON. 186.T.W."; WHITM:WAT 938 is "CASTLETON. 194 T.W." (See plates 44 and 45). Since many of Watson's photographs of the village of Castleton proper are dated by Watson, it was hoped initially to discover a dated negative with a Watson number approximating to 185 or 195, and thus ascribe an approximate date to the latter.

It became apparent almost immediately, however, that these numbers would not provide a possible dating device. There is no proof that Watson numbered his plates sequentially in the chronological order in which they were exposed; it is not known to what his numbers referred; and there are three different plates (nos. 44, 46 and 47 ) all numbered "186", and two (WHITM:WAT 1246 and 938) both numbered "194", even in this one sequence. As elsewhere stated (p. A3 ), "Knowledge of Watson's classification system had died with him", and it is not now

possible to determine to what these numbers refer: they may well have been part of Watson's system for indexing his picture postcards, production of which formed a large part of his business and his income up to World War I. Finally it should be said that there is of course no proof that the photograph of the incline in its incomplete state is the latest in the series: it might equally well have been the first, showing the then new incline under construction; or it might have been an intermediate one showing the incline only temporarily out of use, after which it was repaired or re-built. All that can be deduced from the photographs alone is that the incline was in use after 1892: there is a three-storey house in Finchen Row on plates 45 and 46 which is not in existence on plates 44 and 47, nor shown on the Ordnance Survey map surveyed in 1892. Whilst it is not possible from these photographs alone to ascribe precise dates to the quarrying in the Castleton area, however, they do provide proof that active quarrying was being carried out there in Watson's day, and they do confirm with great accuracy the location, thanks to Watson's note that the views were "from SW", and to the proximity of the railway station.

Something of the possible production methods also can be deduced. The incline terminates at the rear of a three-storey building alongside the railway line, in which the rock was presumably trimmed, sorted or crushed ( the plume of smoke on WHITM:WAT 430 (plate 44) suggests that steam

power was available) before being loaded perhaps via the chutes on the front of the building into the railway waggons waiting outside.

Subsequent research on the ground proved the above inferences and estimates to be surprisingly accurate. The occupants of Finchen Row and Park Nook in 1993 were interviewed, and the tenant at present farming Park Nook stated that his father had worked in the quarry served by the later tramway, and that the mineral extracted was silica. The building at the foot of the tramway had indeed been a crushing "shed", and the product was loaded directly down chutes into railway waggons. This building had been dismantled within the last two years: a pile of stones and some girders remain. So do two stone buttresses where the tramway once crossed his farm track: all the other pillars have been removed. On "walking" the site of the tramway it was estimated that it extended about 400 metres north from Park Nook, and the quarry was within 300 metres of the older, much more extensive, workings.

Equally interesting, and perhaps more important, was the farmer's account of social and working conditions in his father's time. He lived two miles away from the quarry, yet if he reported for work at all late he was turned away, and lucky if he was offered work the day after. His wage was said to be £2-£3 per week, and he could not have brought up his six children but for their smallholding. This was valuable oral confirmation of the point to be made

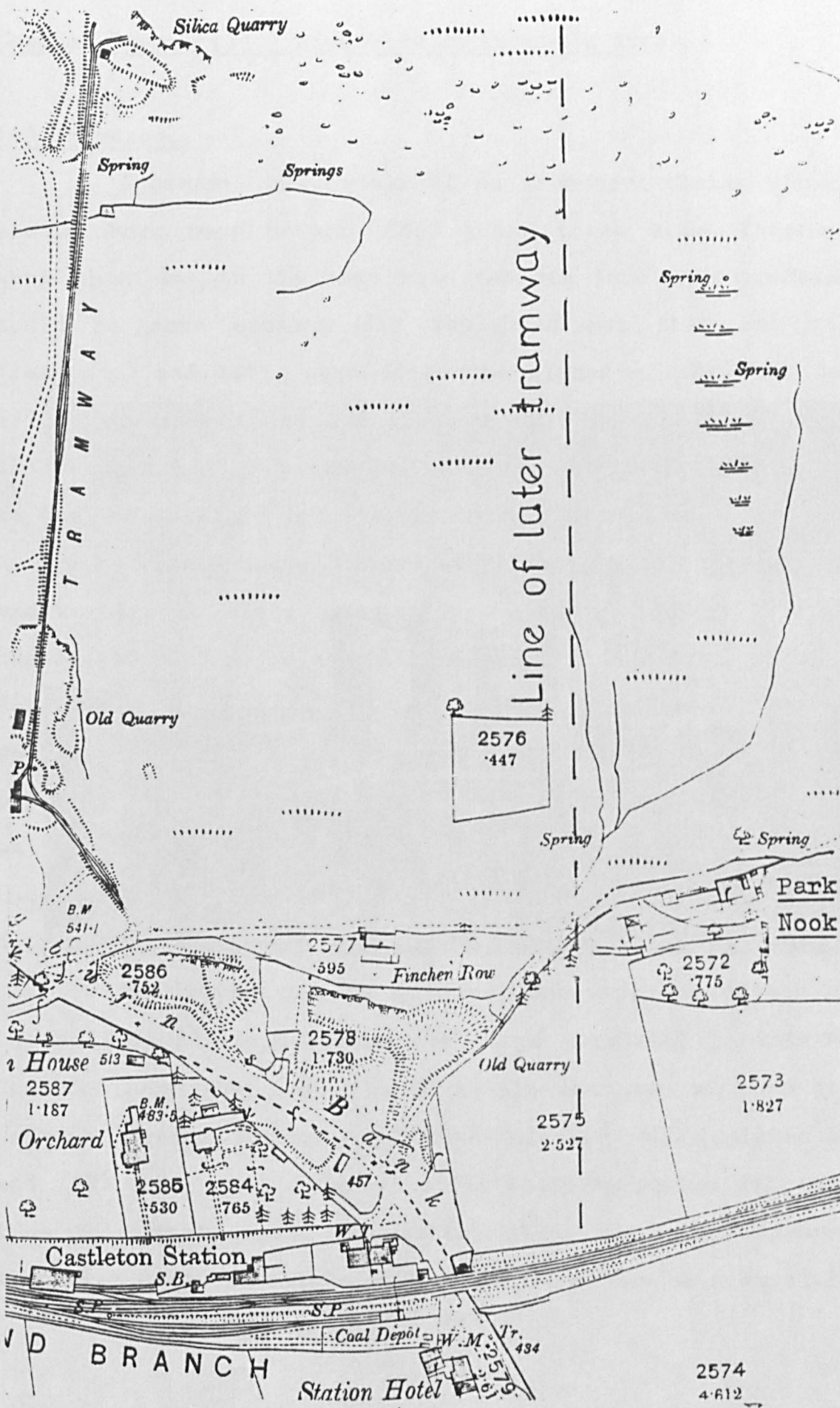
elsewhere ( p. 157 ), that miners and quarrymen often had a smallholding or tiny farm, without which they could not have lived on their wage alone. ( By personal communication, 13.10.1993 ).

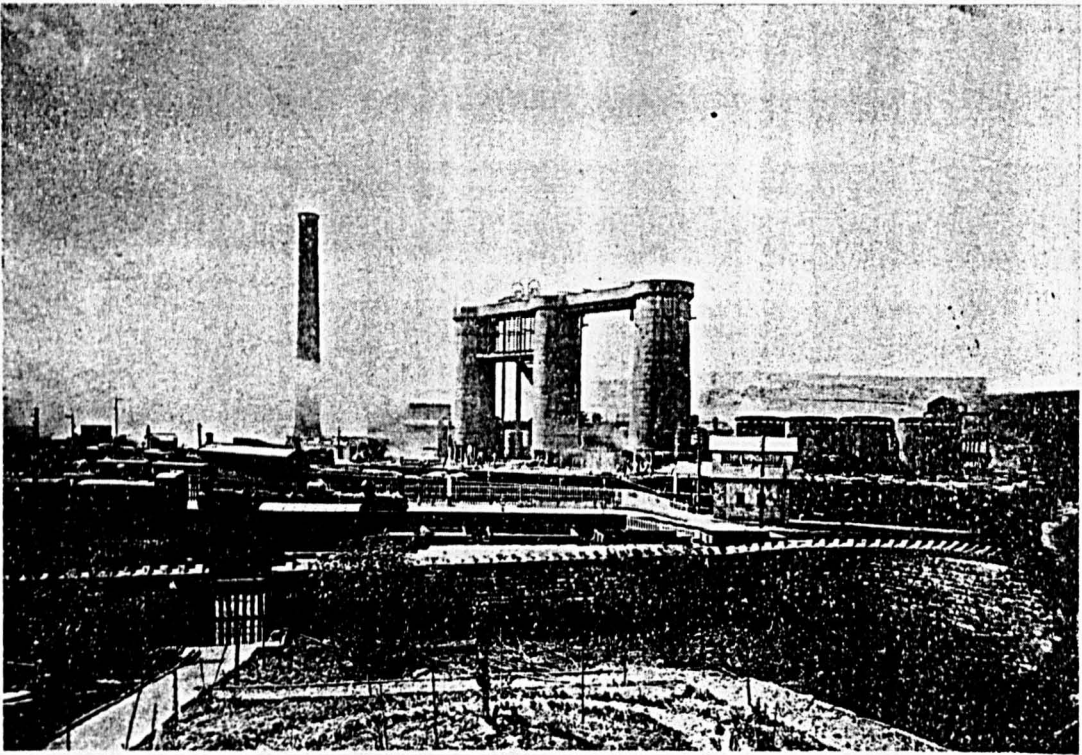
Summary and evaluation: (iv) Whinstone and silica

By collation with the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map (p. 148 ) it is possible to determine that the building of the three-storey house in Finchen Row took place after 1892, the year in which the map survey was undertaken, and therefore that plates 45 and 46 were taken after that date, plates 44 and 47 (showing building work on the new tramway and the buildings associated with it) at an unknown but earlier date. This is firm evidence which might have been of use in dating other features in the photographs: the latter also offer reliable information as to the appearance of the Castleton area c. 1892, the industrial activities and quarrying developments in the area at the time and in the past, and something of the methods employed.

The rest of the information which it was suggested might be deduced from these photographs is all "category 2" evidence, i.e., it consists of suppositions which it may have been reasonable to make, but which were not susceptible of proof.

Subsequent enquiries on the site proved the original assumptions to have been on this occasion surprisingly valid and accurate (see preceding page 146.) It remains true to say, of course, that Watson's photographs alone do not of themselves supply proof of the validity of the assumptions.





To face p.-149-  
( See line 14 )



## Chapter Five: (3) Industries in Watson's area

### (v) Ironstone.

Grosmont, the centre of an ironstone-mining field, saw a short boom between 1863 (when three blast furnaces were blown in, in the hope that the pig iron thus produced could be more economically freighted out than the raw ironstone) and 1891, when after the slumps of 1873 and the 1880s the works were finally put up for sale. WHITM:WAT 1943, dated 1920, (plate 50), shows the smokeless chimneys at the ironworks 29 years after they closed down.

Watson has no record of these works: once again he was working too late to chronicle a dying industry, which had ceased before he established himself as a photographer. Sutcliffe however has a photograph of the iron furnaces working in Counsell (1981), p.25. This is presumably the photograph described by Spratt and Harrison (1989), p.183, as "a well known photograph by F.M.Sutcliffe of Whitby", though it has to be said that it is not one of Frank Sutcliffe's best known works.

Watson's photographs do show, however, the extent of the railway development and the large marshalling yards at Grosmont, and they have the advantage that two of them are dated by Watson. Moreover, WHITM:WAT432 and 495 (plates 48 and 49) show tall chimneys still emitting smoke. It seems from this that mining was still taking place in Grosmont when they were taken, since these chimneys can be accurately

placed from the photographs in the locations in which "mines" are marked on the 2½" Ordnance Survey map of 1883. Unfortunately these two photographs are not dated and there is no means of deducing from them alone how late into the century mining in Grosmont continued. Certainly two photographs which are dated 1920, WHITM:WAT 1943 and 1947, show no smoke emerging, and it may be assumed that by 1920 the mines had closed. This would be in line with the finding of Counsell (1981), pp. 30-31, that after the depression of the 1890s a further attempt was made to extract ironstone from Grosmont East Mine "but it finally closed in 1915..... the Eskdale Mine at Birtley Farm which was re-opened in 1906 was the last working mine in the area, but it also closed during the period of the First World War."

At this juncture it is necessary to sound a cautionary note. Watson's dating of his negatives followed one of two styles: in dating photographs as he took them, for instance those of the re-building of Lythe church, or the making of the Whitby-Sandsend road, or the aftermath of a flood in the Esk valley, he noted in the rebate of his plate not only the year but the day and month also. Such dates can be relied upon as completely accurate. The other style of dating was that which he carried out, at the request of Mr Percy Burnett or others, in retrospect and sometimes long after the event. In these cases he wrote only the year on the negative. Such dates are far less reliable than the detailed ones he noted immediately, since he was

working not only in retrospect, but at the age of eighty or more, when one's memory is perhaps less reliable than it was formerly. So, whilst his date of 1920 for the smokeless chimneys is probably correct, and in this instance is not of vital importance anyhow, if on some subsequent occasion a Watson negative dated by year only had to be used in an attempt to fix accurately an important event, it would be advisable to treat it with caution and to seek all possible corroborative evidence.

It has been suggested that the chimneys pictured by Watson were connected not with the mines but with the Grosmont brickworks. These, it is true, were active over a longer period (1870-1957) than the ironstone mines and furnaces, but they were not located where Watson's smoking chimneys were: they were on the other side of the railway lines, which are clearly visible in Watson's photographs.

In addition to the inland sources of ironstone, the mineral was also mined in numerous locations along the coast: "Along the coast at Staithes the seam was at a lower and more workable level, and the village became an early centre for the industry" (Spratt and Harrison, eds., (1989) pp.178-9). "The rapid expansion of ironstone mining in the 19th century brought a huge influx of men from all over Britain....Many of the men were experienced miners from Wales and Cornwall" (North York Moors National Park Information Service, n.d.).

These men were often housed in purpose-built terraces of miners' cottages or houses, and it is one such which figures as the only other, very oblique, reference to ironstone mining in Watson's work.

This is a line of corrugated iron cottages built in 1903 near the present Boulby mine, and not demolished until 1943. It was nicknamed "Tin City" and the site is well known to local residents. The photograph shown at Plate 86 shows Staithes, photographed from the top of the south cliff. By climbing to the same viewpoint and sighting above the higher of the two terraces of stone-built cottages in the top left-hand corner of Watson's photograph, the site of "Tin City" is clearly seen. It appears on the photograph as a faint white line on the adjacent headland. Little detail is discernible, but under the magnifying glass a line of dwellings can be made out, and the location is indisputably that of Tin City, as a visit to the site (identified by the remains of garden walls and over-grown front gardens) and a reciprocal bearing over the stone cottages to the south cliff above Staithes proves.

Summary and evaluation: (v) Ironstone

This section is a good example of a case in which, once the local history is known, the photographs can be said to bear out the already known facts, without however of themselves and unsupported providing any firm and accurate evidence of, for instance, the dates on which the Grosmont mines closed.

There is "category one" evidence however of the extent of the Grosmont smelting plant and marshalling yards, but the note on the fallibility of Watson's dating is salutary.

Chapter Five: (3) Industries in Watson's area:

(vi) Farming.

More than 300 of the photographs in the Watson Collection, i.e. about 12½% of the total, provide some evidence of farming conditions, methods, tools and machinery in Watson's day. The Sutcliffe prints published by the Sutcliffe Gallery and relating to the same subject total barely one tenth of that number, yet contribute more directly to a study of the agriculture of the region than do Watson's.

This is because the Sutcliffe prints are close-up studies in which there is clear evidence of the farming methods and instruments used, and the crops and animals produced. Shaw (1974, 1978) produces a scholarly analysis of these, and is able to specify the types of plough being used, the crops under cultivation, the techniques employed, and so on.

Watson's photographs on the other hand are in the main landscapes, probably intended for the most part to add to Watson's list of picture postcards. There are three exceptions, all slides: WHITM:WATS1 shows a close-up with detail of a plough and two horses identifiable as Clydesdales or Cleveland Bay crosses; WHITM:WATS89 shows a reaper-binder drawn by three horses of the same breed, and the crop is clearly long-straw barley being stacked in the field at Ugthorpe; WHITM:WATS202 entitled "Two cows with twin calves"



( See p. 154,  
lines 7 and  
10 )

(See lines 7 and 10)

To face p.-154-

portrays one shorthorn and one Ayrshire cow. For the rest, information has to be "gleaned" from the landscapes, often under the magnifying glass, instead of receiving the unequivocal statement accorded to it by Sutcliffe.

A typical example of this is WHITM:WAT102, where it is possible to discern only that the ricks are thatched, compared with Shaw (1978), p. 62, which shows the detail of a thatched rick, and Shaw (1974), p.61, which shows the preparation of the straw before its use in thatching. Similarly, Sutcliffe's harvest scenes (e.g., Shaw (1974),p.57) make clear not only the techniques used and the type of crop (wheat or barley or oats) but also that this is the long-straw, small-headed type of grain before the introduction of the modern, more productive strains.

Watson's landscapes nonetheless reveal a great deal of evidence about farming in his area. Firstly, it was manifestly a labour-intensive operation, and all the land-working machinery was horse-drawn. The hay-rake, mowing machines, hay-turner, and roller outside the smithies in Lythe (plates 54-56 ), Barton-le-Street ( plate 57 ) and Ainthorpe (plate 58) are all designed to be pulled by horses. This was in approximately 1903 - plate 54 is dated "17.9.03" - and although the first tractor had been made by the Charter Engine Company of Chicago as early as 1889, it was not until World War I that the first significant increase in the numbers of tractors on English farms took place. In particular the Fordson Model N, introduced in 1917, dominated

the English market for the next 30 years (Brown(1989), pp.79, 82), but the tractor-revolution seems to have come even later to North Yorkshire, and the tractor does not figure in Watson's photography at all.

As late as WHITM:WAT1723, dated by Watson "Aug.4.1923", the hay is plainly being cut, raked and "led" by horse-power. This exclusive reliance on horse-power in Watson's day had far-reaching effects not always immediately obvious to the lay observer. Horses required a large number of farmhands to drive, tend and provide fodder for them. A hill farmer running a large sheep farm in 1995 finds that with mechanisation his needs are met by the labour of himself and one man if the walling, shearing and silage-making are contracted out: in his grandfather's day, using horses, ten men worked the same farm, and these men had to be fed and, frequently, housed on the farm.

Secondly, the need to provide feed for large numbers of horses meant that a large proportion ( about one half) of the land was permanent grass, providing hay for the winter and grazing for the rest of the year. Watson's photographs make this preponderance of grass abundantly clear (see plates 59-64), whilst also revealing, from the abundance of flowers such as dog-daisies in the meadows and mowing grass, that the use of weed-killers was minimal, probably nil.

Long (1969) differentiates three different types of farming in Watson's area: the Plateau area; the Dales area; and the more fertile coastal strip. Both the Dales Parishes



and the Plateau Parishes were "a country of mainly subsistence farmers" who "sold a little produce in order to have the means to buy the necessities of the times..... but few attempted to produce more than this for sale " (p.44). Even in 1962 he finds ( p.48) "the standard of stockmanship is often disappointingly low, and some farmers are suspected of allowing their fear of becoming liable for income tax to retard them from adopting more profitable techniques."

Any farmer, or indeed any other bread-winner, earning in 1962 too little to be liable to income tax was at subsistence level indeed, and in Watson's day, when the industry was even more depressed, the farms he depicted must have been barely viable. For one thing, they were too small: in 1870 two-thirds of them were holdings of less than 50 acres (Long (1969), p.27). Many were too isolated and inaccessible to get lime and fertiliser to the land, or produce to market, and much of their grass was merely rough pasture. Plates 59-64 reveal how close together ( and therefore how small) the holdings were: plate 65 must have been one of the smallest holdings, and exemplifies what "subsistence hill-farming" meant in Watson's times. Atkinson (1891) also confirms the small size of the farms (pp.7-8): saying, "Danby is a district of small holdings" (p.8). Bishop, ( 1923), p.48, similarly states that "the farms varied from 15 acres to 150 acres....the general average was about 40."

In 1870, of 1,437 holdings in Watson's area, Long (loc.cit., Table 30, p. 217) lists 467 of 5-20 acres, and 303 (more than 1 in 5 ) of under 5 acres. No family could survive, then or now, on such an acreage, and such tiny smallholdings must have been worked part-time by miners or quarrymen and their families. Plate 66 shows a smallholding at Sandsend, where work was available in the alum quarries and the associated works, and plates 44 and 45 show, on the edge of the moor to the left of the miners' incline at Castleton, a "farm" which is little more than one tiny field and a large vegetable garden. Such holdings were usually in the occupation of a miner, who worked by day in the quarry on the moor and survived on his low wages and the produce of his garden, keeping a pig and a few poultry to supplement the diet of his family. The same applies to the housing near the horizon on plate 67, where the single-storey terrace housed workers in the brick-and-pipe works, but the rick outside a ruined barn argues an attempt at scratching a little hay from the field in front.

Away from the moors, in the valley bottoms, farms were somewhat larger and therefore more viable. Farms such as that in the foreground of WHITM:WAT 934, plate 59, would keep several pigs and milk cows, cattle for fattening as beef, and poultry for home consumption. They grew potatoes and swedes; wheat ( for flour in the house) and grass for hay. Here too about half the total acreage was devoted to permanent grass, and this, together with the unintensive system that the local

geography dictated, meant that profits were meagre on most farms, especially during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and up until World War I. It will be recalled that it was in 1892 that Watson was dismissed from the employment of Lord Normanby because the economic climate, especially on an estate dependent on agriculture and mining interests, was so bad.

The rest of the small farms' income came from the sheep, kept on the moor or rough pasture in summer and brought down nearer the house for lambing. It is not clear from Watson's photographs which breeds were favoured: Long says (*loc.cit.*, p. 46), that they were predominantly Blackfaces, and this is confirmed by Atkinson(1891), p.10. The cattle were probably shorthorns or Ayrshires (e.g., plate 59, WHITM:WATS 202; WHITM:WAT 1799), certainly not yet the now ubiquitous Friesians, and wintered in the shippon as at the bottom right of plate 59. There are very few hay barns in Watson's photographs ( there is one dutch barn on WHITM:WAT 1055), because it was more economical to store hay outside in a thatched rick, near to the shippon (as here) in which it would be consumed, in view of the cost of building a barn to house it and of transporting the hay any further than was necessary.

Plate 69 well illustrates the dependence on grass in a stock-raising, horse-powered economy: it shows the field of roots amidst a sea of grass, as also does WHITM:WAT 940, plate 68. Equally noteworthy in plate 68 is the tiny

farmhouse needing a large rickyard with a dozen hayricks close to the shippon and again, thatched against the weather.

The large estates, such as that of Lord Normanby at Mulgrave, had an income from forestry, and at least one large farm (Aireyholme at Great Ayton ) sawed ( and perhaps grew) the timber for fence- and gateposts. In both these connections an exception was made to the "exclusive use of horse-power" referred to above. WHITM:WAT 394 and WHITM:WAT 1245 (see plate 29) show a mobile steam traction engine hauling two trailers laden with 10-12 large, complete tree trunks: these shots are dated "Sept.23.1901."

A similar self-propelled steam traction engine figures in WHITM:WAT 1912, 2080 and 2082, (see plates 73 and 74) this time driving via long belts a massive saw-bench, and sawing fence- and gateposts in the farmyard at "Aireyholme Farm, Great Ayton, in June 1929". In WHITM:WAT 1248 ( see plate 70) there is a stationary steam engine, apparently on a wooden trailer, ready to drive a much smaller saw-bench, in an unidentifiable location.

Summary and evaluation: (vi) Farming

There is some firm ( "category 1") evidence in this section; the small size of the farms, the lack of mechanisation and the heavy dependence on horse-power, and the large areas consequently devoted to grass, all emerge with a good degree of credibility.

The rest of the evidence falls into "category two", and merely confirms already known facts which in the absence of local historical knowledge it would not be possible to deduce from the photographs alone.

What is also obvious from a study of this section is the very limited extent of Watson's social documentation: there is nothing here to suggest the living and working conditions of the rural worker and his family, at a time when the average wage of an agricultural worker was about 10/- per week.

## Chapter Five (3) Industries in Watson's area:

### (vii) Tourism.

The peculiarly English institution of the seaside holiday was, according to Sprawson (1992a ), established "ever since George III set the mood by swimming off Weymouth", and seaside towns such as "Ramsgate, Margate, Brighton, Southend and Scarborough were already in vogue by the time Jane Austen came to write her last novel." Jane Austen died in 1817, George III in 1820, so Scarborough had become established as a seaside resort even before the development of the railways.

It was the expansion of the national railways system and the resultant connection of the Yorkshire coast towns with the major regional centres of population, however, which opened up the rest of the east coast towns to the extensive tourist trade which they have now "enjoyed" for a century and a half. "Scarborough and Bridlington had been connected to the expanding national railway system by 1847" (Lewis, ed., 1991, p. 168), and by 1865 "the introduction of locomotive haulage throughout the route to Whitby allowed the running of carriages between King's Cross, London, and Whitby during the summer months" (ibid., p.169).

Some 30 years before Watson established himself as a professional photographer, then, his area had begun to develop as a major seaside resort. Whitby was open to

travellers by rail, whether day-trippers or the more wealthy holiday-makers staying perhaps in the palatial railway hotel on the West Cliff (see plate 75), and enjoying the amenities of the sea-front Spa Centre (plate 76) and the facilities for concerts and stage-shows which it offered. (Plate 77).

Much of this is chronicled by Watson in his photographs, especially those intended to make picture postcards which would appeal to and be bought by the summer visitors. WHITM:WAT 1172 (plate 75) shows the Whitby Royal Hotel: WHITM:WAT630 (plate 78) the Sandsend Hotel: and WHITM:WAT 728, 729, 730 and 731, dated October 1, 2, and 9 respectively, show what the Whitby Spa Centre was like in 1924. (See plate 77.)

WHITM:WAT 370 (plate 79) and WHITM:WAT 1478 (plate 80) show Whitby beach on a typical holiday. The strong shadows suggest a warm, sunny day, and the "sands" are crowded with over-dressed adults, the women wearing huge ornate hats, ankle-length skirts, high-necked, tight-waisted bodices and even in one or two cases light summer coats. The men all wear trilbies, caps or straw boaters and heavy three-piece suits, complete in some cases with waistcoats and watch-chains. The children digging sand-castles, too, have their heads covered.

There is an interesting light cast on the rigidity of Victorian public morals: there are 25 "bathing tents for hire" and more than a dozen bathing machines, which could be

towed out into the breakers so that their lady occupants could emerge and bathe facing seawards and thus out of sight of any males on the beach, and the centre of interest in WHITM:WAT 1478 (plate 80) is a "Children's Mission Special Service" being addressed on the sands.

The Watson Collection has 218 photographs of Watson's favourite Sandsend, which catered for a rather more wealthy and genteel clientèle than the day-trippers who might find their way to Whitby and Scarborough (where the excursion trains were so long that special "excursion platforms" had been built for them.) There are, for instance, private motor cars on the seafront in WHITM:WAT 472 (plate 30). But the clothes and the conventions are the same: the Victorians and Edwardians seem to have gone in mortal fear of draughts and fresh air. WHITM:WAT 371, for instance, shows a lady in a large hat and a cloak with a fur collar on Sandsend promenade, in strong sunshine.

The seaside pursuits were those that were to last until World War II; children dig with wooden spades, build sand castles, or sail toy yachts in beach pools; there are deckchairs, tents, and beached boats, donkey rides and concert parties on the sands. WHITM:WAT 979, which exemplifies these, is dated by Watson 28.8.'08, but things were to change little in the next thirty years. Perhaps the three-legged race in WHITM:WAT 1472 might have been thought a trifle permissive by some, but for the fact that the competitors in each pair are of the same sex, and the girls



(still wearing their ankle-length skirts), are of course tied together only at the ankle, not at ankle and thigh as are the boys.

It was not only the seaside holiday, however, with its ritualistic bathing, sitting on the sand, walking and paddling in the sea, riding seaside donkeys, attending concert parties and other entertainments at the Spa Centre, whilst invariably taking good care to avoid exposure to wind or sun, which appealed to the summer visitors to Whitby or Sandsend who figure in Watson's photography. They also visited the picturesque villages, the moors and the dales of the hinterland, and the many negatives marked out by Watson for picture postcard production (there are 57 of these in the Watson Collection alone, and there must originally have been many more) prove where the "sights" worthy of a visit by the holiday-maker were situated. This was the "Golden Age" of the picture postcard, (Holt 1971, p. 37), and "the craze for collecting these was matched only by the craze for sending home a postcard from places visited, to prove that one had been there" (Richardson, 1990, p.13). Watson himself had done exactly the same on his travels in Switzerland, as postcards in the Collection prove.

Assuming that Watson produced postcards that would sell to the summer visitors, ( and postcard production formed a major source of his income until World War I ), it seems safe to say that the places depicted in them represent the places visited by his customers. Thus there is direct

evidence that all the villages in Watson's area - Castleton, Sleights, Staithes, Hawsker, Lythe and so on - were popular amongst visitors, either because they were thought to be "pretty" or "picturesque", or simply because one had been and perhaps stayed there. They also thought the local "sights" were worth a visit, and went to see not only the conventional ones such as Whitby Abbey, the Captain Cook memorial and schoolroom at Gt. Ayton, or the Caedmon monument, but the picturesque water-mills like Rigg Mill ( plate 81) and that at Ramsdale. Unusual events also attracted them - the capture of a large shark at Kettleness ( plate 82); the stranded vessel Ben Corlick at Upgang ( WHITM:WAT 400, plate 32); a visit by the DAILY MAIL aeroplane to the beach at Whitby (plate 84) and a visit by Royal Navy warships when visitors were apparently welcomed on board. (See WHITM:WAT 2013-2019, plate 93.) They visited Lord Normanby's Mulgrave Woods on open days (plate 85), and their activities on these occasions included photography - one man on plate 32 is carrying a tripod. Sporting activities and games were available to them also: WHITM:WAT 1102 has advertisements for public tennis courts, bowls, and croquet, whilst WHITM:WAT 295 and 378 show parties in hired rowing boats.

If these postcards provide direct evidence of where the sightseers went, they also provide indirect evidence as to which visitors went there, and how they travelled. There was evidently much more modest and frugal accommodation

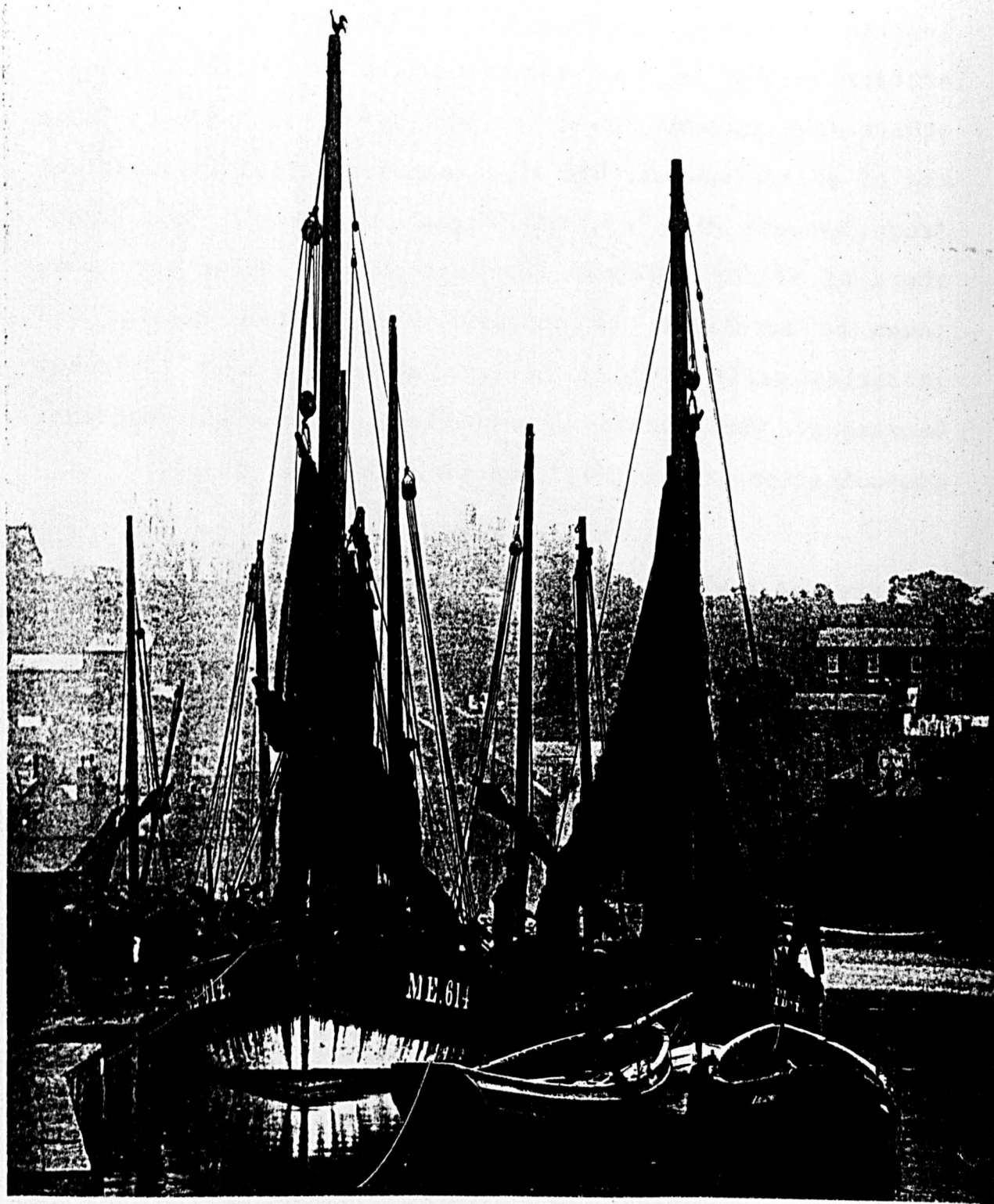
available in the countryside: in plate 94 WHITM:WAT 1149, for instance, shows an ordinary one-storey cottage in Newholm advertising itself as the "Board Inn" and offering "Hikers Rest" and "Bed and Breakfast". Similarly the "Unicorn Inn" in Ruswarp ( WHITM:WAT 1207) is an ordinary terraced house and has "Refreshments" and "Rooms" to offer; the Hart Inn (WHITM:WAT 1364) in Sandsend advertises "Refreshments: Teas provided: Parties catered for": it is thought that WHITM:WAT 1384 and 1386 show "refreshments" being served to one such "party" in a wild garden at the rear of a house. At Egton Bridge the "Horseshoe Hotel" sign reads "Accomodation (sic) for cyclists: good stabling: traps on hire etc.", whilst the "Fox and Hounds Inn, Goldsborough" ( WHITM:WAT 387, see plate 31 ) is the ordinary end house in a terrace of farm buildings, at which the visitors have arrived in, or hired, an open four-wheeled horse-drawn carriage. Away from the railways, it seems, visitors went on foot (hence the "Hikers Rest" sign), by cycle (Watson's own form of transport ), or by hired horse or carriage - WHITM:WAT 770 shows a sign reading "Horses and Carriages for hire: Landau". WHITM:WAT 582, in addition to showing a walking party at Hob Hole, Castleton, suggests that fishing was also amongst the country visitor's pursuits, and that some holiday-makers also sketched or painted. WHITM:WAT 372 and 407 reveal, under the magnifying glass, artists at work, seated at their easels at Darnholme and Lealholm (plate 89). Whether these were amateur visiting artists or

locally resident professionals is not known: professional artists active in the area at the time included amongst others John Atkinson Grimshaw (1836-1893), who made so much use of photography in his work that a parallel is sometimes drawn between his "nocturnes" and Sutcliffe's "moonlight" shots of Whitby harbour. The latter could never have been taken by moonlight, of course, although some critics and galleries still seem to believe that they were (Grimshaw Catalogue, Christopher Wood Gallery, 1990, and personal communication with C. Wood, dated 13 December 1990).

Summary and evaluation: (vii) Tourism

The main body of information provided by the photographs here relates to conditions already well known; it comes into "category 2" of "merely confirming already written history." Thus the different forms of transport; the accommodation for tourists and holiday-makers; their pastimes and entertainment, are already known.

What does emerge in addition, however, is an indication of the class divisions inherent in Victorian society. The well-to-do live in the palatial Royal Hotel in Whitby, or stay in genteel Sandsend, spending their time on the beach, in the Spa Centre, or touring the hinterland in their own or a hired carriage. The less wealthy cycle or hike in the surrounding countryside, and stay in much more frugal accommodation there, or in the cheaper boarding houses at "the seaside."



To face p.-168-  
( See line 3 )

## Chapter Five: (3) Industries in Watson's area:

### (viii) Fishing.

Sutcliffe's photographs include numerous examples of larger fishing vessels such as herring drifters and Scottish luggers (e.g., Shaw, 1974, p.8 ): Watson's fishing boats on the other hand are exclusively the local inshore boats known as cobbles. These are clinker-built open boats with a high bow, deep forefoot and flat bottom: their lines and methods of construction go back to Viking times at least. The Yorkshire cobbles are built of wide planks and the freeboard is least amidships; they were often said to be built "three planks to the waterline" and had pronounced tumblehome in the after half of the boat. Their prime characteristic is that they were designed to be beached when not in use, and drawn up high above the highwater mark. To this purpose they had twin skegs aft which enabled them to dry out level without the need for "legs", and which in the modern diesel-engined boats form a "tunnel stern" to protect the propellor when beaching, as in many RNLI lifeboats. The long, deep rudder is quickly unshippable when beaching.

The modern coble differs from the Victorian boats only in being engined: Watson's boats are all sailing cobbles, driven by a lugsail or long, heavy oars, and such boats fished out of the East Yorkshire harbours until the 1930s or later. In for example WHITM:WAT 368 ( plate 87) , which shows them drawn up on the shore at Staithes, the unriggered

masts and halyards laid in the bottom of the boats can be clearly seen. There are a score or more such boats beached here and at Sandsend in WHITM:WAT 367. This could only have been a temporary berth, perhaps between tides and certainly in settled weather only: WHITM:WAT 1081 and 1775 show how far up the cliff-foot they needed to be drawn for safety otherwise. (See plate 95.) In WHITM:WAT 752 (plate 96) there are more than a dozen high above the beach: this was probably a laying-up space for really bad weather or prolonged repairs.

WHITM:WAT 611 shows a heavy two-wheeled trailer used for beaching: this method of retrieving cobbles from the sea is still in use at Filey, though the trailers are now drawn by tractor. Otherwise the boats must have been launched and retrieved ( again, as in the Vikings' day ) over rollers, as they still are at Flamborough North Landing. The 20 or more boats shown in these photographs (WHITM:WAT 299 is another such) are all Whitby registered, as their numbers with the prefix or suffix "WY" show, and in bad weather they must have moored in Whitby harbour or inside the shelter of Staithes beck, since Staithes at the time of Watson's photograph (see plate 86) had not even the minimal shelter afforded by the present-day harbour walls. WHITM:WAT 163 shows breakers inside Whitby harbour on a relatively calm day: WHITM:WAT 503 shows the safe moorings inside the outer harbour, with cobbles beached on the sand on the bottom of the harbour, and WHITM:WAT 1172 and 1182 reveal how long

were the mooring lines needed to cope with the large tidal range. But for the families of a few ironstone miners, the whole population of Staithes depended on fishing for its living, and Shaw (1990) maintains that "towards the end of the last century 42 cobbles and 14 larger smacks fished out of Staithes" (p.42). Half that number at most are to be seen in Watson's photographs, and there is no trace of vessels larger than cobbles, nor is it easy to imagine such a large fleet being accommodated in Staithes beck (plate 90) in bad weather. They were either beached, or sought refuge in Whitby harbour: see endnote 19 . There is little indication in Watson's work of fishing methods or of the varieties of fish caught, apart from the crab or lobster pots shown in WHITM:WAT 1078. What does emerge is the poverty of the fishermen and their families and the hardship of their lives: even the tiny fishing village of Runswick Bay had its lifeboat station. The cramped, dilapidated cottages in their steep alleys and cluttered yards (plate 90 and 91, WHITM:WAT 1247, 726) are typical, as are those at Robin Hoods Bay (WHITM:WAT 360) and Staithes (WHITM:WAT 104). "A Street in Staithes" (plate 92) speaks volumes about the lifestyle of the barefoot boy standing on the flags of the narrow alley, with the "peg rug", such as were made by the women from strips of cloth cut from old clothes, hanging over the wooden railing.

The fishermen probably supplemented their income from secondary sources: WHITM:WAT 1081 and 1077 show a boating





( See p. 171, line 27 et seq. )

To face p.-171-

party at Runswick, with a fisherman holding his boat's head in to land, and suggest that in the summer months at least there was money to be made by taking out such parties, just as the Scarborough and Bridlington fishermen still take out visitors on fishing trips. Sutcliffe's fishermen in Whitby were bribed or tipped for posing for him and the amateurs who flocked to the "Photographers' Mecca", but elsewhere the fishermen probably did not have this source of income - it is thought highly unlikely that Watson offered such inducement (Richardson, 1990, pp.54-55). They did, however, exhibit (or sell to an exhibitor - the figures in plate 82 do not seem typical fishermen - ) any unusual catches like this huge shark, and they certainly grew some of their own food wherever they could. There are rough vegetable gardens on waste ground above the beach at Runswick in WHITM:WAT 1316, and in WHITM:WAT 1315 can be seen allotments on the steep banks of Staithes beck. These were in all probability tended by fishermen since these were practically the only inhabitants of the village.

There is nothing else to be gleaned from the photographs in the Watson Collection which bears on the fishing industry of the time and area. As in the case of farming activities (see pp.153-154 ), the contrasts with Sutcliffe's photographs is most telling. Although neither photographer started out with the prime intention of making a record of the fishing industry in the Whitby area, Sutcliffe's work provides a wealth of information on



To face p.-172-  
( See lines 6 and 22 )

precisely that topic. From the enhanced prints published by the Sutcliffe Gallery it is immediately obvious not only what fishing methods were used (Shaw, 1990, p.10; Shaw, 1974, p.27); what bait was used, and who collected it (Shaw, 1990, p.14); but even (Shaw, 1990, p. 22) the size of hooks used and the length of the "long-lines". A greater variety and size of fish caught is shown in the open-air auction in Shaw (1990), p.24, than would be taken off Whitby nowadays: the cumbersome sea-boots, high-crowned hats, sou'westers and thick, well patched trousers worn by the men figure frequently, and almost every Sutcliffe picture of Whitby fishermen provides a mass of detailed information on their boats, gear, methods or lifestyle.

As in the case of the two men's pastoral and agricultural scenes, the difference is explicable by Sutcliffe's flair for composition and his habit of "going in close" and "filling the frame", whilst Watson was taking a distant shot with an eye to producing a picture postcard. In a Watson photograph it may be clear that the boats are cobbles: in Sutcliffe's the boats are not only manifestly cobbles, but clearly clinker-built - so clearly, indeed, that the nail-heads are visible, as in Shaw (1974), p.5.

Summary and evaluation: (viii) Fishing

There is information of both categories one and two here. The evidence of, for instance, the number of fishing cobbles, and of the narrow streets and cramped housing conditions in Staithes and Runswick, is a firm indication of the occupation and lifestyle of the fishing families, and cannot have been distorted or falsified.

The case of the boy in the "Street in Staithes" has been dealt with on p. 99. In all probability it is hard and reliable "category one" evidence, but the photograph alone does not prove it to be such.

## Chapter Five (3) Industries in Watson's area:

### (ix) Construction and building.

In addition to photographing isolated building projects such as the re-building of the road bridge over the Esk at Sleights after its destruction by flood, Watson was much occupied in recording two major public works which he had been commissioned to photograph, namely the re-building of Lythe church from 1910-1911, and the construction of the "new" Whitby-Sandsend road from 1922-1925.

These two major projects were photographed by Watson at intervals of 7 or 10 days, and each photograph is accurately dated in the rebate with the day, month and year. Moreover, the projects and their portrayal by Watson were thought to be of major importance to the local historian by Mr Percy Burnett, who accordingly selected for the Whitby Museum no fewer than 85 photographs of the Whitby-Sandsend road, and 113 of the Lythe church re-building.

These photographs therefore provide evidence not only of the building methods, materials and working conditions of the time, but also ( in view of the frequent and accurate dating ) a measure of the rate of progress made in re-building a church in 1910-1911, and in constructing a new road between 1922 and 1925. They also reveal whether any marked developments in construction

techniques or in the use of building materials took place in the 25 years between 1910 and 1935, the year in which Watson photographed the re-building of the road bridge at Sleights. Some characteristics of the workforce employed may also emerge.

The potential importance and value to the historian of these Watson photographs has already been hinted at, but in probably exaggerated terms, by Frank (1980) and Williams (1980). Frank (1980, pp. 6-7) for instance claims that "the sequence amounting to dozens of dated plates of the demolition of the old Lythe church and the building of the new in 1910-1911, with every architectural detail carefully recorded, the masons at their work, and with the ceremony recorded for posterity, must constitute one of the most complete pictorial narratives available to the student of that period", and that the "comprehensive series of photographs of the building of the Whitby-Sandsend road in the 1920's " would possibly " be of interest in the context of the history of civil engineering. "

Many of Frank's submissions can be substantiated, as will be seen in the following analysis of Watson's photographs of Lythe church and the Whitby-Sandsend road: Williams' theories are perhaps less soundly based. Her assertion that "Watson's photography was a pointer to the diminishment of man before machine.... his figures are tiny, they are seen.... seemingly helpless, they are figures from the past in an age which was moving rapidly

towards the future.... they are adjuncts to the paper landscape rather than participants" is contradicted for instance by the many pictures of the masons building Lythe church or the labourers working on the Whitby-Sandsend road (see plates 97-101). To claim otherwise would be as fanciful and, as she admits elsewhere, as much "pure surmise", "overstatement" and full of "tenuous connections" as is her association of Watson's work with "the beginnings of a movement in landscape photography which, 60 years later, was to become consolidated in the photographs of Robert Adams and the pioneers of the new American landscape photography." (Williams, 1980, p. 201). For every photograph in which "The garage standing at the side of the new road speaks not of the quaintness of English travel, of stage coaches and farm carts, but rather is suggestive of the functional long distance travel of North America", the Watson Collection has a dozen putting a diametrically opposed view. See plates 27-31, 89-90, and pages 62-64 . Nor is there any indication in Watson's work of "the diminishment of man before machine," if only because there are so many dignified craftsmen amongst the "men" and so very few machines which might have been thought to dwarf or demean them. There is not even a crane used in the demolition or re-building of Lythe church, only a small block and tackle. A view from the church tower dated May 6 1911 shows the church builder's yard and materials on the completion of the church: the only sign of mechanisation is



a small vertical steam boiler whose use is unknown. (WHITM:WAT 426 and plates 104, 106). Otherwise the work on the church would seem to have been entirely manual, using age-old craftsmen's skills and hand tools. Even where machine tools were available, as in the joiners' shop at Mulgrave Castle (WHITM:WAT 462, plate 105), these were themselves hand-driven or treadle-operated. The only traces of mechanisation in Watson's work before 1925 is the steam boiler already mentioned. A similar one seems to have been used on the Whitby-Sandsend road, e.g., in WHITM:WAT 377, plate 106, apparently for use in hauling excavated material or emptied concrete tubs up the slope from the new road, or for lowering mixed concrete down to the workings, and in WHITM:WAT 816. The wooden crane used (WHITM:WAT 498, plate 107) to lift from the quarry the "stone for the church 'gateress' " on February 13 1911, despite its very tall jib, is entirely hand-cranked.

It would be impossible, then, to maintain that Watson's work shows men demeaned by machinery: nor were they demeaned by their toil. These are respectably dressed craftsmen displaying pride in their accomplishments (see plates 98-100), and their working conditions must have been infinitely better than those endured by, say, the North Yorkshire coal miners (see p.141 ). It is true that conditions and materials were far from perfect: in the rebuilding of Lythe church the scaffolding is all of wooden poles lashed together with rope, and there are no planks-

on-edge to add the safety of a toe-board. WHITM:WAT 847 (plate 108) indeed shows gaps between the planks in the working platforms which would today be considered dangerous and unacceptable.

The "new" Whitby-Sandsend road was built in the 1920s in an attempt to relieve unemployment, and it is therefore not surprising that the cutting-back of the steep slopes and the filling-in of the ravines was done with pick, shovel and wheelbarrow, with the help of horse-drawn steel dumper-trucks on a miners' railway. (WHITM:WAT 647, see plate 109). Slightly more sophisticated methods were in use in the casting of the concrete culverts under the road (WHITM:WAT 648, see plates 110, 111), but the work was still done by human labour: no concrete mixers or cranes are shown on the Watson photographs of these projects.

By the 1930s increased mechanisation had crept into the construction industry in Watson's area. WHITM:WAT 1711, entitled " Site of oil boring, Nr. Aislaby, Whitby" is dated April 20, 1937, and shows a mechanised cement-mixer, and a lorry and winch. The photographs showing the North Yorkshire County Council's replacement of the road bridge over the Esk at Sleights, demolished by floods in 1930 and re-opened in 1937, shows modern techniques and materials in use. The crane is of steel girder construction (WHITM:WAT 376 and plates 112-114); the concrete-mixer is motorised; the steel rods suggest re-inforced concrete construction; but the scaffolding and ladders are still

wooden.

WHITM:WAT 698-705 do however show the considerable progress made in construction methods and materials made by 1937 and which facilitated the replacement of what had been a stone bridge by the steel units manufactured by "Head Wrightson & Co., Ltd., Engineers, Thornaby on Tees." (See plates 112- 115).

Plates 112 and 113 do more than merely demonstrate this progress made in mechanisation, however: they also show that such progress was not accompanied by the "diminishment of man before machine" discussed earlier ( page 175 above.) These photographs were taken between 1930 and 1937, i.e., in the worst days of a slump in which huge numbers of the workforce were indeed "diminished" and depressed. But the cause of this, then as now, was not mechanisation but hopeless, long-term unemployment. These men are not "diminished": they have a job.

WHITM:WAT 2, 5, 6 and 14-18 represent the latest mechanisation of a construction site in the Watson Collection. The "Offices of the BEA North Eastern Division Construction Department" show a modern steel-girder crane, hydraulic tipping lorries and steel tubular scaffolding poles. These photographs were not dated by Watson, but the large car shown on WHITM:WAT 15 (Plate 116) has a registration number AVY 302, which was issued by the York licensing authority not earlier than April 1938. (By personal communication, National Motor Museum, Beaulieu).

By the outbreak of World War II, then, the construction and building industry as pictured by Watson had moved on from its previous heavy reliance on hand tools and manual labour to a far greater degree of mechanisation. This was not necessarily accompanied by speedier progress in the work being undertaken: Lythe church was demolished and re-built in the years 1910-1911, whereas the bridge over the Esk at Sleights was - for whatever reason - seven years in the re-building by the North Yorkshire County Council.

Summary and evaluation:(ix) construction and building

Much of the photography in this section was dated by Watson at the time of taking, and therefore chronicles with accuracy the progress and changes in construction methods and building materials between 1910 and 1938 (see p.150). This is photographic documentation of the best kind, chronicling what Harker ( 1982), p. 8, calls " changes in the environment over periods of time" which are "particularly well revealed in photographic imagery." It stands on its own without need of confirmation from other sources, and contrasts sharply with the unsubstantiated interpretations of Williams (1980), discussed on pp. 57-60.

## Chapter Five (3) Industries in Watson's area

### (x) Brick and Pipe Manufacture

A thriving factory producing bricks, tiles and sanitary pipes from a plentiful supply of local clay ideally suited to these products, had existed in Comondale village since the early 1860s. In 1865 the potential of the site was increased by the opening of the Teeside-Whitby railway line, passing through Comondale. By 1867 the factory was linked to this line by a private siding, and in 1872 the site and works were acquired by the Crossley family, who established the "Comondale Brick Tile and Pottery Company Limited" which in addition to producing bricks, tiles and pipes began in 1880 to produce a wide variety of art pottery (the local clays again proving eminently suited to what the Whitby Gazette of 31st. July 1880 referred to as "FINE ART TERRA COTTA DOMESTIC WARE MANUFACTURED AT COMMONDALE").

Production of this ceased about 1884, and in the late 1880s the works began trading as Comondale Brick and Pipe Works, which is the name Watson uses in his photographs. They closed officially in 1947, and by the late 1950s the chimneys had been demolished, and the site levelled and grassed over. Today nothing of it remains and even its location could only be guessed at without local enquiries.

Little of this emerges from Watson's two photographs, which are undated and do not even prove that the works were

still producing bricks. (The brick kilns and stores were situated too far from the road to figure in Watson's images.) The production of the fine "art pottery" had almost certainly ceased before the photographs were taken, and in any case could not have been recorded from Watson's viewpoints. Plate 191 does however indicate the scale of the workings, which were obviously then in full production, and the "private siding" referred to above is clearly shown crossing the road and entering the works. The double-fronted building in the centre of plate 67 is denoted as "Comondale Board School", but from its architecture would seem to have been originally built for some other purpose. Further up the hill, appearing over the tree in the foreground, are buildings which seem much more likely to have been a larger school and perhaps the head teacher's house: perhaps the tiny village had seen some domestic and social development with the relative prosperity which the Brick and Pipe Works brought.

#### Summary and evaluation (x) Brick and pipe manufacture

There is little social documentation here: Watson was not concerned to take photographs of the interiors which would have shown working or living conditions, and these two photographs are much more akin to what Williams (1980), p.21, describes as buildings "photographed because they were there, and because they were said to be interesting. So very often, nothing was proved with the camera except existence."



To face p.-183-  
( See line 13 )

## Chapter Six : Social structure, attitudes, and conditions

Watson's photography has so far been compared, in its quality as an art form and its value as a piece of social evidence, chiefly with the work of Sutcliffe.

In considering the man's social origins, social status and financial success, however, a more enlightening comparison could well be made with George Washington Wilson (1823-93) of Aberdeen, documented in Taylor (1981), or with William Hayes of York and Hutton-le-Hole, chronicled in Buchanan (1986).

Wilson "was born into rural poverty in Banffshire, in 1823. He overcame social handicaps to become the official photographer who recorded the life of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert at their Balmoral retreat. He was a confidant of Victoria's controversial retainer, John Brown. And he built up one of the largest photographic businesses in the British Isles." (The Daily Telegraph, 27 March, 1993.)

Watson, too, came from humble origins: his father was a joiner, and far from wealthy. Watson was dismissed from his employment as a carpenter by the Marquis of Normanby because of lack of work in 1892, and he, like Wilson, set himself up as a professional photographer at the age of 29. He too won and retained the respect and patronage, if not of Royalty as did Wilson, at least of a distinguished branch of the aristocracy who had close links with the Royal family. Both men seem to have travelled more widely than might have



been expected of men of their origins, and both made much of their income from the production of pictorial "views". The major difference was that Wilson was a successful and prosperous business man who made a fortune from his photography, whilst Watson "never made any money at it", as he told Mr Percy Burnett. (Richardson, 1992, p.6.)

The similarity of Watson with Hayes is even more marked. Both worked in small villages within the North Riding of Yorkshire. Both were men of strong religious convictions; both made the greater part of their living from picture postcards; both even shared the same habit of cycling around the adjacent villages and consulting the local shopkeepers as to the cards most likely to sell well.

At first sight, therefore, it might be expected that Watson would be almost ideally placed to photograph the lifestyles and activities both of the family of the Marquis of Normanby ( who gave him his lifelong patronage and frequently commissioned him to take photographs of the Phipps family and of the estate ) and of the working-class background from which he himself came.

In the event, although several of Watson's photographs portray working class conditions, trades and artisans, far more of his work ( at least in the proportion of it selected by Mr Percy Burnett as being worthy of preservation at the Whitby Museum ) was devoted to photographs of the Normanby estate at Lythe, or to the production of "views" as picture postcards. More importantly, his portrayal of the

economic and social conditions of his time is completely devoid of comment or criticism - a point which will be discussed more fully later. ( See Conclusion , pp.213-4.)

Photographs of the Mulgrave Estate ( there are more than 150 of them in the Watson Collection ) concentrate on the exterior of the old and the present Mulgrave Castle; the picturesque spots in Mulgrave Woods; events at the castle such as the firing of miniature cannon on the "Quarterdeck" to celebrate the relief of Mafeking. ( See for instance plates 1-4, 85 and 117.) There are however some enlightening shots of the interior and persons, also: WHITM:WAT: 2101 and 2095 show four kitchen staff in the bare, large, gas-lit kitchen with its substantial but old-fashioned cooking utensils (plates 118, 119 ), and WHITM:WATS 65, 135 and 143 (plate 120), show the typically Victorian dining and drawing rooms with their over-crowded furnishings and huge pictures covering all the wall space. WHITM:WAT 2090 and 2094 show the family and guests posed on the steps of the castle in 1902. On "17.7.'96" there are only 14 domestic staff in WHITM:WAT 2093, ( plate 121), whereas on "September 26 1912" Watson photographed 26 of them in WHITM:WAT 2116 (plate 122). Perhaps the smaller staff in 1896 was a reflection of the hard times which only four years previously had seen the dismissal of Watson for lack of work; perhaps the difference in numbers was purely coincidental, or perhaps the increased staff in 1912 was a sign of returning prosperity. (See endnote 20.)

Whatever the reason, within two years the situation was to be reversed: the late Lord Normanby remembered (private communication) that his most abiding impression of the Estate as a very small boy during World War I was that there was not a man to be seen anywhere, and WHITM:WAT 2113, 2114, and 2115 (plates 123-125) show that rooms at the Castle were soon to be in use as a military hospital with dormitories and a physiotherapy gymnasium. In 1910 however there were still shooting parties on Ugthorpe moor (WHITM:WAT 2096, plate 133), and the foxhounds still met at Lythe (WHITM:WAT 1869), Grosmont (WHITM:WATS 129) and Castleton (plate 134).

The Normanby connection with the famous and the distinguished of the land emerges also: WHITM:WAT1867 shows a close-up of the Poet Laureate, and WHITM:WATS 57, entitled by Watson "Mulgrave Castle Sept. 22 1898. ( Mr. Alfred Austin, Poet Laureate)" shows the diminutive figure of the Poet Laureate on the steps of the castle, accompanied by some of his hosts and their staff. Mr Austin had unveiled the Caedmon Cross memorial in Whitby on 21.9.98, according to Watson's note on his photograph of this ceremony (plate 135), so it seems highly likely that the Poet Laureate had been entertained at Mulgrave Castle for one night at least.

The Reverend the Marquis of Normanby ( WHITM:WAT 24, plate 126, shows him in full regalia, in what seems to have been a portrait made in Watson's studio ) had close and long-established connections with the Royal Family, and on

at least one occasion Watson was sent ( or perhaps accompanied Lord Normanby when he was visiting Windsor ) to photograph St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, Queen Charlotte's Monument, (WHITM:WAT 464) and other aspects of Royal Windsor.(See WHITM:WAT 1491-1500, plates 127-132).

More interesting are WHITM:WAT 1491 and 1492, annotated by Watson " Mulgrave House, Windsor " (plate 132). Personal communication from Lord Normanby dated 29.3.93 states that "...this was at one time used by Lord Normanby when he took his school to Windsor when the period of his Canancy coincided with the term. The date of his visit is not known."

The "school" in the above reference was the small class of boys run by the Reverend the Marquis of Normanby, usually at Mulgrave Castle. Some of their art lessons were taught by Sutcliffe's father, and for their woodwork lessons they went to Watson senior in the estate carpenter's workshop. The late Marquis (by personal communication ) explained that the delicate wooden easels on the bench in the workshop ( in plate 105) were most probably not, as Frank (1980) conjectures,made by the Watsons for the display of delicate china objects at the Castle, but were exercises made by the schoolboys during their woodwork lessons.

Imposing as the exterior of Mulgrave Castle is, life inside the Castle was probably less luxurious than might be expected. The kitchen, for instance, (WHITM:WAT 2101, 2095,

plates 118, 119), although spacious enough and well equipped, is spartan and bare; the "Landing, Mulgrave Castle, about 1890" (WHITM:WATS 155) is anything but impressive despite its cases of stuffed birds, and the thin carpet extends only part-way across the stairs where it is secured by ordinary stair-rods. The dining and drawing rooms (WHITM:WATS 65, 135, 143 and plate 120) are comfortably but not luxuriously furnished and equipped.

The estate staff however were well looked after and comfortably housed: it will be recalled that Watson's father, when appointed Head Carpenter to Lord Normanby in November 1863, was housed in the lodge at the entrance to Mulgrave Castle, and "Lythe Bank Lodge" (plate 136 and WHITM:WAT 284) show what substantial buildings these were.

There was obviously a great depth of feeling of "noblesse oblige" on the part of the Normanby family, and it is interesting to note that in the latter half of the 19th. century, Lythe Hall was in the occupancy of one John Muschamp Sowerby, land and alum agent to the Earl of Mulgrave, as is shown by WHITM:WAT 1326 and 1329, plate 137, portraying his memorial plaque in the old Lythe church in 1910. Until quite recently the agents to the Normanby estate continued to occupy the Hall ( WHITM:WAT 1344, plate 138 ) but it was the late Lord Normanby himself who resided there until his death in January 1994, and the Dowager Marchioness who still does.

The lifestyle of other landed gentry in the area is

reflected in Watson's photographs of their residences such as Wynyard Park ( WHITM:WAT 126, 130, plates 139 and 140) Botton Hall, Danby ( WHITM:WAT 141, 1815 and 1816, plate 141 ), in the unidentified castle and Victorian interiors in WHITM:WAT 710-718, and the gracious living implicit in WHITM:WAT 288 and 342 (plates 142 and 143). They took their part, too, in the hunt-meets and shooting parties already referred to on page 186.

Examples of the houses of a wealthy middle class are to be seen for instance in Sandsend (WHITM:WAT 171,584,585) and Glaisdale ( WHITM:WAT 1034), Egton (WHITM:WAT 1029), and Goathland ( WHITM:WAT 1041), though in no case is the interior pictured. Plate 146 is typical.

The shopkeepers' and workers' houses in the villages - again, exteriors only - conform to the pattern of solidly built stone houses, slate or pantile-roofed, opening directly onto the street. WHITM:WAT 68 - 70, all of Castleton, are typical (plates 9, 17, 18 ). Farmhouses figure frequently, the following being typical: Manor Grange Farm, Gt. Ayton ( WHITM:WAT 1909), and Travellers Rest Farm, Ugthorpe (WHITM:WAT 1881).

There are farmhouse interiors shown in WHITM:WAT 1910, 577 and 1911, plates 147-149, and a great deal can be read from these. The turf fire in WHITM:WAT 577 (plate 148) was perhaps a curiosity by this time, but the immense

Yorkshire ranges were common, and were used both for heating and for cooking and keeping food warm, as here. They invariably had matches and wood spills kept on the mantelpiece, and frequently a clock as in this case.

The settle to the left of the fireplace would be used by whoever might be in need of a short rest and warmth at any given time, but the bed on the right may have had a different function: it was common practice to "move downstairs" any long-term invalid whom it was not practical to nurse in a bedroom, or any aged or failing member of the family no longer able to climb the stairs.

There are no other photographs of the interiors of workers' houses. This is a great loss to the social historian, but hardly to be wondered at when it is remembered that Watson's main interest lay in finding a "picturesque" scene for his picture postcards, and that "local history was not at all in his mind." The cottages at Sandsend (e.g., WHITM:WAT 286, and plate 150) were probably intended as such, and reveal only incidentally a hint of the lifestyle of the miners or alum workers who lived in them and cultivated the allotments on the other side of the track.

The demolition of old cottages in Lythe in 1935 (WHITM:WAT 83, 1976, 1987) shows the building methods and the poor housing that was then being demolished. These cottages were probably on the Normanby Estate: one of them at least is next door to Watson's own house, Gordon Cottage,

which was at that time owned by the Estate, and the demolition and re-building being done, long before the cottages reached the state of decay shown in WHITM:WAT 597 (plate 151), make the latter all the more interesting. (See above, p. 98 .)

Watson's photograph of Robson's cottage was, then, perhaps intended to form a picture postcard for holidaymakers from Sandsend. At least it must be said that it would be very risky to take it as concrete evidence of the wretched housing conditions of the Victorian poor, although the possibility of it being precisely that cannot be entirely discounted. Wretched housing conditions undoubtedly still existed in Watson's area in the second half of the nineteenth century; thus Atkinson (1891), pp. 18-22, speaks of the "revolution" in "the altered conditions characterising the dwellings of the people" which had taken place during the 40 years of his office in Danby. In approximately 1870 he assisted in an official enquiry into "the ways in which the working classes were housed", and found conditions in which "the commonest rules of decency were not, and could not be, attended to as regarded the sleeping arrangements" (p.19). He goes on to describe farmhouses in which a single clay-floored room, divided into cubicles or sleeping boxes, served as living and sleeping accommodation for the entire family, "... and at one time the united population of two such one-roomed, loftless dens reached the trifling total of 23 souls!" (p.22). He hastens



to add that by 1891 great improvements had been made, but sometimes without success: often a good, newly created bedroom was kept as "the best room" and used by guests only.

The Revd. Atkinson was much perturbed by, and fought hard against, the "shameful immorality of the usages and manners" caused by such housing, and the "regardless commingling of the young lasses and lads of the family, whether sons and daughters or hired farm-servants, and of the married heads with children (old enough to need to be kept apart)."

Dr. Bishop (1923), as a GP and a poor law medical officer, encountered cases of incest and so much in-breeding and inter-marriage that he chronicled insanity among the moorland population of quite alarming proportions (pp.74-180).

Poverty there undoubtedly was in Watson's area, though Bishop (1923), writing from a topographically and economically similar district some 25 miles away, found none in his: "There was practically no poverty in those moorlands, even in the darkest days of agricultural depression" (p. 46). Much depends, of course, on the good doctor's definition of "poverty": he had up to 25 "paupers" in his area, and the officially designated "pauper" was indeed poor.

Very little of this poverty is evidenced in Watson's photographs: in the almost complete absence of photographs of the interiors of working class houses it has

to be deduced from the poor housing conditions revealed in plates 156, 80, ( where the wash-tub stands in the alley and the washing itself lies on the broken flagstones) and 92. This barefoot boy is the only example of a truly deprived child in Watson's work, and even here it cannot be held to prove absolutely that he had in fact no footwear (see p. 99 .) All that is known is that whereas Sutcliffe's "Water Rats" (loc. cit.,) were paid to pose naked, Watson was unlikely ever to have tipped or bribed anyone.

All other children and adults in Watson's work are at least adequately clothed and shod; the clothes even of "Robson" and his small charge, in plate 151, are in a much better condition than the cottage.

At least until the turn of the century, the most disconcerting aspect of working class housing in Watson was the drinking water supply. This seems to have come mainly from the village pump: WHITM:WAT 1835-1837, plate 153, is at "Hinderwell", WHITM:WAT 1022 (plate 154) is Egton, and the open trough (WHITM:WAT 1838, plate 155) is at Hemsyke. It may have been a horse-trough, but the rhymed injunction to the "weary stranger" suggests otherwise. Even where the supply was apparently piped (WHITM:WAT 356, plate 156, shows a street water tap and a cast iron inspection cover) the conditions for collection and disposal were still unsatisfactory.

It was at first thought possible that they might have been a prime cause of "the fever" which the headteacher of Lythe village school frequently mentions in his log book (1862-1906) as having caused the closure of the school for weeks at a time, but it seems more likely that "the fever" at this time would have been scarlet fever, certainly not typhoid or cholera (Dr. N.T.Nicol, Hon. Keeper, Whitby Museum, by private communication).

By 1904 water was being piped into the villages, but the purity of water in the rural areas obviously remained an issue important enough to attract a great deal of attention and large crowds to the official inauguration of a supply of "Pure Water for Lealholm" on "13.9.1904" (plate 157).

In 1912 a modern water tower had been built at Sandsend. WHITM:WAT 501 is entitled "Water Tower, Meadowfields, 1912" (plate 158), and WHITM:WAT 502, annotated "Meadowfields, Sandsend", shows a large middle-class housing development.

## Social Attitudes

Whilst it can hardly be said that "the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton" (if only because the College had no playing field at the time ), it is arguable that national morale and moral attitudes to the Boer war of 1899-1902 and to the appalling trench warfare of World War I were substantially influenced by the kind of upbringing and education which the Victorian and Edwardian generations received at home and in school.

Watson's photography does little more than echo the blind, unswerving loyalty to Queen or King, Church and Country, and the jingoistic patriotism of the first half of the twentieth century, but the social attitudes of the day emerge clearly from the log book of Lythe village school, of which Whitby Museum has a copy for the years 1862-1906. It is noted that "his Lordship" (the Rev. the Marquis of Normanby) came in regularly to "open school", give a lesson, or "take prayers", and it should be remembered that these were the days in which the hymn "All things bright and beautiful" was not only still sung, but still included the verse

'The rich man in his castle  
The poor man at his gate  
God made them high or lowly  
And ordered their estate.'

Respect for authority and property, the importance of good behaviour and honesty, hard work, cleanliness and

punctual attendance, were inculcated as a matter of course.

None of this reveals itself directly in Watson's photography. What does emerge is a hint of the regimentation and strict discipline insisted upon at school: the desks in the school hall (WHITM:WAT 457, 760, plate 159) are in straight rows wide enough apart to discourage "copying" or working in pairs; the boys in WHITM:WAT 361 (plate 160) are standing in rows, and before entering school in the morning doubtless stood to attention, in two rows, in silence. Physical Education was unheard of: there was not even Physical Training, merely what was called "drill", with much emphasis on marching in step and none on free activity.

Watson's own lifelong devotion to Methodism, and his contemporaries' loyalty to their church, find expression in a great number of his photographs. Ceremonies such as Ascension Day at Lythe church (WHITM:WAT 424, plate 161) and the laying of the foundation stone (WHITM:WAT 422, plate 162) were attended by large crowds, as would be expected in a village where the provincial aristocratic landowner was himself an ordained minister of the Church of England. Methodism too had a strong hold on its adherents, and although the chapel in Lythe (e.g., WHITM:WAT 1778) appears modest and in poor repair, every village seems to have had its chapel, and the wealth and prosperity of the urban Wesleyan church is exemplified in plates 163-167, which show Brunswick Wesleyan Church, Whitby, before and after rebuilding. Temperance fêtes at Whitby (e.g., WHITM:WAT

1476-1477, WHITM:WAT 272, plate 168), were attended in large numbers both of spectators and of participants.

The unswerving devotion to Queen or King and Country which was to last at least another twenty years is shown in the huge crowds lining Whitby streets on the occasion of Victoria's Diamond Jubilee on "10.8.97" ( WHITM:WAT 1224-5, plates 169, 170) to see the decorated, horse-drawn floats pass in procession, the lady spectators also taking part, pushing their bicycles hung with flowers. The Channel Fleet was photographed off Sandsend on "Sept.15.'03" (WHITM:WAT 876), and plate 93 shows visitors being shown over the ships.

The relief of Mafeking is celebrated by adults at Mulgrave Castle in plate 117 and WHITM:WAT 1930, but other Watson photographs show children attending peace celebrations: the children's tea-party in WHITM:WAT 1725 (plate 171) is dated "July 19. 19" and seems (from the decorations) to have been a celebration of the end of World War I. WHITM:WAT 2117 (plate 172) shows a smaller group, waving union flags and wearing home-made paper hats or helmets decorated with the union flag, and holding aloft a banner labelled "PEACE" and portraying three uniformed officers. The negative is dated "Lythe 2.6.'02", and the brown sugar-paper edging is annotated "Lythe, celebrating relief of Ladysmith 1902." Ladysmith was relieved in 1900, and 1902 saw the end of the Boer War, so there is little doubt that the full date on the negative is correct and the

pencilled one on the border a later, incorrect addition - see pp. 150-151.

This would then seem to be a group of children, perhaps a school group, celebrating the end of hostilities in South Africa, though many of them are too young to have had much appreciation of the issues involved. There is a similar negative (WHITM:WAT 300) picturing even younger children celebrating the relief of Mafeking, with blacked-out faces and home-made hats, and in both these photographs the salient feature is the extremely young appearance of the children.

It would therefore seem that the attitudes which made possible the almost universal support for the two wars mentioned were not only present in society in general but also encouraged from the earliest age in school (Plate 159).

Here the instruction was formal, with much emphasis on the three Rs and on rote learning and memorisation. There is seating for at least 30 "scholars" in the school hall; the doors opening off this may have led to other classrooms, or the whole school population may have been taught in different groups in the hall. The chart on the wall probably set out "tables" of weights and measures, but instruction extended beyond the three Rs to the geography of North and South America as well as of the British Isles, if the wall maps were for anything more than show. There is a model of a castle, too, on the chest of

drawers, and the "sums" on the blackboard give an indication of the standard reached - the "simplification of fractions" such as  $\frac{11\frac{1}{4}}{3\frac{1}{8}}$  or  $\frac{3\frac{1}{7} \text{ of } \frac{5}{11} \text{ of } \frac{1}{15} \div 4}{\frac{2}{7} + \frac{4}{3}}$

would be beyond the competence of many secondary pupils today, without their calculators. Many of the most able "scholars" were so well taught up to the age of 14 that (as in the case of Watson's older sister Annie : see pp. 17-18, above) they completed distinguished careers in competition with the products of the secondary schools or, as in the case of Watson and G.W. Wilson, proved sufficiently mature, self-confident and competent to set up their own independent and successful businesses, or become the skilled artisans, craftsmen and engineers of Edwardian industry. A century previously the Whitby area had produced another prime example of a poor local scholar who made good: Watson has several photographs of the humble schoolroom at Great Ayton where Captain James Cook laid the foundations of a navigator's and cartographer's knowledge of mathematics.

There are no further details of the educational provision of the times in Watson's photographs. The Lythe school log book already mentioned is a mine of information as to the life at the school when Watson was a pupil there, but details of fees, salaries and prices; the rôle of the Rev. the Marquis; the headmaster's attitude to corporal punishment, and the joiner's enlargement of the school



building in 1872, though most useful social evidence, are not evidence from Watson's photography and therefore lie outside the scope of this thesis.

Watson's photographs supply surprisingly little evidence of the impact of World War I on his society. Apart from the pictures of the pre-war fleet mentioned above, he has shots of the war memorials at Lealholm (WHITM:WAT 1286) and Sleights ( WHITM:WAT 1013); the military hospital at Mulgrave (plates 123-125, and p.186 , above); the "Plane at Overdale '14" which was "at battlefront 3 weeks later, the first to fly there" (WHITM:WATS 133), and three photographs of shell damage to houses in Whitby, inflicted by a German warship on "Dec. 16. 1914." ( See WHITM:WAT 2118-2120, plates 178, 179).

There is not one portrait of the tens of thousands taken of young fresh-faced men in their new uniforms, often standing beside their even younger brides, though Watson must surely have taken some: there are a score of names of Lythe men on the local war memorial to World War I. Perhaps Watson thought them too personal and poignant to be kept with his other negatives: perhaps he enclosed the negative with the ordered prints, as a complimentary gesture. Despite his strong christian convictions it is unlikely that he would be so rigid a pacifist or conscientious objector as to refuse to photograph a local lad going to the wars, and he had in any case already photographed the Boer War celebrations, the military

hospital provision, the visit of the fleet to Sandsend and the first warplane to fly to France. The most likely explanation is that Mr Percy Burnett did not see fit to select any of the wartime portraits for the Whitby Museum, thinking perhaps that they had not enough to contribute to the study of local history.

## Chapter Seven: Conclusion

### An evaluation of the nature and extent of social documentation in Watson's work.

"Francis Frith and his colleagues travelled the length and breadth of Britain, photographing their fellow citizens and their belongings. They were not consciously making any social comments, but the pictures they took inevitably formed a commentary in themselves of the complex, colourful tapestry that made up British society." ( Wilson (1985), p. 168).

What Wilson has in mind is the way in which Frith's photography reflects the "Two Nations" which made up Victorian society, by portraying the living conditions, the dress, professions, trades and habits of all members of society from the wealthy to the destitute. Subject to the caveat expressed above (pp. 95-100), as to the reliability and validity of photographs as historical evidence, it would be true to say that Watson's photographs too formed "a commentary of the tapestry that made up British society", although it must be stressed that in the case of both these photographers the commentary is "not consciously making any social comments", and also that in Watson's case it is even more incomplete than in that of Frith.

It is manifest, from the preceding description and analysis of Watson's work, that such evidence as there is of the social conditions prevailing in his area and his era is latent, hardly ever explicit: it has to be gleaned from his photographs by the observer in the light of the latter's knowledge of the local history of Watson himself, and of the social, economic and physical environment in which he operated. None of the evidence is presented deliberately, still less critically. Watson has no axe to grind, no case to present, no cause to fight: "local history was not at all in his mind", and he was concerned primarily merely to produce picture postcards which would sell, or to fulfil a commission for which he had been engaged to produce an impersonal, factual record of the work as it proceeded. He was what Baird (1980) has called " a travelling diarist": a "journeyman photographer" who "had to cater for the requirements of a small village practice which required unsophisticated photographs to be made for the local people and the growing numbers of tourists."

He was not, and could never have become, concerned with photographic social documentation or interpretative, proselytizing photo-journalism, but whilst this factor goes a long way towards explaining why there is so little true social documentation in Watson's photography, it is not the sole explanation, and it is necessary to outline the other factors which were operative.

Williams (above, p.90), reminded us that "Topographical photography was a distinct Victorian and Edwardian passion. To those who view it today, it is often disappointing; buildings were photographed because they were there, and because they were said to be interesting. So very often, nothing was proved with the camera but existence." It has to be admitted that much of Watson's photography, at least in the selection of it which survives as the Watson Collection, is open to this criticism. Like his camera, Watson recorded without interpreting what he saw. An Atget, whose documentation of the seamier side of life in his beloved Paris reveals an approach and a motivation completely different from Watson's, might perhaps have said of him, "Il ne juge pas - il constate", i.e., "He does not form judgements; he states facts."

At a superficial level two possible explanations for this emerge. The first possibility is that Watson did perhaps take a number of photographs intended as social documentation, and that nearly all of these were amongst the very many negatives that were scrapped after his death. This is an unlikely possibility and too facile an explanation: just as "there is no reason to suppose that the missing albums and negatives would be superior to what has survived (of Watson's work)" (Richardson, 1992, p.18), so is it highly unlikely that Watson did any considerable amount of work in a genre completely different from the rest of his work, and that nearly all of this was

scrapped.

Secondly, there is the possibility that Mr P. Burnett (see pp.3-4) was biased and over-selective in his choice of the negatives to be preserved in the Whitby Museum. Burnett was a local historian, but neither a sociologist nor an economist, and he seems to have been interested in preserving a record of the re-building of Lythe church or the construction of the Whitby-Sandsend road, perhaps to the exclusion of what the social historian of today would consider more valuable material. Equally, perhaps such material never existed in Watson's work: whether he never took a photograph inside a Whitby slum, or whether he did, but Burnett ignored it, will not now be known.

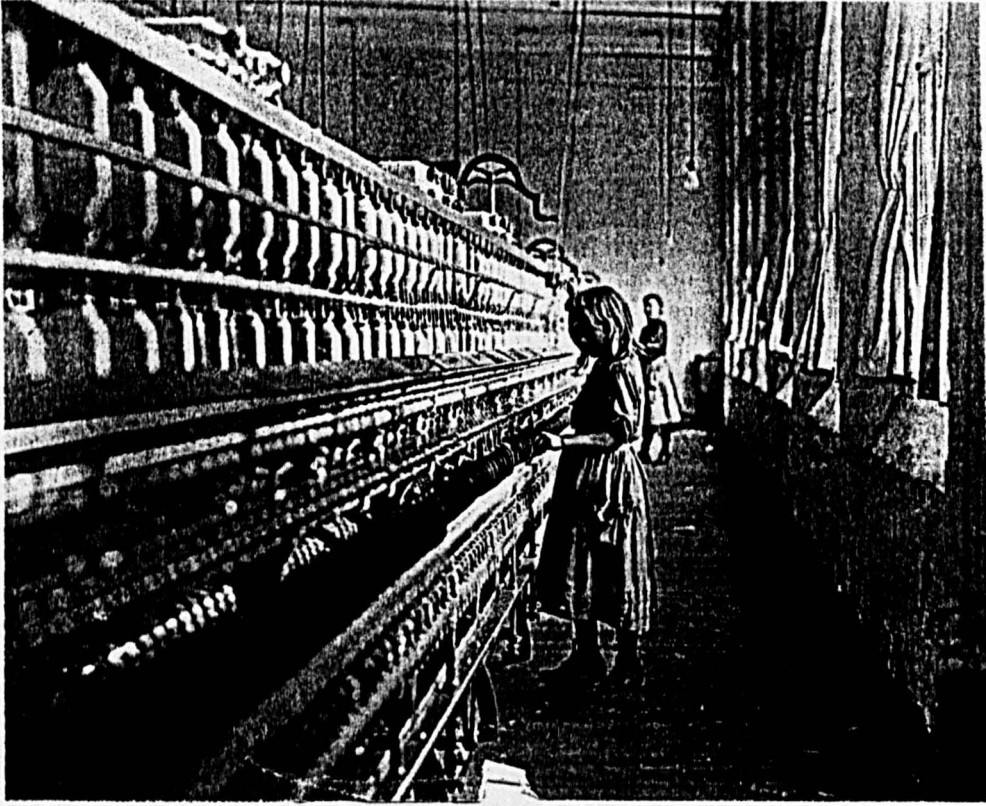
It would not be in the least surprising to find that Watson rarely produced evidence of social deprivation, and that when he did, as in plates 88, 92 and 156, it was without deep involvement, either emotional or intellectual. He would not have been alone in this: other much more famous photographers like Francis Frith or G.W.Wilson were also more concerned to produce saleable "views" or picture postcards than to present critical social documentation. Taylor (1981, p. 50) points out that G.W.Wilson made a living in his "views" from topographic representation, and that the Scottish tourists went in search of the atmosphere, beauty and "picturesque-ness" of Scotland as described in Scott's novels and poetry: harrowing scenes of poverty and deprivation would not have

been to their taste. Even in Wilson's picture of the "St. Kilda Parliament about 1880", it is the strength and dignity of the men that predominate, not the fact that half of their number are barefoot, and one is forcefully reminded that a true, trenchant social documentation of Scottish life such as that of Oscar Marzaroli (1993) lies more than a century ahead. (See endnote 21.)

It is not that the photographers under discussion lacked a social conscience: far from it. It is however perhaps surprising that their conscience did not play a greater part in determining the type of photography they undertook, and its emphasis and purpose. As Jay (1973, p.61) puts it, "In spite of Frith's passionate devotion to Quakerism, he does not seem to have used his camera as a social weapon. When he focuses it on the poor or the underprivileged there is always an element of voyeurism, or an acceptance of the class structure as an unalterable fact of life. There is no emotional involvement such as is all too evident (sic) in the pictures of the East End poor by Frith's contemporary, John Thomson."

Others may not find this "element of voyeurism" in Frith's work, and it certainly does not exist in Watson's, but the rest of the quotation is fair comment on Watson's photography, as on Frith's.

It is this "acceptance of the class structure as an unalterable fact of life", the lack of "emotional involvement" in the life of the poor and the



( See p. 207,  
line 23 )



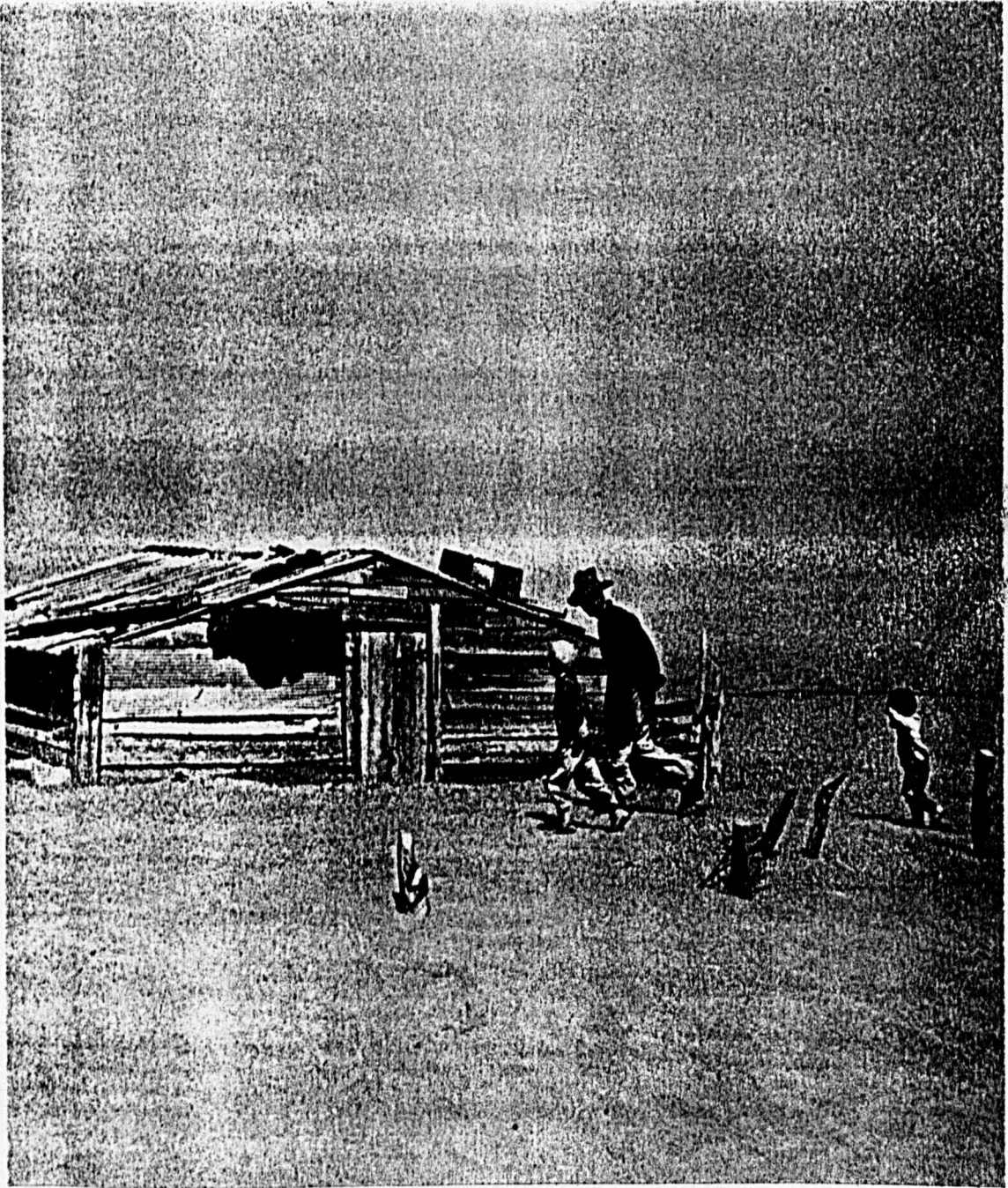
( See p. 207,  
line 26 )

Jacob Riis. 'Bandits' Roost', New York slum, 1888.



underprivileged, that marks the work of Watson or Frith off from the outstanding social documentation produced earlier by for instance Hine, or later by the FSA photographers in the America of the 1930s, and today in the work of, for instance, Sebastião Salgado or Carlos Reyes-Manzo. If one takes as a definition of "photography as a social document" the work of the FSA photographers during the 1930s depression, or Lewis Wickes Hine's documentation of Italian immigrants in 1905, or of steel construction workers in 1931, it becomes immediately obvious that Watson's "documentation" is qualitatively so different as to belong in a different category altogether.

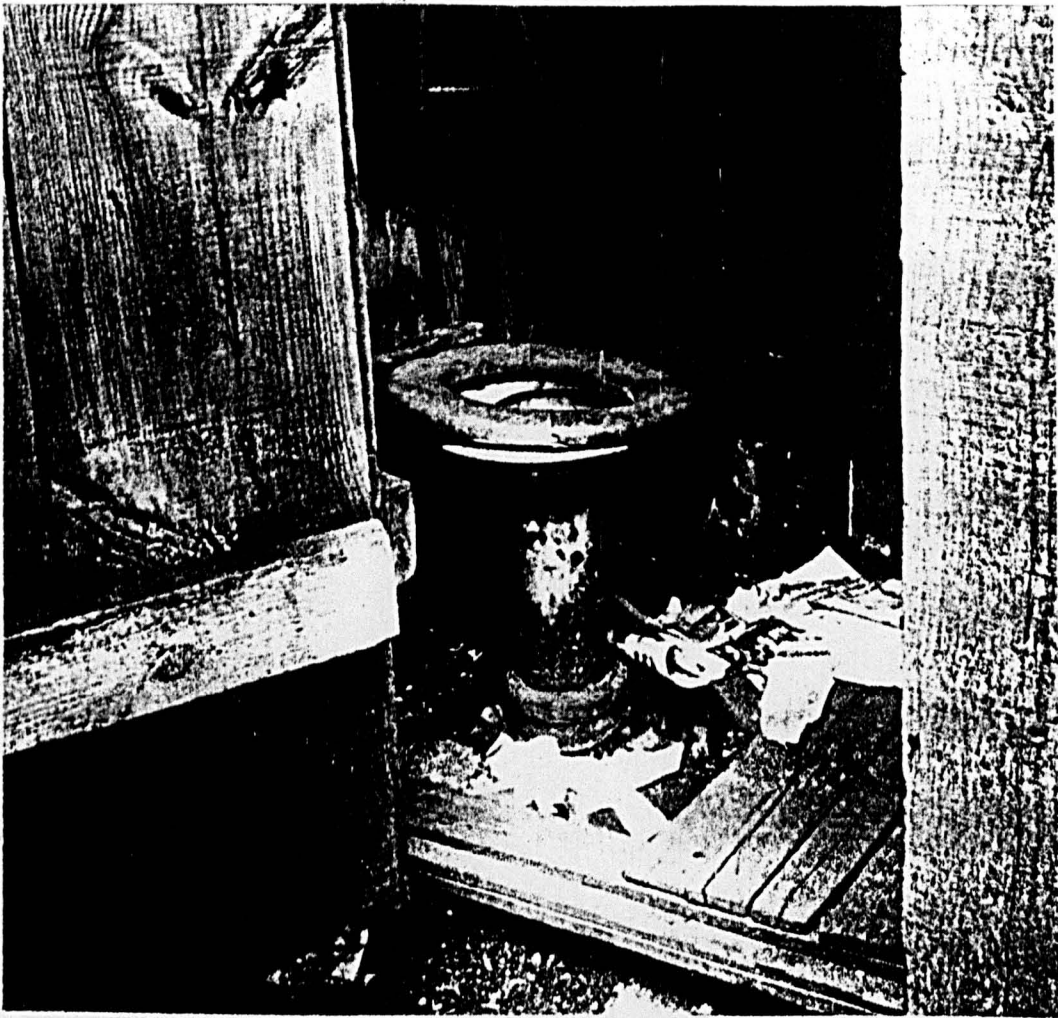
It is not a question of equipment, techniques, or epoch. Hine photographed from the top of the Empire State building under construction carrying a 5" x 7" plate camera complete with tripod: Watson might perhaps have balked at working at such an extreme height, but this is by no means certain, as he had already photographed with even heavier gear from above the roof-ridge of Lythe church. Similarly, it would be quite untrue to say that he could not have photographed the interiors of workers' houses or workplaces in Whitby because his emulsions or his lenses were too slow. After all, Hine's picture of child-labour in his "Carolina Cotton Mill" dates back to 1908; Jacob Riis' "Tailor's workshop employing sweated labour, New York", is 20 years earlier, and his "Bandits' Roost" in the New York slums is also dated 1888. Riis was admittedly using



To face p.-208-  
( See line 11 )

flashpowder, but it is recorded that Watson too used this on occasion, though not always with success. (See endnote 22.) Moreover, as plates 173 and 174 prove, he was perfectly capable of taking what G.W.Wilson would have called "instantaneous photographs" of men at work outdoors.

Nor would it be possible to argue that Watson produced so little explicit social documentation simply because the genre had not been invented in his day. It might be tempting to think that photographic social documentation was born in the 1930s and reached its peak perhaps in the work of the Farm Security Administration photographers before World War II, after which "its tenets have been absorbed and have become essential to the fabric of photo-journalism and especially to the style of factual reporting developed by television" (Newhall, 1982, p. 246). The fact is, however, that the concept itself was well publicised before Watson set himself up as a professional photographer. If a document can be defined as "a thing, especially a deed, writing or inscription, that furnishes evidence" (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1964), then "any photograph can be considered a document if it is found to contain useful information" (Newhall, loc. cit., p. 235), and as early as 1889 the British Journal of Photography had "urged the formation of a vast archive of photographs containing a record as complete as it can be made of the present state of the world." (ibid.) (See endnote 23.)



(See p.209,  
line 6)



(See p. 209,  
line 23)

It is the motives and intention of the photographer, above all else, that differentiate the true photographic social document from the work of a Watson or a Frith. Newhall (ibid., p. 132) sees the motivation of Jacob A. Riis, for instance, as no less than "his personal campaign to expose the misery of the underprivileged living in the crime-infested slums of the lower East Side", and Riis' intention was not to take photographs like Sutcliffe's "Argument's Yard" or Watson's "A street in Staithes", but - as he himself stated - to make a selection of slides to show "as no mere description could, the misery and vice that I have noticed in my ten years of experience (i.e., as a police photographer).... and suggest the direction in which good might be done."

Riis' statement is of vital importance because it reveals not only a compassionate human being, deeply concerned at the lot of his fellow men and passionately convinced of the need for social reform but - most importantly - a photographer confident of the power of his medium to bring about that reform. (See endnote 24.) His work is comparable in this respect with that of the Farm Security Administration photographers, employed in 1935 to portray photographically the starvation conditions in which the rural workers and share-croppers of the American dustbowl lived in the depression of the 1930s. The explicit aim of these photographers, and of the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration of the day, was to concentrate



To face p.-210-  
( See line 6 )

public attention on the desperate plight of the workers and their families by documenting in depth their living and working conditions, their crops, methods and housing, with a view to bringing financial aid to the relief of the affected states. (See endnote 25.)

In John Thomson's "Street Life in London", published posthumously in 1877, there is a similar message of social deprivation and an implicit call for reform, and although these are carried as much by the accompanying articles as by the photographs, Gernsheim (1955), p. 447, points out that the work is "the first photographic social documentation of any kind". About the same time Thomas Annan had "documented notorious slums for the Glasgow City Improvement Trust" (ibid.), and again the nascent social documentation is perceptible: "Much of his (Annan's) work goes deeper than the mere recording of a close or alley to be demolished, for the poverty stricken (sic) people outside their ramshackle wooden houses are a vivid reminder to society of its obligations towards those who work for it." (ibid.)

It could be argued that the Watson Collection includes three photographs ("Kiln Yard", "A Street in Staithes", and the girl at the street water tap (plates 88 , 92 , and 156), which approximate to what Thomson and Annan had produced twenty years previously, as do Sutcliffe's "Argument's Yard" (Shaw, 1974, p. 41) or "Chapel Street, Robin Hood's Bay" (ibid.). There is however

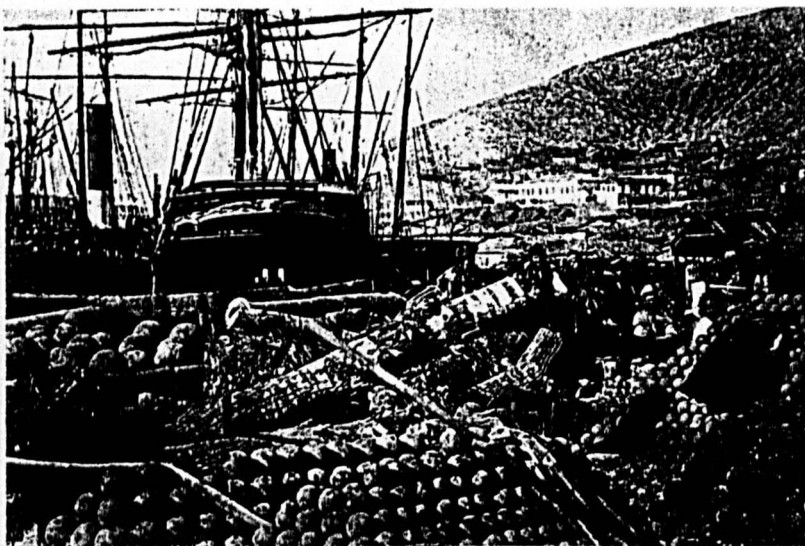


To face p.-211-  
( See line 2 )



a basic difference: the Watson photographs totally lack the element of social criticism, the desire to "portray reality through reality" and by so doing to achieve social reform and the righting of a clearly perceived and forcefully expressed wrong.

This different motivation of Watson, and also of Sutcliffe and Frith, is however not the only characteristic distinguishing their photography from that of the true exponents of social documentation. What they also lack is the conviction that the portrayal of deprivation, in a desire (in however small a measure) to change the world, can be the proper province of photography. The Victorians were not devoid of social conscience; they were aware of the social evils in their large cities and impoverished parts of the countryside; they were sympathetic to the calls for remedies and reforms expressed by their writers like Dickens and artists like Fildes and Cruikshank (who illustrated amongst other works "Oliver Twist"). The immense popularity and prolonged success of "Oliver Twist" and "Hard Times", for instance, proved that the message contained in them did not fall on deaf ears. What the Victorians did not concede was that such criticism was properly the province and rôle of photography: they had known since Pope that "the proper study of mankind is Man", but had yet to realise that such a study could be legitimately based on and expressed in photography. They had no desire to see poverty, destitution, ugliness or



( See p. 212,  
line 4 )



( See p. 212,  
line 17 )



(See p.212,  
line 23)

death portrayed in their picture postcards and "views", which they bought because they preserved memories of happy holidays spent in "picturesque" and comfortable surroundings. For the same reason Roger Fenton's photographs of the Crimean War show the orderly life in the military camp, the unloading of ample supplies of stores and provisions for the troops, and pictures of happy soldiers far from any action. All scenes of horrific warfare are studiously avoided (Fenton, indeed, had specific orders to that effect), the object being not to portray the horror or futility of war, but to bolster morale at home and to avoid offending any Victorian sensibilities. Watson and Frith were doing no more than catering for their public and giving it what it wanted - which also happened to be what was completely in line with their own thinking, and therefore what they themselves were most willing to supply. It was left to Mathew B. Brady ten years later to present the American Civil War in a less sanitized format, and the more horrifying of even his photographs were suppressed at the time. It was not until World War II that Man's inhumanity to Man was portrayed with complete honesty in, for instance, the first pictures to come out of Auschwitz and Belsen; in the war photography of Robert Capa (as in "Omaha Beach, D-Day"), and Don McCullin ("Vietnam, 1968"), Bert Hardy and Nick Ut, or in the pathos of Bill Brandt's victims of the London blitz sheltering in the Elephant and Castle

underground station in 1942.

The Victorian photographers of Whitby were thus inhibited by two factors in any documentation of the social and economic conditions of their time and environment. In the first place, the personal motivation to present a reformer's view of society was lacking in them - both seem to have been satisfied with the status quo, and Sutcliffe at least positively lamented its passing, and the demise of the sailing ships and old Whitby.

Secondly, their lack of financial independence, and the consequent need to work within the parameters set for them by society, to give society what it wanted to see, meant that they could not have afforded to portray the full reality even if they had wished to. In this connection it will be remembered that for instance the French magazine VU, the first French periodical to take a stand against Nazism and Fascism and remarkable for its high standards, ceased publication in 1938 after only ten years in production because it depended heavily on its advertising revenue, and its advertisers did not like the political stance of the founder (Lucien Vogel) on the issue of the Spanish Civil War. Social reformers need funds and a strong sense of independence both financial and intellectual if they are to succeed, and internationally famous agencies such as Magnum Photos (established in 1947 by Henri Cartier-Bresson, Robert Capa, George Rodger et al.), were distinguished not only because their photography was

superb, but because their photographs were "outstanding for their vision and independence" (Daval, 1982, p. 194). See also endnote 26.

It is precisely this "vision" and "independence" which Watson, through no fault of his own, lacked. It is not to reproach him with anything resembling an under-developed social conscience, to point out that in his origins and by his education and upbringing he was incapable of becoming a social reformer. In his Victorian, working class and Methodist childhood he would have been taught to conform to the orthodox view, to be seen and not heard, to be a hard-working artisan and to respect authority, property and the Establishment. He left school at fourteen years of age and worked for fifteen years as a carpenter on the Normanby estate. Here he strengthened his already close ties with the provincial aristocracy, who employed his father (and himself until 1892) and who sponsored him most generously, from the age of 29, in his photographic business. These ties he maintained throughout his life.

The respect and loyalties which Watson felt were mutual, and it would have been unthinkable for him to question the social order or to seek to rectify deprivation or poverty in his environment, even if he had been aware of their degree and extent. There was perhaps no social category more conservative and Conservative than the employees and former employees of the landed aristocracy.

## ENDNOTES

### Endnote 1 (from p.11)

Daysh (1958) p. 63 speaks of the "people owning the adjoining shipyards who, like all the other owners of shipyards in Whitby, preferred to reside in substantial houses near their establishments, usually on elevated ground overlooking the yards."

### Endnote 2 (from pp. 19 and 21)

The possibility that William Watson was at this time to some extent self-employed and on occasion branched out on his own as a contractor is, however, more than mere theory. During this year of 1872 both Lord Normanby and Lord Mulgrave were away from Lythe (see pp.30-31) and "the administration suffered as a result". The present Estate Manager at Mulgrave Castle is of the opinion that at this time the joinery and maintenance work being done on the Normanby estate at Lythe was minimal, and would not have provided full-time employment for the estate carpenter. Watson senior was therefore almost certainly working independently at least part of the time, and would therefore have been able to tender for the school extension, if he so wished. (Personal communication with Mr. David Shepherd, November 1994).

Endnote 3 (from p.45)

Whilst it may be taken for granted that "the bridal garter shot" common today would have "horrified the Victorian and the Methodist in Watson", what is perhaps less certain is that it is a phenomenon of the 1980s and 1990s only, or that these times were more "permissive" than previous eras. In its origins, at least, the tradition of the bride displaying her garter after her wedding may go back at least a century and a half.

Thus Atkinson (1891), pp. 206-210, describes the tradition whereby the young men, on the completion of the marriage ceremony, raced on foot or on horseback from the church door to the bride's former home. The prize, as late as 1890, was a ribbon or ribbons presented by the bride herself to the winner. The ribbon - or the handkerchief, in 1890 - Atkinson considers "a delicate substitute for the bride's garter, which previously used to be taken off as she knelt at the altar.... and was made the chief prize in the ensuing sports." Up to 1850 "the custom has been upheld in full force in Robin Hood's Bay", and in Danby "in days gone by, the race was always from the church to the bride-door, and the prize was not barely the bride's garter, but the added privilege of taking it himself from her leg as she crossed the threshold of her home."

If, as the Revd. J.C. Atkinson says, (loc.cit., p.207) "nearly the whole, if not the whole, of the usages under notice are, in the strictest sense, survivals", then the

bridal garter photograph may be a mutated survival of a custom older than the photographic camera itself. "But all these things are altered now, and I am not altogether sure that they are altered for the better. I am no indiscriminate laudator temporis acti, but I cannot help seeing that more modern usages have shut out much that was simple, homely, and touching, without introducing any improvement upon the old downright, homespun code of manner and action" (p. 212).

Endnote 4 (from p.50)

That he was known and respected not only in his home county but also to at least one London publisher and at the London Institute of Historical Research emerges from a perusal of Page (1914) and Page (1968), where in an editorial note dated 1914 acknowledgment is made to "Mr. T. Watson" for photographs of Danby Church, Castle and Beacon; Egton Church and old Mass House; Fylingdales; Glaisdale; Hinderwell Church and Staithes; Kildale Hall and Church; Kirby Misterton Church; Lythe Church; Ugthorpe Old Hall; Pickering Church; Goathland Church; Nelly Ayre Force; Sneaton Church; Stokesley Church; Whitby, Kiln Yard; Ugglebarnby Church and Newholm Mill. The same publications include a number of line drawings, the lineblocks for which are credited to "Mr. Lawrence Davies, Miss Jennie Wylie... and others", without mention of Watson, although it is manifest that they are all quite slavish copies from further Watson photographs.



Endnote 5 ( from p.72)

Hayes' studio is not "a unique example of photographic architecture", though it may be the best. Writing in 1986, Buchanan was obviously not aware of the survival of Watson's studio in Lythe ( see pp. 40-41).

Endnote 6 (from p. 80)

It seems that KODAK Ltd. had produced postcard-sized POP at least seven years earlier, and offered this at 1s. per packet of 12 cards. (See advertisement below, from "The Picture Postcard", June 1902.)

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*THE PICTURE POSTCARD.*

**KODAK**                      **JUNE 1902**  
**SENSITISED POST-CARDS**

Provide an easy and fascinating means of

**MAKING YOUR OWN PICTORIAL POST-CARDS.**

The sensitive surface may be wholly or partially printed upon from any negative by lamplight gaslight, or subdued daylight.

**NO DARK ROOM IS REQUIRED**

throughout the few necessary operations. These are simply printing, developing, fixing, rinsing—

**THAT IS ALL!**

Price per packet of 12 Cards—1s.

Obtainable of all Photographic Dealers, or of --

**KODAK, Ltd., 43, Clerkenwell Road, London, E.C.**

*Wholesale and Retail Branches:*

96, Bold Street, LIVERPOOL, and 72-74, Buchanan Street, GLASGOW. ...

Ask for particulars of the  
KODAK  
POST-CARD  
COMPETITION.  
£50 IN PRIZES.

Endnote 7 (from page 84)

There is information on the production techniques, prices, costs and sales of photographic postcards at the turn of the century in Wall (1912), p. 590; in the Waverley Book Company's "Cyclopaedia of Photography," (1912); and especially in Wall and Ward (1906), where it is suggested (pp. 3-4) that in 1904, 1,161 million postcards were posted in Germany; in the USA 770 million; in the UK 613 million; and in Japan 487 million. "At least two-thirds of these," it is suggested, "were picture post-cards."

Describing production methods, these same sources point out that "specially prepared cards, cut to regulation size and coated with bromide, gaslight, gelatino-chloride or self-toning emulsion are now supplied by practically every maker of sensitive papers. The procedure for the production of picture postcards with these printing bases is exactly the same as with ordinary paper prints...", but they also give lengthy and detailed advice on the sizing, coating, developing, fixing, washing and toning of plain (i.e. non-sensitive) postcards for those photographers who in 1906 and even later still preferred to produce their own postcards from the basic raw materials.

Similarly detailed advice on the amateur production of photographic postcards is to be found in Hanneke, P., (1905), and Tennant (ed.) (1908). There is no information as to costs and prices here, but the final note that "The

only other work on postcard making is 'The photographic Picture Postcard' by E.J.Wall and H. Snowden Ward, 1906, 104 pp., 50 cents" is interesting, and accurate.

Ordinary postcards were made of card unsuitable for photographic reproduction: "pure" cards could be obtained from Germany, France, or from Wellington and Ward of Elstree, "who offer pure cards, as used for their own sensitizing, at 4d. per dozen or 3/6d per gross." (This price of one third of a penny per card for the unsensitized card alone confirms the writer's estimate of approximate costs on pp. 79 and 83, above ). Obviously the small-time producer could not compete with "the wonderfully complex and expensive machinery with which the great printing firms produce real photograms by the mile", but "readers of this book may be interested to know, however, that great rolls of paper, of various widths up to 39 inches, and of lengths up to about three-quarters of a mile, are put into these machines, by which they are automatically carried past the negatives, automatically exposed, and automatically fixed, washed and festooned to dry....".

"When large numbers of postcards of a given set are required, the individual photographer cannot hope to produce them at a cost to compete with these great firms." (Wall and Ward, 1906, p.74). "The individual photographer cannot compete with them in price or in technical quality when the quantities are large." (ibid., p. 85).

The more surprising, then, that (*ibid.*, p. 81) they should state that "The photographer who is supplying a little local demand may print his own cards, by any of the processes already described, and will probably be able to make sales freely at 2d. per card, or more restrictedly at 3d. or 4d. I know of one photographer in a health resort who sells many hundreds of silver-print cards in the season at 4d. each, although the district is well supplied with collotypes and colour cards at a penny each. I know many places where pretty poor "real photograms" sell fairly well at twopence in competition with printed cards at a penny". It will be recalled that on p.77, above, it was suggested that the legend "This is a genuine photograph" perhaps gave the photographic picture postcard an added appeal: whether it was thought to justify a price increase of 200, 300, or 400% would seem more problematical.

When one bears in mind Wall and Ward's further advice that there was a discount "from 25 per cent. to 50 per cent to the retailer.....", and "to wholesalers who supply the retailers in a district... a further discount which may be 15 or 20 per cent", the writer's suggestion (pp.77-82, above) that the individual photographers like Hayes must generally have ignored their labour costs and written off their overheads would seem to be further justified.

As Wall and Ward themselves put it (*loc.cit.*, p.83): "So many people seem to think that if the income is

somewhat larger than the cost of producing stock the business must be profitable, forgetting that establishment expenses - rent, staff, interest on capital, cost of advertising, travelling, etc. - may be a larger sum than the cost of the goods." Wall and Ward (ibid., p. 87) give the following examples of the competition the individual photographer faced from the printed cards:

"Cost of Collotypes: the actual prices paid to the printers, and charged to the retailers, are as follows:

250 cards on 1 subject cost 6/6, sell 10/-

500 " " " " 9/6, " 15/-

1,000 " " " " 14/6, " 25/-".

Endnote 8 (from page 93)

Information from Watson's son, William Edward Watson, was to the effect that his father had "several albums full of pictures taken on his travels abroad", but that these and all the prints of scenes in Europe have vanished without trace.(Cockcroft, 1974, pp. 118, 120).

Endnote 9 (from page 99)

In other words, the accurate interpretation of any image requires a knowledge of its social context. Ever since Viëtor (1882), Gouin (1892), or Jespersen (1904, 1922), linguists have insisted that the accurate interpretation of a linguistic utterance requires a knowledge of two contexts, one social and the other linguistic, and in the last twenty or thirty years considerable effort has been devoted to applying these tenets to the interpretation of the visual image.

In the attempt to define the limitations of the latter (as distinct from the verbal utterance) as a mode of communication, it is sometimes the purely visual, devoid of title, caption or dialogue that is considered, and this in isolation is usually found to be inadequate.

Thus Sekula (1982) p.85, for instance, seems to suggest that an image still requires both a social and a linguistic context in order to convey fully and accurately its meaning. "A photograph is an utterance of some sort, that carries, or is, a message. However, the definition also implies that the photograph is an "incomplete" utterance, a message that depends on some external matrix of conditions and presuppositions for its readability. That is, the meaning of any photographic message is necessarily context-determined."

Barthes (1980) has even fewer doubts about the need for the linguistic context before the image can communicate

a meaning accurately: as he puts it on p. 274, "Today, at the level of mass communications, it appears that the linguistic message is indeed present in every image - we are still, and more than ever, a civilization of writing, writing and speech continuing to be the full terms of the informational structure.....all images are polysemous; they imply, underlying their signifiers, a 'floating chain' of signifieds, the reader able to choose some and ignore others. Polysemy poses a question of meaning and this question always comes through as a dysfunction."

The difficulties and uncertainties of interpreting aright "Robson's old Cottage" thus remain: a picture is not yet (despite the claim frequently made for it) "worth a thousand words."

Endnote 10 (from p. 101)

The family has an ancient and enduring tradition of close connections with Royalty and distinguished service to the Crown in the military, naval and diplomatic fields.

Turton (1938) notes that "Edmund Lord Sheffield commanded a ship against the Spanish Armada, and for his services on that and other occasions was granted by the Queen on 28th. April 1592 the Manor of Mulgrave, part of the forfeited estates of Sir Francis Bigot, for an estate in tail male. As Lord Lieutenant of Yorkshire, President of the Council in the North Parts, and Knight of the Garter, he possessed an influence at Court most valuable in securing a grant of the letters patent " (p.71).

"Soon after he had attained his majority, Lord Mulgrave took that place at Court to which his position as a large landed proprietor entitled him..... His town house was then in Charing Cross. In 1673 he succeeded the Duke of Richmond as Gentleman of the Bedchamber and was granted a pension of £1,000 to be paid out of the Alum Farm.

Lord Mulgrave, who was created Duke of Buckingham in 1703, died on 24th. February 1720. As the builder of Buckingham Palace, his name is not likely to be forgotten. On the death of his only son Edmund, there was no heir made of the body of the first Earl of Mulgrave, and the Mulgrave Estates reverted to the Crown, but his mother the Duchess of Buckingham purchased the reversion .... At her death she left the Estates and alum works to her grandchild by her



first husband, Charles Phipps, from whom the present Marquis of Normanby is descended " (p.192).

According to Page (ed.,(1923), 1968 edition consulted), Lord Mulgrave was " created Marquess of Normanby, County Lincoln", in 1694 and in March 1703 "Duke of the County of Buckingham and of Normanby."

After the fresh creation of the title of "Lord Mulgrave of Mulgrave, Yorks.," in 1794 and the passing of the title to Henry Phipps, the latter served as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 1804-5; first Lord of the Admiralty 1807-10; Lord Lieutenant of the East Riding 1807, and in 1812 was created Viscount Normanby of Normanby, County Yorks., and Earl of Mulgrave in Yorks. This Henry died in 1831 leaving as heir Constantine Henry Phipps, Viceroy of Ireland 1835-39, who was created Marquess of Normanby in 1838, served as Colonial Secretary and Foreign Ambassador , and died in 1863 leaving as his son and heir George Augustus Constantine, who was Governor of Queensland 1871-74, of New Zealand 1874-78, and of Victoria 1879-84.

On his death in 1890 he was succeeded by his son Constantine Charles Henry Phipps, who took Holy Orders in 1870 and became the Rev. the Marquis of Normanby who gave so much assistance, support and his generous patronage to Thomas Watson of Lythe, Photographer and Picture-Framer.

Endnote 11 (from p. 105)

It was not only the workers and tradesmen who were affected by economic depressions: Slater (1887), p. 293, notes that "Mulgrave Castle, seat of the Marquis of Normanby, (is) at present occupied by Lord Hillingdon", and the late Lord Normanby ( personal communication by letter dated 29th. March 1993 ), stated that the "old" Whitby - Sandsend road was "built by the Maharajah Duleep Singh (a tenant at Mulgrave Castle) in the 19th. century." In 1872 "Lord Mulgrave left Lythe, having accepted the living at Worsley", noted the headmaster of Lythe school in his log on November 1st.

The production of alum on the Normanby Estate also having ceased in 1871, times in the second half of the nineteenth ceentury were perhaps hard for the aristocracy too.

Endnote 12 ( from p.105)

Perhaps even the smaller sailing vessels had always had difficulty in entering and leaving the port. On 2 February 1809 the Whitby Customs Collector wrote to the Admiralty Office in London, requesting a special dispensation "on behalf of the owners of the (whaling) ships mentioned on the annexed list." (Since 1798 a Convoy Duty Order issued by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty had insisted that no ship should sail from Great Britain without convoy). The reason given by the Customs Collector for requesting that the

whalers be exempt from this order was that "owing to the extreme difficulty attending ships of this description in joining any ship or vessel of War calling at this Port to take them under convoy arising from the peculiar position of Whitby Harbour which does not permit of ships of large draught of water proceeding to sea except at Spring Tides." The largest whaler on this occasion, "RESOLUTION, William Scoresby, Master" was all of 291 tons. Perhaps the Customs Collector chose to pretend that the larger men o' war would wish to enter the harbour instead of mustering the convoy at sea. Perhaps he thought their Lordships would be easily deceived or not acquainted with the depths in the remote northern port, although the First Lord of the Admiralty of the time was Lord Mulgrave of Mulgrave. Or perhaps even ships of 291 tons had difficulty in leaving or entering Whitby Harbour. (From the records of Whitby Customs Office, 2 Feb 1809).

Endnote 13 (from p.108).

Scoresby's "RESOLUTION", for instance, returned to Whitby even as late as 1809 with 26 whales, 21 seals, and 216 tons of oil. (From the records of the Whitby Customs Office, 2 Feb 1809, quoted in the Annual Report 1994 of the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society, p. 18.

Endnote 14 (from p. 110)

The discrepancy would be explained if the small figure referred only to the fleet actually berthed in and fishing out of Whitby, whilst a larger number of vessels registered in Whitby were fishing from Staithes and other harbours.

Endnote 15 (from page 126)

TOLL CHARGES

	s.	d.
Two wheels & one horse		3
Two wheels & two horses		4
Two wheels & three horses		6
Four wheels & one horse		6
Four wheels & two horses		8
Four wheels & three horses		10
Four wheels & four horses	1.	0
Motor cars	1.	0
Horses, bicycles etc.		1
Cows, sheep and pigs		$\frac{1}{2}$ each

Endnote 16 (from p. 129)

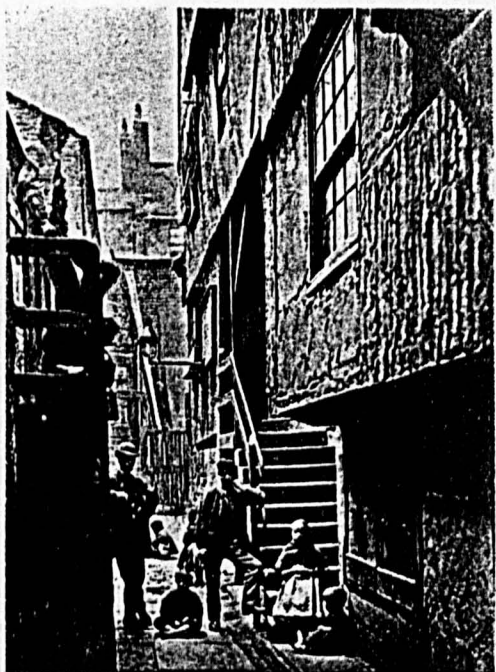
Research in the Stockholm Maritime Museum reveals that the vessel ATHALIA was listed in DET NORSKE VERITAS' Class Register of Norwegian Ships. She is listed as being built in 1847 and figures in the lists up to 1892, but not in the registers for 1893 or later. It seems certain that she was a Scandinavian vessel, therefore, and highly probable that she was lost in 1892, by which time she was elderly and therefore probably leaking appreciably - see following endnote 17.

Endnote 17 (from p. 131)

The "windmill structure on deck" was indeed used to pump the bilges on Russian, Scandinavian, and Finnish wooden ships but not - despite being a British invention and often of British manufacture - on British vessels, where its use was not countenanced. Kähre (1978) has two clear photographs of such pumps, and a note on p. 61 by his editor Basil Greenhill ( a former Director of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich) makes their use clear.

Endnote 18 (from p.136)

Personal communication from the late Lord Normanby, dated 29 March 1993, states that "Last supply of cement from these works is known to be in 1932 by Messrs. Griffiths to Middlesborough Paint Works."



Thomas Annan. Glasgow slum, 1868.

To face p.-231-  
( See line 20 )

Endnote 19 (from p.170)

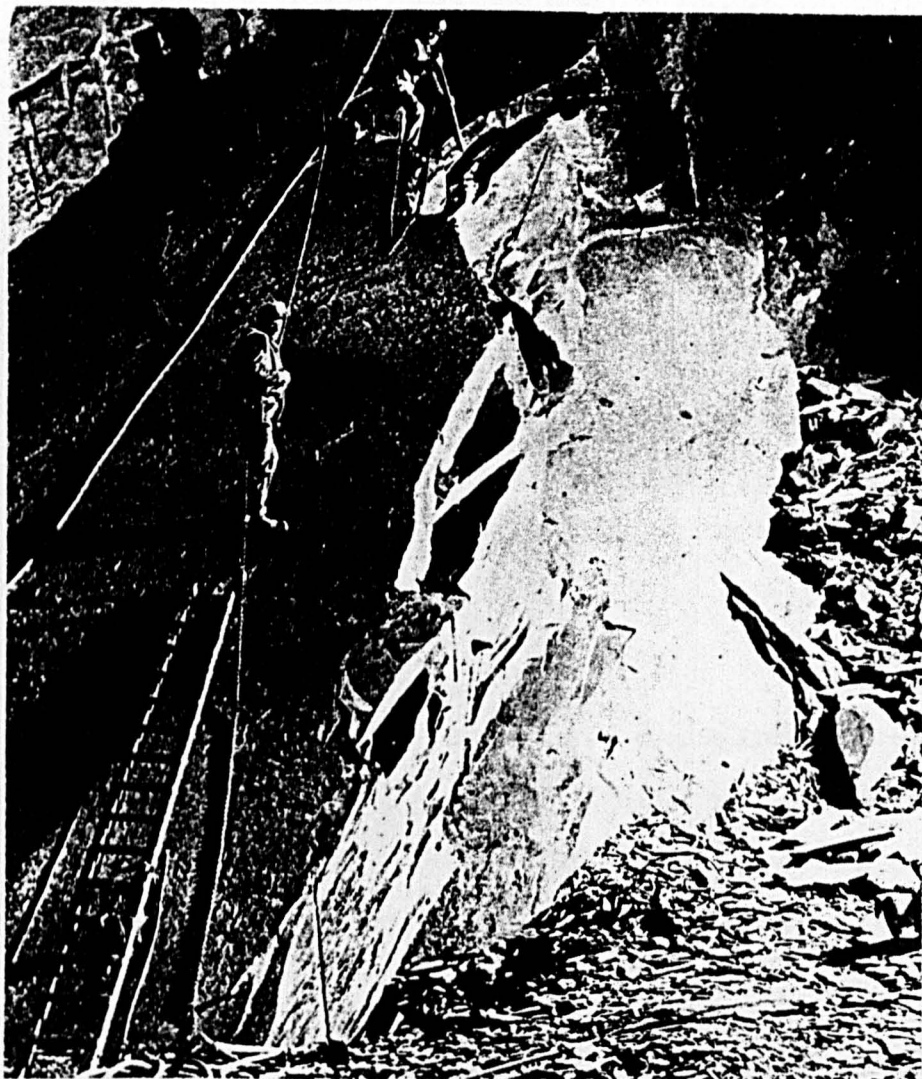
The number of vessels fishing out of Staithes varied with the state of the fisheries and of the market, but some authorities place the estimated total even higher than does Shaw. In c. 1900 there were perhaps two or three yawls of 36-45 tons and crews of 10-15 men stationed at Staithes, and a fleet of 80-90 cobbles, each manned by two or three fishermen.

Endnote 20 (from p.185)

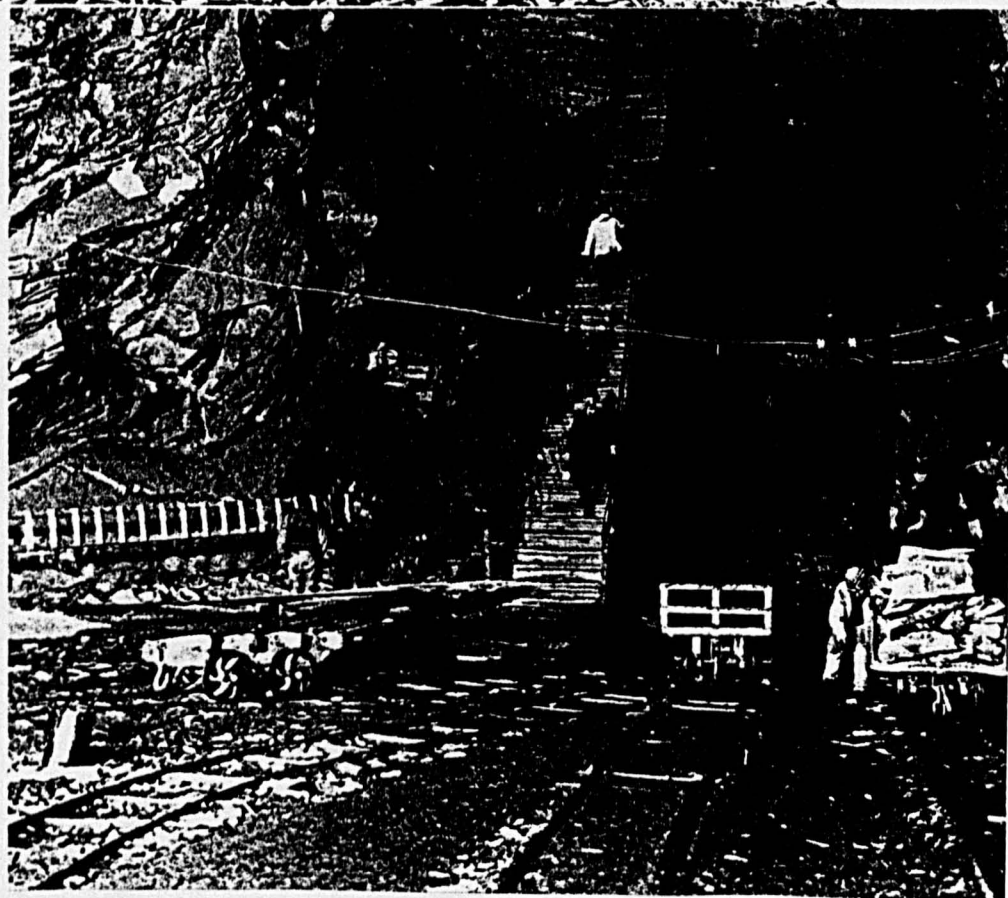
The Estate Manager at Mulgrave Castle offers another possible explanation: since the then Lord Normanby married relatively late in life, the staff in 1896 might have been all that was required for a "bachelor's household."

Endnote 21 (from p.206)

This is not to ignore the work of T. Annan (1878), but to argue that his photography falls into a different category from that of the other photographers mentioned. Watson, Wilson, Frith et al. were concerned to produce views or postcards which would appeal to the tastes of a Victorian purchasing public as outlined above, p.205 : Annan was executing a commission for the Glasgow City Improvement Trust, who had specifically ordered (and were prepared to pay for) only photographs of the old closes and streets of Glasgow.



( See p. 232,  
line 2 )

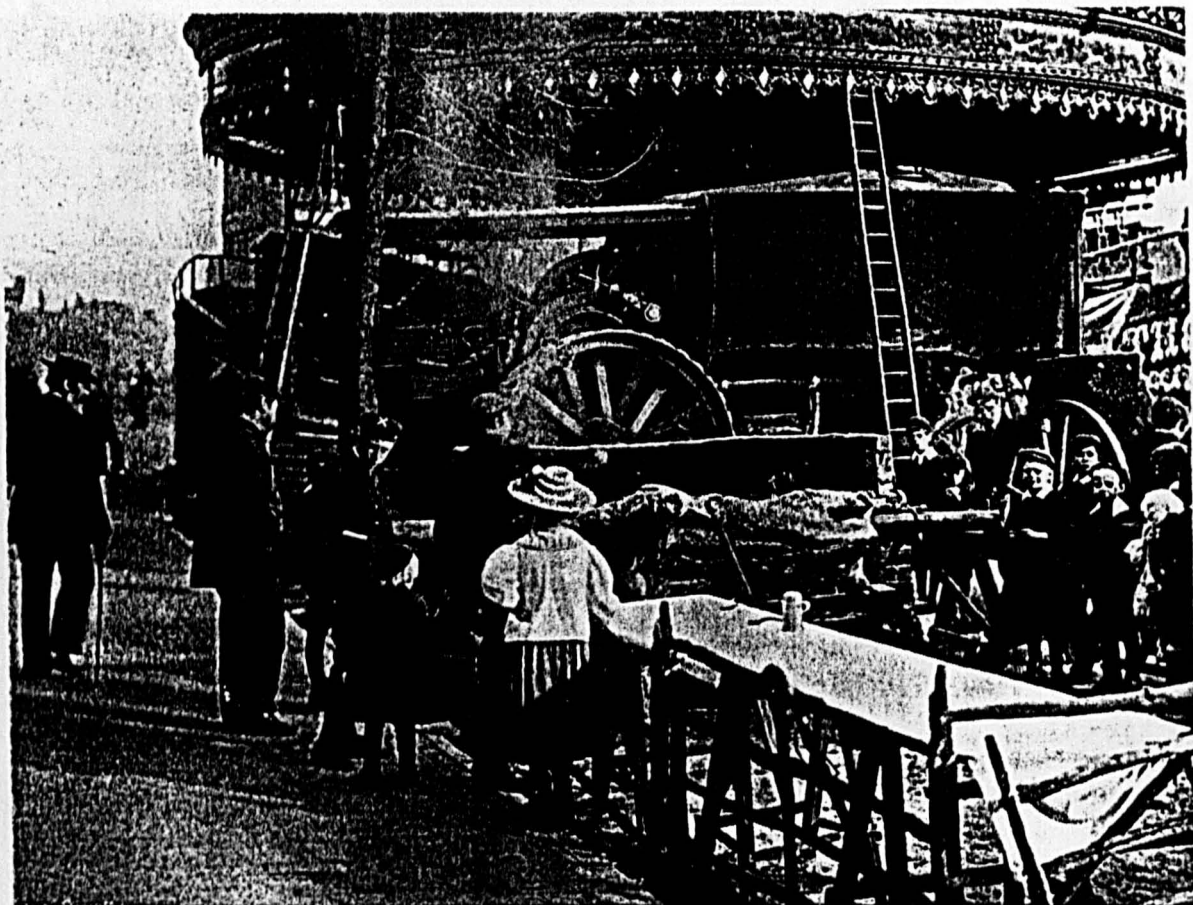




Endnote 22 (from p.208)

The many photographs taken underground in the slate mines of Snowdonia as early as 1893 (i.e. at a time when the only illumination for the workers was a candle) are exemplified in Jones (1978) and Lewis (1976). They clearly demonstrate that the use of magnesium or other means of brilliant illumination on a large scale was well known long before the turn of the century.

Many of them were taken in the Llechwedd slate caverns at Blaenau Ffestiniog, where two examples of a magnesium lamp are still held in the Chairman's office. Originally used for inspecting the very high roofs in the mines, they were certainly used for photography as well by the mine manager, Charles Warren Roberts, and probably by others. Mr Roberts, who died in 1897, said the coil of magnesium ribbon used in the lamp was very cheap, and would burn for about two hours with care. He did not, however, know who invented or made the lamp: he had "purchased it from a man named Moses, in Red Lion Square, London", who had since disappeared. (By personal communication with Mr Ivor Wynne Jones, Director, Llechwedd Slate Caverns, dated 26 September 1995.)



Sir Benjamin Stone. Ox-roasting at Stratford-on-Avon 'Mop', c. 1898.

To face p.-233-  
( See line 6 )

Endnote 23 (from p.208)

The year 1897 saw the foundation of the National Photographic Records Association by Sir Benjamin Stone, MP, which deposited its prints in the Department of Prints at the British Museum. The Association lasted only 13 years, however, and moreover, Stone's photographs tend to portray the old-fashioned manners and customs, and the dying-out ceremonies, of the British way of life, rather than concentrating on poverty and social deprivation.

Endnote 24 (from p.209)

For a particularly fine account of the work of Riis and Hine, and of their success in using the camera as an instrument to procure social reform (Riis' work, for instance, enabling Theodore Roosevelt, as President of the Board of Police Commissioners for the City of New York, to raise funds for reform and re-housing) see Daval (1982), pp. 114-115.

Endnote 25 (from p.210)

This section on documentary photography draws heavily on Newhall (1982), chapter 13; Duval (1982), "From ethnography to Sociology", and to a lesser extent on Gernsheim (1955), chapter 35.

Acquaintance with the work of the FSA photographers had however first been made in 1992, at an exhibition of more than 80 prints by Arthur Rothstein, Marion Post Wolcott, Russell Lee, Dorothea Lange, David Meyer, Jack Delano, Ben

Shahn, John Vachon, Carl Vydans, Theo Jung, Gordon Parks, Paul Carter, John Collier Junr. and Walker Evans. The catalogue is dated Trollhättan, Sweden, 1987; which argues at least one earlier exhibition than the one visited, which was at a public branch library in Västra Frölunda, Gothenburg, Sweden.

These details are considered to be important to the extent that they prove an enduring interest, 60 years on, in a country other than the USA, in the conditions endured there during the depression of the 1930s, an interest exemplified also in the BBC 2 documentary films on "The Great Depression" shown in November and December 1993. They indicate also that the FSA campaign was not only successful in enabling President Roosevelt to procure the finance needed to relieve at least some of the suffering, and in arousing the public and national consciences, but has proved long-lasting in its value and its effects. As Tugwell said to Stryker at the end of the campaign, "We did it, didn't we?" They had indeed succeeded in their aim, but they had done more: they had also proved the power of the camera and the value of photographic representation as an instrument of social reform.

Endnote 26 (from p.214)

It is noteworthy that the leading figures in the field of social documentation were primarily well educated social reformers, and only secondarily photographers. Thus Riis was a social worker photographing for the police; Stryker was Professor of Sociology at Columbia University; Hine originally trained as a sociologist at the universities of Chicago, Columbia and New York; Tugwell was Professor of Economics at Columbia before heading the FSA, and Paul S. Taylor (who backed Dorothea Lange) was Professor of Economics at the University of California. In our own times Sebastião Selgado is a former economist.

Watson, on the other hand, was primarily a good photographer and not in the least a social reformer. He was, as he described himself on his letterheading, a "Photographer and Picture Framer of Lythe, near Whitby", a "journeyman photographer" (Frank, 1980) whose photography, although always competent, was never gifted enough to gain him the international recognition accorded to Sutcliffe, nor the fame and hence the financial independence of a Wilson, Fenton or Brady.

Endnote 27 (from p. A6)

Similar research elsewhere has been hampered by the lack of such documentation and facility for computer-based analysis. Thus for instance Woollen and Crawford (1977) regret their lack of "a complete catalogue of the collection, but alas this has still to be done", and note that "much work remains to be done in this area and in cataloguing the complete collection." (loc.cit., Introduction, p. 78). "There has been no attempt within this study to investigate the significance of his (John Thomas') work in portraying the social history of Wales during the second half of the nineteenth century and no attempt has been made to catalogue or itemise the subjects." (ibid., p. 79)

The task of these co-authors would have been immeasurably lightened by the existence of such a "catalogue," and indeed one might doubt whether any further investigation into "the significance of his work in portraying the social history of Wales in the second half of the nineteenth century" could take place until some such documentation has been done.

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APPENDIX I

The methodology of the present research

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## APPENDIX I

### The methodology of the present research.

#### (1) Background and origins.

The writer began research into Watson's work in 1989. At that time the selection of Watson's plates and slides which had been lodged in the Whitby Museum since 1957 was unsatisfactorily stored, and not catalogued or documented in any way. Some were stored in specially constructed wooden boxes with interior grooves to take the slides vertically on edge, but the majority of them were packed in the cardboard boxes in which they had originally come from the suppliers as unexposed dry plates and in which they were unsatisfactorily stored horizontally, one on top of the other, often without even an intermediate sheet of protective tissue. Only a minority of the plates had a protective envelope or sleeve, and the cardboard boxes were beginning to disintegrate after many years in storage. Although many of these boxes still bore lists of the former contents, or the letters of Watson's original classification system in Watson's handwriting, there was no means of ascertaining whether the notes and classifications on the boxes any longer bore relation to the present-day contents. Knowledge of Watson's classification system had died with him; the plates themselves were not documented; and there would have been no justification for assuming



that in 1989 the plates would be in the same order, or even in the same box, in which Watson had placed them fifty or a hundred years earlier.

The original research (based at the Whitby Museum) had therefore relied on examining each plate individually in the hand and making notes on the content, techniques employed, date if known, and any other details thought important. The subsequent analysis and description of Watson's work had relied to a perhaps undesirable extent on memory and the ability to relate the plates to each other without further examination of them at Whitby Museum, attendance at which was in any case difficult in view of the travelling distance involved and the restricted opening hours of the Museum:

#### MUSEUM OPENING HOURS

May 1st to September 30th, inclusive:

Weekdays	9.30 a.m. - 5.30 p.m.
Sundays	2.00 p.m. - 5.00 p.m.

October 1st to April 30th, inclusive:

Mondays & Tuesdays	10.30 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.
Wednesday to Saturday	10.30 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.
Sunday	2.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.

BANK HOLIDAYS -

Good Friday and Easter:

Friday	10.30 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.
Saturday	10.30 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.
Sunday	2.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.
Monday	10.30 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.

Such techniques were manifestly inadequate for the second, more serious examination of Watson's work, this time as a piece of social evidence. Before a comprehensive, detailed and effective analysis in depth could be carried out it was necessary to devise and implement a research methodology which would ensure firstly the documentation of all the plates in the Watson Collection, and the storing of the relevant details and subject areas in the Museum's database, and secondly the storage and easy retrieval of all the Watson images in a form which would render the material accessible to any researcher, not only one with ready access to the Museum. Moreover, all this had to be achieved at a cost which would lie within the limited financial resources of Museum and researcher alike.

Coincidentally, the writer's request to the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society, to be allowed to work again in the Watson Collection, was made in 1990 at the precise time when the Museum was in the process of documenting all its exhibits in order to qualify for recognition by the Museums and Galleries Commission. What was required, by the Museum and the writer alike, was a full documentation of all the plates in the Watson Collection, conforming to the Commission's recommendations and requirements. It was proposed to treat the Watson Collection, and the writer's documentation of it, as a test case indicative of the Museum's ability to fulfil the Commission's requirements for recognition, and it was

anticipated that this would entail two years' work. It would however give the author the research facility and methodology without which this research would have been impossible - see endnote 27.

(2) Documentation of the Watson Collection. The writer accordingly agreed to undertake the task of documenting the entire Watson Collection, which he completed in June 1992, and the Whitby Museum became the first museum in Yorkshire and Humberside to be granted Full Recognition by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

The two years devoted to the documentation did not however delay the present research and thesis project as much as was at first feared, since it proved possible and indeed desirable to combine the work of documentation with the progress of the research proper. Thus, each plate or slide was examined in detail under the magnifying glass, both in the hand and on a light box. It was then numbered as required by the Museums Association, and documented on the Museums Association's form MDA 006, Photograph B.(p.A7)

It soon became obvious that the completion of these forms required a great deal of time to be devoted to writing out, in longhand, details which would be identical for several hundreds of the exhibits: a "Watson Minicard" was therefore devised, the completion of which required a minimum of handwriting and which eliminated completely the repetition of identical entries under "Acquisition note",

Copy of	original number		date		number	
IDENTIFICATION	subject name		title		number	
<input type="checkbox"/>	title		date		number	
PREPRODUCTION	source simple name		date		number	
<input type="checkbox"/>	method		date		number	
PRODUCTION	technical data and notes					
<input type="checkbox"/>	related items					
ASSOCIATIONS	nature of association		person		date	
<input type="checkbox"/>	place					
PREVIOUS OWNERS	transfer method		from		date	
<input type="checkbox"/>	method		from		date	
ACQUISITION	price		conditions		date	
<input type="checkbox"/>	VALUATION		copyright		date	
COPYRIGHT	price		conditions		date	

CARD MDA 006  
FACE

PHOTOGRAPH B

M. J. ... 1973 ... MDA

STORE RECORDER DESCRIPTION	orig. neg.		orig. print		date		number	
<input type="checkbox"/>	condition		date		number		date	
LOANS and EXHIBITIONS	frame or mount						catalogue number	
<input type="checkbox"/>	content							
PROCESS	inscription type		method		date		note	
<input type="checkbox"/>	institution		title		date		note	
REPRODUCTION PROCESS	type		method		date		note	
<input type="checkbox"/>	method		operator		date		note	
DOCUMENTATION	L class		author		date		title	
<input type="checkbox"/>	journal or publisher		volume		date		ref. number	
NOTES	note							

VERSO

"Production" and so on. This was much more economical of time, and enabled attention to be focussed on the most important category of "Content" (Page A9). In this category a number of key fields were identified, and care was taken to refer to these always by the same key word. Thus "horses and carts", "railway trains", "steam traction engines" and "timber waggons" would always be listed under "transport", as well as under the individual modes of conveyance. It was important to remember to use the same key word consistently, e.g., to list "headgear", "footwear", "clothes", "dress", "hats", "suits", "robes" etc. always as "clothing", and not sometimes as "clothes" or as "costume."

In fact this was not as important as at first thought, since once the data from the cards had been entered into the Museum computer, the latter would produce a print-out of "index of key fields from content-outline field" which with a minimum of editing and tidying in the interests of consistency made indexes of key fields such as "housing", "industry", "water supply" and "negative dated by photographer" quickly available to the researcher.

## WATSON MINI-CARD

RECORD No. :- WHITM:WAT

PREVIOUS No(s) :-

SIMPLE NAME :-

FULL NAME :- Glass Negative

PRODUCTION :-

METHOD :- Dry Plate

PERSON'S NAME & ROLE :- Photographer & Watson, T.

PLACE :- Lythe, Whitby, North Yorkshire.

TECHNICAL DATA AND NOTES :- Original glass negative  
in black and white.

ASSOCIATION :- Watson Collection

AQUISITION

NOTE :- Believed to be one of Watson's negatives bequeathed by him to Whitby Museum. A reference to this is in a letter from Mr Percy Burnett to Miss D. Walker Hon. Keeper, dated 31.5.1957. Original and copy in Watson Collection.

PERMANENT LOCATION :- Z4/C

DESCRIPTION

ORIG. NEG. :- yes/no.

CONDITION :- good/fair/poor

DIMENSIONS :- height width

CONTENT :-

RECORDBR :- Richardson, G.

DATE :- ../../1992

NOTES :-

(4) Base of access to images of the Watson plates.

There remained the problem of facilitating access to those images identified by the computer as relating to the topic (i.e., the boy flag) under study. Knowing the reference numbers of the original plates was only half the battle: it was still necessary to devise a convenient method of retrieving the same from their unsatisfactory storages and examining them in detail. This could not be

(3) Use of the computer to identify all plates relating to any prescribed key field.

The computer indexes provide merely a complete list of the reference numbers of those negatives or slides which refer to the key field specified. Thus the negatives portraying, for instance, the cement works at Sandsend are listed under the key word "cement works" as nos. 586, 587, 604, 617, 620, 1538, (all prefixed by the Whitby Museum and Watson code WHITM:WAT, which makes the reference unique, as is also the slide WHITM:WATS 95.

It is maintained that all the pieces of Watson's work relevant to the topic under study (in this case the Sandsend cement works) are immediately listed, identified by their unique documentation numbers, under which they can be referred to without in any way attempting to provide a "computerized" analysis or evaluation of his work, which must of course always remain a subjective and creative process.

(4) Ease of access to images of the Watson plates.

There remained the problem of facilitating access to those images identified by the computer as relating to the topic (i.e., the key field) under study. Knowing the reference numbers of the relevant plates was only half the battle: it was still necessary to devise a convenient method of retrieving the same from their unsatisfactory storages and examining them in detail. This could not be

done in person at Whitby Museum for the reasons already stated, namely the remoteness of the Museum and its restricted opening hours.

It was originally hoped to install at the Museum a sophisticated GEAC computer with a digitalisation station which would have made possible the recording, storage and retrieval of images from Watson's plates, with tone-reversal facility in case it was wished to view negatives as positives. These images could have been made available to any researcher, wherever located, who had telephone access to Whitby Museum, but the costs would have placed the facility beyond the scope of the present researcher, and in the event the Museum proved to lack the funds needed for the purchase of the GEAC. It was therefore necessary to devise another method of referring to the plates which would be conveniently available to a researcher not within easy travelling distance of the Whitby Museum at times when the Museum would be open, and which would be financially viable despite the Museum's and the researcher's very limited funds.

It was therefore decided to photograph all the Watson plates, back-lit by being placed on a conventional light-box, onto 35mm. black and white film. This could then be used in an ordinary 35 mm. filmstrip projector to throw an enlarged image onto a screen in any convenient location, thus obviating any need to attend at the Museum in order to view the plates.



The writer was acquainted with the production of a positive filmstrip direct by photographing negative materials since this had been the technique he had devised and used in connection with his MA thesis, Richardson (1956). Watson's 8cm. x 8cm. slides were not copied in this way since it was thought preferable to borrow them from the Museum as needed and to view them on a light-box rather than view them in tone-reversed (i.e., negative) form on filmstrip. Since they are securely stowed in custom-made wooden cases, lined and with adequate separation, the risk of damage in handling and transit was negligible.

The other positive plates were copies of plates which still exist as negatives, or which were deemed to contribute to this thesis no details which could not be read from a negative copy-image.

It would obviously have been possible to produce the 35mm. copies as individual slides, but the storage of 2,400 slides and the time involved in retrieving and loading them into a magazine before moving them on one at a time until the required slide appeared on the screen would have been excessive: it was much quicker to insert a filmstrip of 36 images and pull it through the filmstrip carrier smoothly and quickly until the required frame was reached.

The purchase of a Tamron Fotofix IIX or III film video processor, which would have permitted the showing of filmstrip or slides, with tone-reversal, on a domestic

television screen was considered, but discarded on the grounds of cost and image quality. The projected Photo CD from Kodak and Philips was unknown at the time of the documentation and will equally remain outside the financial reach of the amateur at least in the short term. (The Independent, 1 February 1993, p.16).

Had there been in existence prints of all the Watson plates, one could have copied these on Agfa DiaDirect film and produced positive slides. Only a minority of Watson's plates have been printed, but the Museum has a certain number of enlargements which were made for exhibition purposes in 1980 (see p.8), and with the Museum's permission these were copied on Agfa DiaDirect to produce slides which have illustrated the writer's lectures to local photographic clubs, the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society, a local history lecture course organised by the Adult Education Department of the University of Hull, and to a one-day training course on "The care of Photographic Collections" which was organised by the Yorkshire and Humberside Museums Council. They were also used in the writer's lectures for the "Victorian Photography" module of the University of Hull's MA in Victorian Studies degree course given in the summer term, 1995.

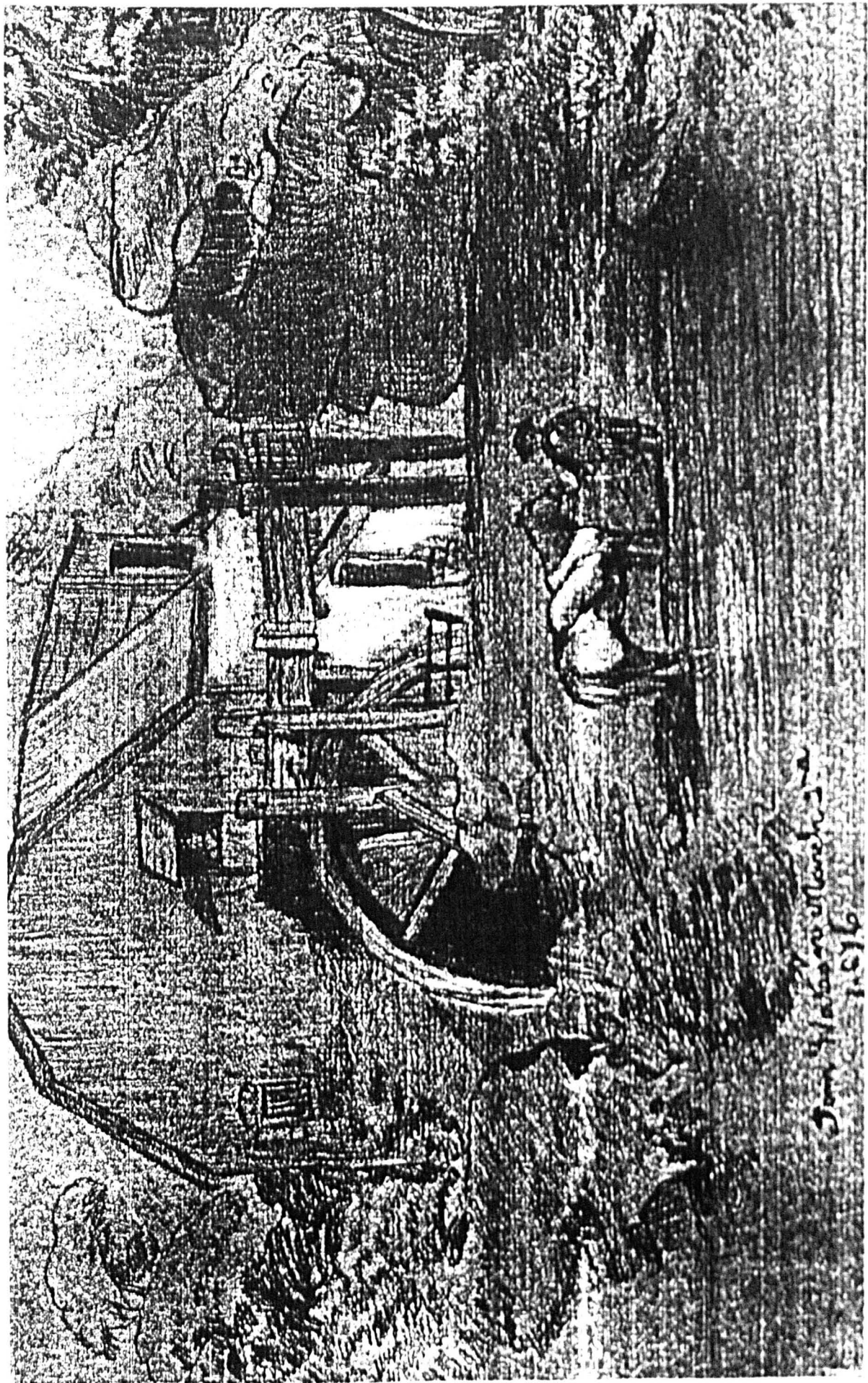
(5) Conservation and security of the Watson Collection.

Since it is advisable to handle the irreplaceable original materials of the Watson Collection as little as possible, the above techniques make an obvious positive contribution to the better conservation of the plates. The existence of duplicates on film also contributes to security in the possible event of damage to or loss of an original plate.

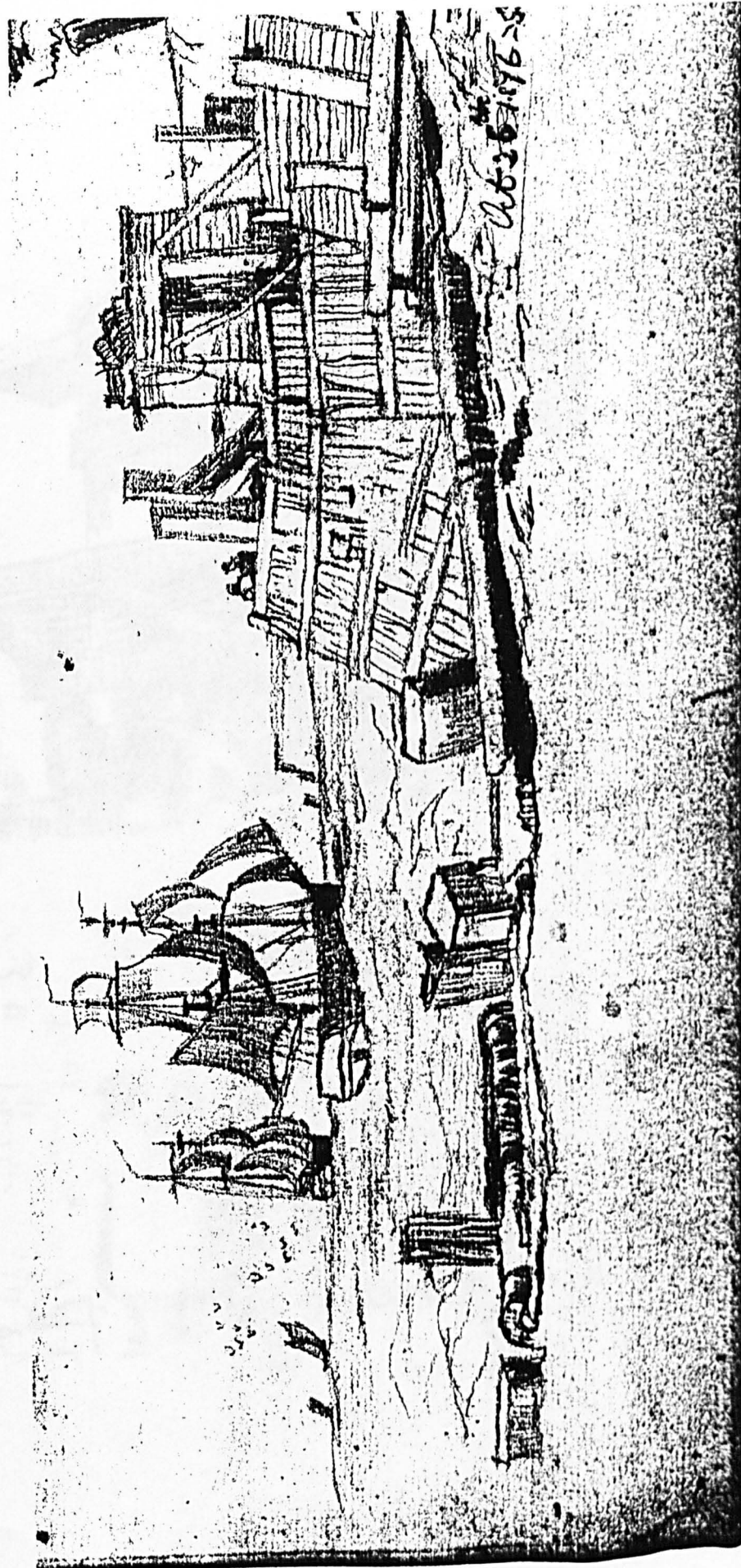
The sophisticated retrieval techniques described above (p. A11), and the copying onto 35 mm. film, are precisely the methods used by, for instance, the University of Aberdeen for the G.W.Wilson Collection ( by personal communication from the curator.) This fact was not known to the writer at the time of documenting the Watson Collection.

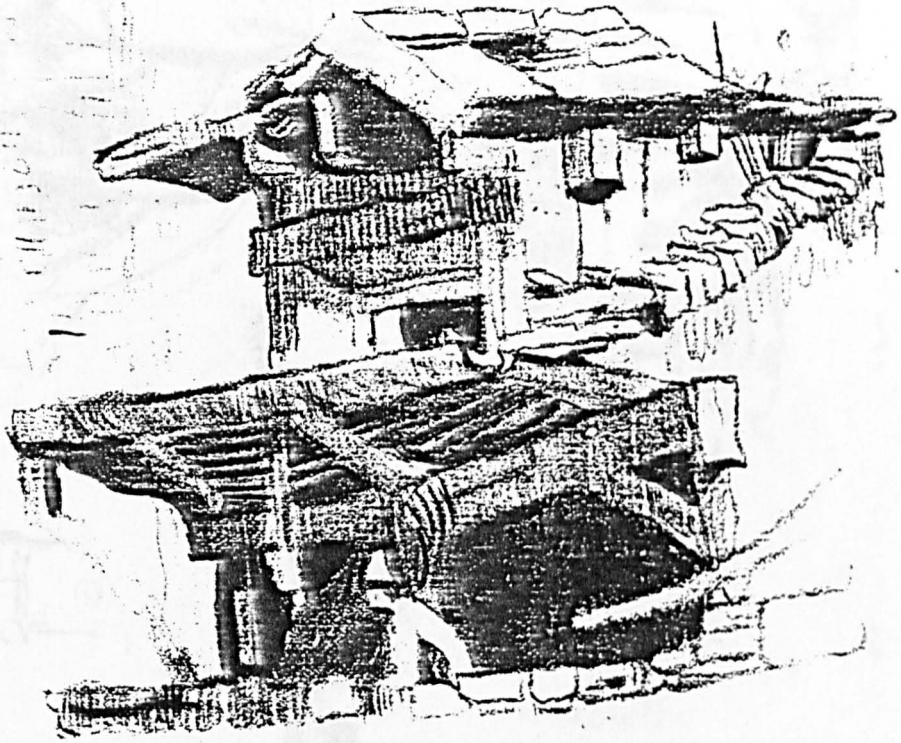
APPENDIX II

Examples of Sketches by Watson

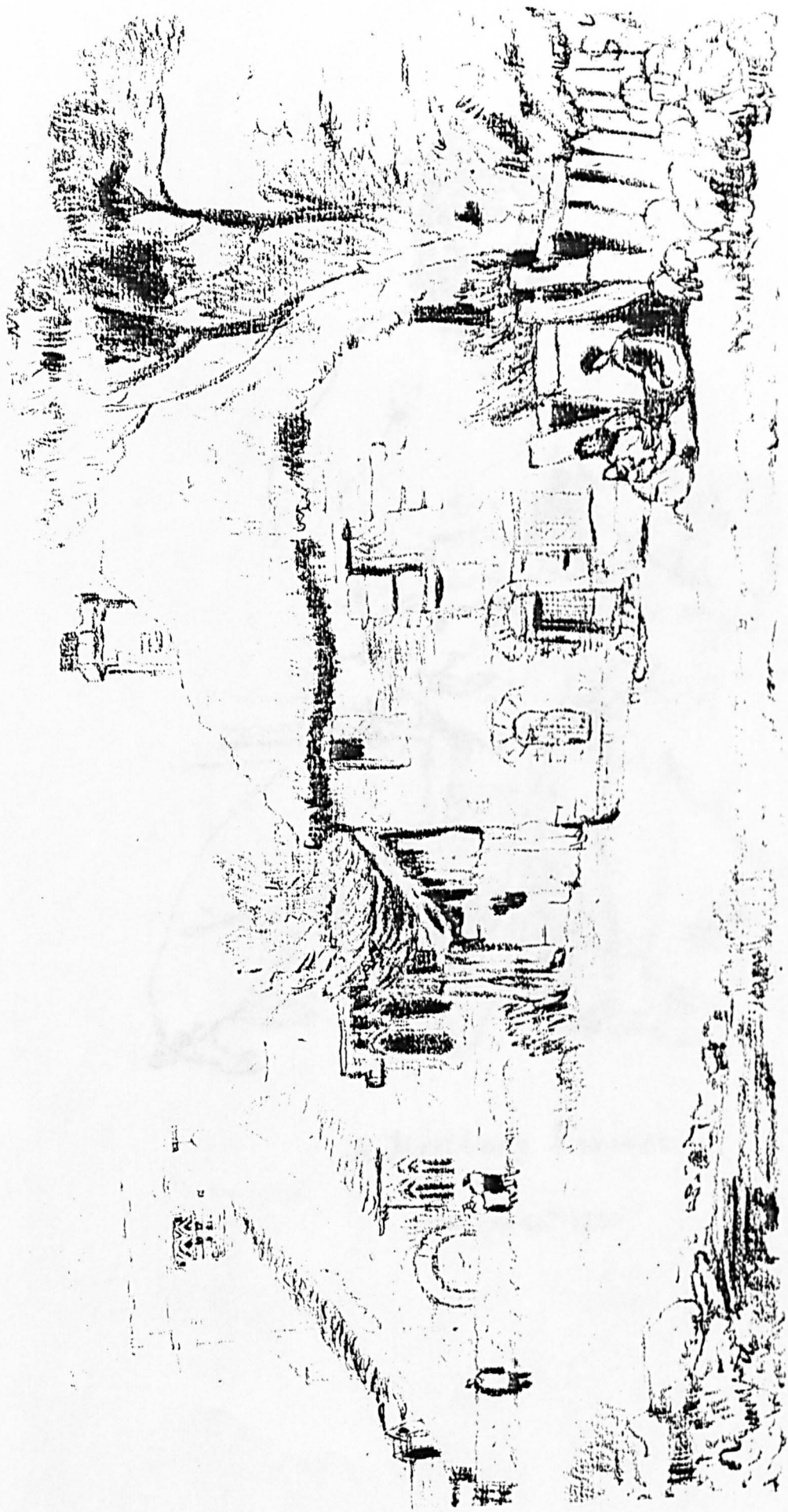


Don't forget to check in  
1916





(iii)



TOMLAWSON, SEPTEMBER 26<sup>TH</sup>  
1876





A Brittany Farmer.

January 24<sup>th</sup> 1880.



*The young Fisherman.*

January 22<sup>nd</sup> 1820.

