

ARTISTS' COLONIES IN STAITHES AND RUNSWICK BAY c.1880-1914

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by

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Abstract

Artists' Colonies in Staithes and Runswick Bay c.1880-1914. Robert Slater

This is the first scholarly study of the artists' colonies of Staithes and Runswick Bay on the north Yorkshire coast from c.1880 to 1914. Artists who worked in both locations have attracted attention, but their work until now has not been considered as part of a wider painting community. It has not been recognised that Runswick Bay was a separate colony. Such a topic requires an interdisciplinary approach, drawing on the methods of social and economic history, together with local history studies as well as art history.

Following an introduction establishing the motivations, approach and scope of the thesis, each chapter addresses a range of key issues and images.

Chapter one examines the social and economic context in which the paintings were produced, with particular emphasis on the fishing industry.

Chapter two examines the development of the artists' colonies, together with the relationship between the fisherfolk and the artists. It compares Staithes and Runswick Bay with Newlyn and Cullercoats as centres of cultural production.

Chapter three explores the representation of both villages and their inhabitants in the paintings produced. Of particular concern is the depiction of fisherfolk as icons of a simpler life and the embodiment of Englishness.

Chapter four discusses the exhibiting practices of the artists, particularly in London and northern England. It also looks at the role of individual patrons.

Overall this work demonstrates that Staithes and Runswick Bay were two distinct artists' colonies and that they were of greater significance than has previously been recognised because of the number of artists who worked there and the paintings produced. A broader aim of this thesis is to suggest that the development of artists' colonies, such as Staithes and Runswick Bay, contributed to definitions of Englishness and that the paintings produced there were expressions of national identity.

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Preface

My choice of this subject has come from my interest in the area in which the artists' colonies of Staithes and Runswick Bay were established. My mother's family originally came from Staithes where they were fisherfolk up to c.1870; some members of the family were from Runswick Bay. Other family members were involved in ironstone mining near Staithes and others worked at the Skinningrove Steelworks. I still have family living in Staithes and the surrounding area. Throughout my life I have regularly visited north Yorkshire. These visits have given me some knowledge of the villages, the local people and their culture and without this I would have found it difficult to undertake this work.

This work is dedicated to Bette and to my mother.

Abbreviations used

Ex. cat.	Exhibition Catalogue.
A. N. C.	Artists' of the Northern Counties.
B. C.	Bewick Club.
B.	Royal Birmingham Society of Artists.
F. A. S.	Fine Art Society.
G. I.	Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts.
L.	Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.
Le.	Leeds City Art Gallery.
M.	Manchester City Art Gallery.
M. A. F. A.	Manchester Academy of Fine Arts.
N. E. A. C.	New English Art Club.
N. S. A.	Nottingham Society of Artists.
N.Y.C.R.O.	North Yorkshire County Record Office.
R. A.	Royal Academy.
R. B. A.	Royal Society of British Artists.
R. C. A.	Royal Cambrian Academy.
R. E.	Royal Society of Painters-Etchers and Engravers.
R. H. A.	Royal Hibernian Academy.
R. I.	Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolours.
R. O. I.	Royal Institute of Oil Painters.
R. S. A.	Royal Scottish Academy.
R. S. W.	Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Watercolours.
R. W. S.	Royal Society of Painters in Watercolours.
S. A. C.	Staithes Art Club.
S. S. A.	Scottish Society of Artists.
V. A. M.	Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
<i>W. G.</i>	<i>Whitby Gazette.</i>
Y. U. A.	Yorkshire Union of Artists.

INTRODUCTION

Staithes is ten miles north and Runswick Bay is seven miles north of Whitby on the Yorkshire coast (**Map 1**) (**figs. 1,2,3,4**). This work examines the artists' colonies, which existed in Staithes and Runswick Bay c.1880-1914. It documents the social historical context of the artists' colonies, the factors which contributed to their development and those who worked there. It also examines the patronage, iconography and motifs of the artworks, but is less concerned with providing a stylistic and formal analysis. The full discussion of these points will support my hypothesis that there were, in fact, two artists' colonies, and that their distinctiveness is of more significance, in terms of the artists who worked there and the paintings produced, than has previously been recognised.

It will also be demonstrated that these artistic communities were shaped by a particular set of circumstances, with their own distinct identity, and are a part of a much broader cultural phenomenon, and so shared common characteristics with artists' colonies in Britain and overseas. It is hoped that this study will add to a fresh understanding of the histories of art in this period particularly in northern England, and that it will contribute to an understanding of the state of mind of the country during this period as the paintings examined, influenced the English outlook at this time.

There is a real need for this work as there is no previous academic study of the two artists' colonies. Indeed, little research has been undertaken on art in this period on the north Yorkshire coast, an area which attracted many artists who worked not only in Staithes and Runswick Bay but also in Robin Hood's Bay, Scarborough and Whitby. Previous scholarly neglect of these colonies is indicated by K. McConkey's failure to refer to Staithes and Runswick Bay in an essay of 1996: '...while in England artists' colonies sprang up in the 1880s at Newlyn, Walberswick and Whitby'.¹

A study is required which not only examines the villages and the painters, but investigates the layers of meaning in the paintings produced. This has required extensive examination of primary, local, social and economic history sources, many of them previously unpublished, as well as art historical material. What has been discovered contributes to a fresh perspective on

¹ K. McConkey, 'Winslow Homer in Cullercoats', in T.E Faulkner, ed., *Northumbrian Panorama*, (Newcastle-upon-Tyne 1996), 222.

the two artists' colonies. This work is also a study of how one group of workers - fisherfolk - is portrayed in British art, an area that has received little attention.²

Many of the painters were well known in Britain and so were the villages as locations for painting during the period under study. For over half a century they were mostly forgotten, however, as British art not conforming to the modernist canon was marginalised. Work produced outside London was further sidelined and was thought to be of little importance, with attention mainly focused on European developments. From the mid-1970s art dealers and writers, in a limited way, recovered Staithes and the paintings inspired by it, but Runswick Bay was largely ignored. Analysis of the Staithes artists' colony shows that Runswick Bay was subsumed under Staithes and the artists and their work was seen from a Staithes' perspective. However, contemporary material shows that Runswick Bay was an important and distinct site for the production of art.

Art produced in this area has been seen in terms of 'The Staithes Group'. This is problematic as there is no clear definition of what constitutes this group and its membership. P. Phillips demonstrates this tendency in 'The Staithes Group' exhibition catalogue. He argues that: 'This catalogue and the associated exhibition feature thirty painters. There are at least eleven others who could, with varying degrees of justification, have claimed a place'.³ In his exhibition catalogue, P. Haworth lists 34 artists.⁴

'The Staithes Group' is a term widely used in the art world among dealers and writers, without seriously considering what the term means. There were artists who banded together into groups and there is solid evidence to show there was a Staithes Art Club from 1901 to 1907.⁵ However, 'The Staithes Group' as a term was not in wide use during the life of the colony and was only mentioned for the first time in 1926 and then not again until the 1970s.⁶ Use of the term has obfuscated our view of this area of art history; a wider perspective is required.

Some of the most influential artists who lived and worked in or near Runswick Bay included Frederick William Jackson, Henry Silkstone Hopwood, Mark Senior and William Gilbert Foster. From the early 1880s it attracted artists who had previously met in art academies

² This is discussed in Chapter 3.

³ Nottingham, Castle Museum and Art Gallery, *The Staithes Group*, ex. cat., P. Phillips, 1993, 11.

⁴ London, F. A. S., *Paintings by Members of the Staithes Group*, ex. cat., P. Haworth, 2002, 5.

⁵ The Staithes Art Club, ex. cats., 1902-5, Bagshawe family archives.

⁶ Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, 8. It was first used in an article in the *W.G.*, 30.7.1926, 1.

mainly in Paris. Its importance can be seen through an examination of the 1888 R. A. Summer Exhibition, where eight paintings inspired by Runswick Bay were displayed.⁷ By 1889, 50 artists were working there. For some, Staithes may have been too busy, noisy and malodorous in the early 1880s, so they turned to Runswick Bay.⁸ There was rivalry between the two villages, which were markedly different in topography, size of population, dress, dialect and ownership of boats. Staithes was a larger village with a population of 1400 compared with 350 in Runswick Bay. These communities inspired the paintings, and a detailed knowledge of the area is required to fully understand the art produced.

There were different phases of development in each artists' colony. Runswick Bay was more significant from 1880 to 1892. Staithes was more popular between 1893 and 1907 and Runswick Bay once more took the lead, as Staithes declined, between 1908 and 1914. Artists' colonies were also established at Newlyn, St. Ives and Walberswick, mostly by those who had attended art academies in Paris and Antwerp. In Cullercoats, members were mainly drawn from the local area. Painters in artists' colonies wanted to be with like-minded people, who viewed the world as they did. They were also trying to escape from the stifling atmosphere of the conservative art world and to find artistic freedom.⁹

Artists at Staithes and Runswick Bay lived and worked alongside the fisherfolk. How they engaged with the landscape and the local people, and how they mediated these scenes is central to what follows. The fishing villages were not suddenly discovered as a location for painting in a particular year. Indeed, artists were painting there in the early nineteenth century and some artists continue to work there today (**figs. 20,104**).¹⁰

There is no standard definition of artists' colonies. In M. Jacob's synoptic work, *The Good and Simple Life*, no definition is offered.¹¹ Lübbren however, defines artists' colonies as: '...communities of artists, mainly painters who worked and lived in a village for a certain period of time'.¹² In this study, artists' colonies are defined as groups of artists who worked and lived in or near a particular place, over a period of time. They drew their inspiration from

⁷ London, R. A., Summer Exhibition, ex. cat., 1888.

⁸ See *The Times*, 22.9.1885,4. The nuisance was caused by smells from sewage, fish processing and the manufacture of cod liver oil.

⁹ See C. Fox, *Laura Knight* (Oxford 1988), 17.

¹⁰ One example is Len Tabner, who lives in Boulby, near Staithes. The local scenery and the ever-changing sea are an inspiration to him.

¹¹ M. Jacobs, *The Good and Simple Life* (Oxford 1985).

¹² N. Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies in Europe, 1870-1910* (Manchester 2001), 2.

the local environment and from members of the local community, as well as from each other. Their method in terms of style, technique and iconography was often comparable. This definition emphasises the interaction with place. The artists, as G. Weisberg argues: '...employed Emile Zola's dictum that the environment forms a backdrop against which it is possible to see how the individual is moulded by and interacts with others'.¹³ The definition offered by this thesis also stresses the importance of having the co-operation of the community, which was vital to the production of the paintings. There is also an emphasis on artists working collectively, as they wanted to learn from and to support each other. Many artists were young and the mutual support of their friends was vital at this early stage of their career.

While this study places emphasis on understanding Staithes and Runswick Bay as distinct artists' colonies, they were also part of a broader international phenomenon, and they should not be seen in geographical or cultural isolation. Artists were seeking unspoiled places in Pont-Aven in France, Laren in Holland, and Worpswede in Germany, as well as Old Lyme in the U.S.A. and Abramtsevo in Russia.¹⁴ For artists in Staithes and Runswick Bay, there were areas of commonality with other artists' colonies throughout Britain and the world; artists were escaping from the modernity of urban centres where many found industrialisation repugnant.

Artists' colonies also offered cheap accommodation, a ready supply of models, and a range of picturesque subjects. There was a shared interest in and concern for working people, especially agricultural labourers and fisherfolk. This, in turn, should be seen in the broader context of concern for the loss of traditional ways of life due to urbanisation.¹⁵ Artists returned to nature, in real communities, with people they thought were unsullied by civilization. Ironically, the towns and cities they criticised for their dirt and ugliness were those upon which they were largely dependent to sell their paintings in the increasingly sophisticated art world which had developed there.

¹³ G. Weisberg, *Beyond Impressionism: The Naturalist Impulse in European Art, 1860-1905* (London 1992), 274.

¹⁴ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 1: 'Between 1830 and 1910, over three thousand artists from all over the world left the established centres of art production to live and work in artists' communities scattered across the European countryside. By 1900, eleven European states harboured between them over eighty rural artists' colonies'.

¹⁵ K. Snell, ed., *The Regional Novel in Britain and Ireland, 1800-1990* (Cambridge 1998), 23: 'From 1880 was *la fin de paysans* - a time of persistent and often nostalgic interest in rural culture and its demise in smallholdings, allotments, vernacular architecture, folk song and dance, community games, folklore and agricultural craft traditions'.

However, the artists still had to come to terms with modernity when they lived in Staithes and Runswick Bay. It is ironic that they were leaving cities and seeking timeless communities with primitive fisherfolk at a time of great upheaval and change in those communities. They mainly painted traditional motifs, however, ignoring those elements of modern life, which were an increasing part of local experience such as the ironstone miners, the iron and steel workers, the railway and steam-powered fishing vessels. They painted selectively, excluding any subject they found undesirable or which they thought would not make the paintings attractive to buyers. They were fortunate in that the physical structure of the villages mainly remained untouched by modern developments.

The fact that artists were clearly understood as groups at local and regional level is illustrated by the observations of the *Whitby Gazette*: ‘...the Staithes School - we use the term not in the meaning of a distinct style of painting, but as a colony of artists who “Bohemianise” annually amid this ideal combination of sea, civilization and heather’.¹⁶ This sense of particular identity was also to be found at a regional level, with the *Leeds Mercury* arguing: ‘I have repeatedly said during the last 15 years that I think the time is coming...when Staithes and Runswick - especially Staithes - will be very formidable painting grounds to Newlyn and Clovelly’.¹⁷ This sense of the specificity of sites was indicated, in part, by the distinctive topographies of the villages: Staithes was situated between two steep cliffs, and Runswick was in a large bay.

Over time the artists moved away from fisherfolk subjects to a wider range of motifs, for example, agriculture and leisure. In terms of style there was also a shift from Naturalism to Impressionism. Naturalism was seen in a different way through contemporary eyes from how it is perceived today; as French-influenced and, in some cases, as photographic. Artists rejected idealised representations of people and landscape and concentrated on a detailed observation of the environment. Painting of this kind was concerned with depicting, as accurately as possible, what the painter saw. There was little that was sentimental or anecdotal. As Weisberg contends: ‘They selected themes drawn from daily occurrences to convey a “slice of life”, freezing time for posterity like a photograph...Yet the need for accuracy in expression, dress, and locale remained uppermost in creating a Naturalist image’.¹⁸ For the consumers of this art: ‘...they created style that could be read at a glance. People saw these canvases as accurate, objective reflections of the real world’.¹⁹

¹⁶ *W.G.*, 7. 8. 1903, 2.

¹⁷ *W.G.*, 13. 9. 1901, 7. Review of the 1901 S. A. C. exhibition. This originally appeared in the *Leeds Mercury*.

¹⁸ Weisberg, *Beyond Impressionism*, 9.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 10.

Rural Naturalism drew a range of critical responses. Clausen's *Winter Work* (1883 Tate Gallery London), for example, was severely criticised for its ugliness.²⁰ An exhibition review of 1885 stated that: 'Mr. Clausen counts it his function to discover the ugly and delights in its exercise'.²¹ However, in contrast, a contemporary reviewer, discussing the works of S. Forbes, Bramley and Tuke at the R. A. exhibition in *The Spectator*, considered that:

The merits of their pictures may at once be felt on approaching them after much of the mannered, untrue, studio indoor effects and hot yellow and lake style of work, so plentifully to be found on the Academy walls. Forced and helped by so many of the surrounding pictures, their characteristics are pushed prominently to the front, their qualities of freshness, cool grey colour laid on to the canvas straight, and not mixed on the palette with the brush (under which process the fresh vigour of colour quickly dies) and the evidences of a direct study from Nature and fact are at once felt - indeed, the whole *plein air* scheme is well appreciated.²²

Here the critic emphasises the positive aspects of Naturalist works. They were direct and honest interpretations of the world, which could be easily understood. Increasingly Naturalist works came under attack by those who saw them as backward and 'photographic'. It is only in the past three decades or so that Naturalist works have been recovered from the modernist margins.

Similarly, Impressionism was seen through contemporary eyes in a different way than it is perceived today. As McConkey contends: 'It is worth recalling that French Impressionism was not one formal, absolute artistic phenomenon, and that ideas of what it was changed at the time and have changed ever since'.²³ This appears equally the case with its British followers, whose work might vary considerably. 'Impressionism' was a term applied critically to paintings sometimes with only the weakest connection with Monet's work in the 1870s.²⁴ Indeed, 'Impressionist' was used as a blanket term for any changes in art, such as when artists painted in a French style, used vivid colours, painted modern scenes and used broken brushwork.

Monet and Pissarro had worked in London in the early 1870s, but Impressionism was slow to be accepted in this country. A London exhibition review of Manet's *Argenteuil, les canotiers* (1874 Musée des Beaux-Arts, Tournai)²⁵ dismissed it as "coarse and ugly".²⁶ As McConkey has suggested:

²⁰ See McConkey, 'Figures in a Field: *Winter Work* by Sir George Clausen', *Art at Auction*, 1982-3, 72-77.

²¹ 'The Royal Institution,' *The Magazine of Art*, vol. VIII, 1885, 133.

²² *The Spectator*, 11.5.1889, 644.

²³ London, Barbican Art Gallery, *Impressionism in Britain*, ex. cat., K. McConkey, 1995, 13.

²⁴ London, Goupil Gallery, *A Collection of Paintings by the London Impressionists*, ex. cat., W. Sickert, preface, 1889.

²⁵ See T. J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers* (Princeton 1984), 164-173.

²⁶ *The Times*, 25. 4. 1876, 5.

...if they saw Impressionism at all British students might regard its landscape as an audacious extension of Corot and the Barbizon painters. In their lack of system and regularity the Impressionists must have seemed to the student generation of British Impressionists as both old-fashioned and daringly avant-garde at the same time.²⁷

The art dealer Paul Durand-Ruel helped establish the Impressionist artists in France, the United States and Britain. Amongst the earliest collectors in Britain were Captain Henry Hill, James Maddocks and Samuel Barlow. Hill was based in Brighton, Maddocks in Bradford and Barlow near Manchester.²⁸ French influence was seen in British artists' adoption of Impressionist techniques particularly their interest in light effects, the subjects painted and their use of colour. In 1889, 'The London Impressionists', a group of artists associated with the N. E. A. C., exhibited in London to mixed reviews. Sickert's introduction to the exhibition catalogue shows how some British artists, influenced by Whistler, were soon to leave behind early Monet-like Impressionism. The fact that Sickert and Whistler were thought 'Impressionist' shows the loose manner in which the term was used.

In the Francophobic climate of the 1880s and 1890s, the critical reception of Impressionism in England was sometimes hostile and sometimes positive. In 1882 W. Hamilton had argued that 'Pre-Raphaelite, or Aesthetic or Impressionistic pictures' were thought to be unhealthy and unnatural.²⁹ The following year F. Wedmore was more supportive of Impressionism as the painting of modern life.³⁰ However, in 1888 W. P. Frith fiercely attacked the Impressionists who had 'tainted the art of the country', considering them 'diseased'.³¹ D. S. MacColl was more sympathetic and argued that their approach may differ on, for example, the use of colour, but the painting of modern life was their main concern.³² A year later when *L'Absinthe* by Degas, (1876 Musée d'Orsay, Paris) was shown at the Grafton Galleries, MacColl defended the work but there was a furious row with many people attacking the painting.³³ Despite this, there was a gradual acceptance in some quarters of Impressionism. However, Frank Rutter's failed attempt to buy Monet's *Vetheuil: Sunshine and Snow* ³⁴ (1881 Dublin City Gallery) for the National Gallery shows that the supporters of Impressionism were still in a minority. In the end he had to settle for a Boudin.

²⁷ McConkey, *Impressionism in Britain*, 30.

²⁸ Barlow is discussed in Chapter 4.

²⁹ W. Hamilton, *The Aesthetic Movement in England* (London 1882), 29.

³⁰ F. Wedmore, 'The Impressionists', *Fortnightly Review*, January. 1883, 75-82.

³¹ W. P. Frith, 'Crazes in Art: Pre-Raphaelites and Impressionism', *The Magazine of Art*, vol. XI, 1887, 191.

³² D. S. MacColl, 'The Logic of Painting', *Albemarle Review*, September. 1892, 85-90.

³³ See R. Pickvance, 'L'Absinthe in England', *Apollo*, vol. LXXVII, May 1963, 396.

³⁴ This is the traditional name for this painting; it is also known as *Lavacourt under Snow*. Lavacourt is on the other side of the Seine from Vetheuil.

As Impressionist art slowly became accepted, some sought to recognise its distinctly British character. W. Dewhurst believed that Impressionism was inspired by English art and in *Impressionist Painting: Its Genesis and Development* of 1904 argued that: 'Impressionism owes its birth to Constable; and its ultimate glory, the works of Claude Monet, is profoundly inspired by the works of Turner'.³⁵ The following year, L. Housman maintained that: 'English Impressionism may be said to deal with the tone-values far more than with problems of colour; for the French, colour was paramount'.³⁶

1880 was chosen as a starting date for the period under study here, because major changes occurred within Britain during this decade. These include the growth of the modern state, the extension of the franchise, and the expansion of local and national government services, all of which affected those living in the two villages. Britain was dealing with rapid change within, while also coping with being the most powerful nation in the world. It became more urbanised between 1801 and 1841 with three million people migrating to the cities. A. Howkins, J. Marsh and R. Williams have discussed the social consequences of this on the countryside and the prevailing culture.³⁷ The railway opened in Staithes and Runswick Bay in 1883, improving access and overcoming the isolation experienced for centuries. Following this many artists came there, particularly to Runswick Bay; more tourists also visited the area. By 1914, Britain still remained a major economic and military force in the world. This position was soon to be tested during the Great War.

The war restricted access to the villages, but after 1918 many artists still continued to live in the area mostly in or near Runswick Bay. Senior built a house, 'Hillside', there in 1918 and worked there until his death in 1927. Stevens, Crawshaw and Terry lived in or near Whitby: Stevens worked there until his death in 1925; Crawshaw lived there until the 1920s; and Terry lived in Sleights until his death in 1939. Ingall and Hill continued to live in or near Runswick Bay: Ingall died in 1936 and Hill in 1952. J. Watson visited Runswick Bay during the summer and when he retired he spent more time there until his death in 1926.

After the war, the Joblings continued to paint in Staithes. Later L. Colbourn and E. Blackadder worked in the village. Blackadder also worked in Runswick Bay. More recently,

³⁵ W. Dewhurst, *Impressionist Painting: Its Genesis and Development* (London 1904), 4.

³⁶ L. Housman, 'Two Kinds of Impressionism', *The Manchester Guardian*, 17.1.1905, 5.

³⁷ A. Howkins, *Reshaping Rural England: A Social History, 1850-1925* (London 1991); J. Marsh, *Back to the Land: The Pastoral Impulse in England from 1880 to 1914* (London 1982) and R. Williams, *The Country and the City* (London 1973).

L. Tabner has been associated mainly with Staithes and D. Curtis with painting in both villages. There has been a wide-ranging debate about the consequences of the war on art and to what extent the changes seen in British society in the 1920s were foreshadowed by tendencies already noticeable in the country before 1914.³⁸

This work contributes to the debate on artists' colonies in England and to the international phenomenon of artists' colonies between 1880 and 1914. Such a topic necessarily requires an interdisciplinary approach, drawing on the methods of social and economic history, together with local history studies as well as art history. This approach is needed in order to appreciate the circumstances in which the paintings surveyed here were produced. As L. Nead has argued: '...the best historians of nineteenth-century art have drawn (broadly, but discriminatingly) on diverse areas of the humanities and social sciences in order to produce rich and nuanced analyses of the cultural production and consumption of the period'.³⁹

In analysing 'the cultural production and consumption' in this area, detailed archival work was undertaken. Wide use is made of local historical materials such as government reports, local board of health minutes, school logbooks and contemporary accounts, as well as traditional art historical methods. What the various disciplines bring to each other gives insights and contributes to a greater awareness of this phenomenon. An examination of place and the economy and society of each community gives a deeper understanding of the artworks produced in these locations. Knowledge of the relationship between the community and the artists is also required.

Combining art historical techniques with the disciplines of economic and social history provides more information about the paintings and where they were produced. It also gives an insight into the involvement of some elements of the bourgeoisie in painting, the images of society produced, particular industries, art dealing networks and patronage. There is also an interest in artists' colonies in certain villages and how artists related to these communities. Artists were witnesses to a changing way of life. One advantage of combining the socio-economic with the art historical approach is to reveal the paintings produced not merely as records of what was there, but as mediations upon the scene. Three examples are how artists

³⁸ J. Stevenson, *British Society, 1914-1945* (London 1984); C. L. Mowat, *Britain Between the Wars, 1918-1940* (Chicago 1969).

³⁹ Quoted in the L. Nead section in, 'Whither the Field of Nineteenth-Century Art History?' Commentaries by A. Blaugrund, W. Busch, H. Dorra, L. Nead and L. Nochlin in *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide*, Spring, 2002, <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org> [accessed 2. 2. 2006].

ignored modernity, how women are represented and how the heroic, masculine images of fishermen can be seen as symbolic of British nationhood and the wider empire.

The existing literature on art in Staithes and Runswick Bay and 'The Staithes Group' is disparate. From the mid-1970s, P. Phillips, an art dealer, held regular exhibitions of what he called 'The Staithes Group' with accompanying catalogues.⁴⁰ He has also written three short articles on 'The Staithes Group'.⁴¹ In 1993 he organised a touring exhibition of 'The Staithes Group'. The exhibition catalogue lacks detailed analysis of the painters and their work. It does not refer to Staithes as an artists' colony and the role of Runswick Bay is not discussed. Most of the catalogue contains short biographies of artists who are deemed to be part of 'The Staithes Group'. Haworth's exhibition catalogue, *Paintings by Members of the Staithes Group*, devotes six pages to a general discussion and the rest to artists' biographies.⁴²

In both catalogues there is little on the circumstances in which the paintings were produced, the artists' colonies in Staithes and Runswick Bay and comparisons with others in Britain and Europe. There is also no analysis of the iconography of the paintings produced, and little information on exhibition venues and patronage. Everything is seen from a Staithes perspective and many artists, for example E. S. Harper, W. Brymner and Sir W. Llewellyn, have been excluded. The important role of Runswick Bay has been ignored and there is little on the close proximity of Whitby and its influence as a cultural centre. There is also no discussion of the impact of modernity and how artists engaged with this. In books on British art, for example that of D. Farr, there is no reference to Staithes and Runswick Bay.⁴³ Other books by J. Treuherz and F. Spalding have only passing references to Staithes.⁴⁴

The literature on the artists who worked there also varies. Some, such as Hopwood, have very little written on them, while L. Knight has been the subject of many books and articles. Her autobiography, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, was very popular when it was published in 1936.⁴⁵ Another volume of autobiography was published in 1965.⁴⁶ These are used in the present work, but it is important to stress that they are the reminiscences of a person reflecting

⁴⁰ P. Phillips, A series of ex. cats. relating to 'The Staithes Group'. (Marlow and Cookham 1976-96).

⁴¹ P. Phillips, 'Early Days and Hard Times at Staithes', *Art and Antiques Weekly*, 1977, vol. XXIX, no. 7, 22-24; 'Britain's Impressionists', *Art and Antiques Weekly*, 1979, vol. XXXVI, no. 11, 22-24; 'Nowhere Like it for Painting', *The Antique Dealer and Collectors Guide*, 1986, vol. XL, no. 4, 39-42.

⁴² Haworth, *Paintings by Members of the Staithes Group*.

⁴³ D. Farr, *English Art, 1870-1940* (Oxford 1978).

⁴⁴ J. Treuherz, *Victorian Painting* (London 1987); F. Spalding, *British Art Since 1900* (London 1992).

⁴⁵ L. Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint* (London 1936).

⁴⁶ L. Knight, *The Magic of a Line* (London 1965).

on her life in Staithes. In *Oil Paint and Grease Paint* she looks back some 30 years, and in *The Magic of a Line* around 60 years. She lived there from 1900 to 1907, but had visited from around 1895.

Her autobiographies give an insight into the community, and are the only major account of an artist's view of the village. Staithes was an important part of her life, where she struggled to become an artist. Her writings are particularly strong on describing the village, the inhabitants, how they earned their living and their customs and superstitions. She is poor on dates, for example when she first went there, when she left, and on the other artists who worked there. There is no mention, for example, of the Joblings, Senior and Foster and there is also little on the paintings produced. By using other materials, such as local newspapers, alongside Knight's work it is possible to form a picture of life there. The artists R. Jobling and N. Erichsen also wrote brief descriptions of life in the village.⁴⁷

Biographies by J. Dunbar and C. Fox provide some information on L. Knight, but these generally focus on the later period when she was a successful artist.⁴⁸ Dunbar gives little information on the context in which the paintings were produced or the dissemination and consumption of them. However, there is some discussion of the artists' colony in Newlyn. The chapter on Staithes starts with an error: 'Staithes was not easy to get to; they had to go by rail to the small resort of Whitby, and hire a horse and gig to drive them along the cliff road until they came to the top of the narrow, stony road which led down to the fishing village'.⁴⁹ In fact the railway was operating from 1883 and the station was half a mile from the fishing village.

Fox deals with Knight's time in Staithes in a few pages. She uses a limited range of materials and there is little information from local newspapers and other sources. As with Dunbar, there is little on the context in which the works were produced, nor the dissemination and consumption of them. Both writers have overlooked the importance of Runswick Bay as an artists' colony. Fox does give some insights into L. Knight's work, her personality and the problems encountered as a woman painter. In 1989, Channel 4 included a television programme on L. Knight in *Five Women Painters*, and a book accompanied the series.⁵⁰ This highlights the difficulties she faced, but her time in Staithes is dealt with in one and a half

⁴⁷ See R. Jobling, 'Word Pictures', *Pen and Palette Papers*, [Newcastle] December 1901, 86-92 and N. Erichsen, 'A North Country Fishing Town', *The English Illustrated Magazine*, vol. XXXI, 1886, 462-9.

⁴⁸ J. Dunbar, *Laura Knight* (Glasgow 1975); C. Fox, *Laura Knight*.

⁴⁹ Dunbar, *Laura Knight*, 51.

⁵⁰ T. Grimes, *Five Women Painters* (London 1989).

pages. Again there is no discussion on the context in which the paintings were produced, exhibition venues nor who bought them. A book on her drawings completed after her stay in Staithes focuses on this aspect of her oeuvre.⁵¹ H. Knight has been overshadowed by his more famous wife and no books and few articles have been written about him.

Artists such as F. Mayor, Mackie and Hopwood were well known in the period under study, but were largely forgotten until the 1970s. It is difficult to obtain information on these and other artists as, because of decades of obscurity, many of their records have been destroyed. Many artists were confined to the margins and their paintings left in art gallery storerooms or sold for low prices at auction.⁵²

However, there has been a renewed interest in Jackson, Senior, the Joblings, and Mason. This should be seen in the wider context of the growing interest in British art and a corresponding increase in the literature on this subject since 1975. An exhibition of Jackson's work, the first for 60 years, was held in the Rochdale Art Gallery in 1978 with an accompanying catalogue.⁵³ He settled near to Runswick Bay in the 1880s and lived there for the rest of his life. Most of his paintings are inspired by the village and thus figured prominently in the exhibition. The catalogue draws on a limited range of materials and gives a brief outline of his life and works. But, as with other literature on these artists, there is little on the context in which the paintings were produced and on the iconography of the paintings. Staithes and Runswick Bay are not considered as artists' colonies. Other references to him appear in *British Impressionism: A Garden of Bright Images* and in the *Impressionism in Britain* exhibition catalogue.⁵⁴

An exhibition of Senior's paintings was held in London in 1974.⁵⁵ A further exhibition was held in Wakefield in 1983.⁵⁶ Senior was one of the earliest painters to be recovered and both catalogues provide some information on his life and works. But, once again, there is little about the context in which the works were produced, analysis of them, nor who bought the paintings. There are references to him in *British Impressionism: A Garden of Bright Images* and the *Impressionism in Britain* exhibition catalogue.

⁵¹ G. F. Bolling and V. A. Withington, *The Graphic Work of Laura Knight* (London 1993).

⁵² For example, C. H. Mackie, *A Woodland Path* was sold at Sotheby's on 22.7.1977 for £8.

⁵³ Rochdale, Rochdale Art Gallery, *F.W. Jackson, 1859-1918*, ex. cat., 1978.

⁵⁴ See L. Wortley, *British Impressionism* (London 1988) and London, Barbican Art Gallery, *Impressionism in Britain*, ex. cat., K. McConkey, 1995.

⁵⁵ London, Michael Parkin Fine Art Gallery, *Mark Senior 1864-1927*, ex. cat., M. Parkin, 1974.

⁵⁶ Wakefield, Elizabeth Exhibition Gallery, *Mark Senior*, ex. cat., 1983.

The work of the Joblings was featured in an exhibition between late 1992 and early 1993, in which many paintings of Staithes and Runswick Bay were displayed together for the first time.⁵⁷ The Joblings' role in Staithes was significant in that they influenced some Newcastle-upon-Tyne artists to work there and encouraged Staithes artists to exhibit their work in the city. An exhibition of the work of Mason, who spent a short time at Staithes at the turn of the century, was held in 1996.⁵⁸

There are two academic studies of Staithes, one on the local dialect and another on religion in the village.⁵⁹ There is none focusing on Runswick Bay, and this thesis is the first academic study of the village. There is no general history of Staithes during the period 1880 to 1914 and the artists who worked there. J. Howard has written a general history of Staithes, but this does not look in depth at the period under study and there is little discussion on the village as an artists' colony.⁶⁰ There is one brief account of life in Runswick Bay by the Canadian artist, W. Brymner, written after his visit in 1884. This provides an insight into his interaction with the small community and the problems he faced in painting local subjects.⁶¹ There is also a book by J. Johnson, whose family owned The Royal Hotel in Runswick Bay. This describes life in this small community from around 1900, but there is little on the artists who worked there.⁶² Both villages are mentioned in local histories written in 1817 and 1846.⁶³

In *The Good and Simple Life*, one of the few studies of artists' colonies throughout the world in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there is only a brief reference to Staithes and none to Runswick Bay.⁶⁴ This examines artists' colonies such as Barbizon, Concarneau, Skagen, Newlyn, St. Ives and Worpswede. It concentrates more on describing a number of colonies rather than analysing why there was an international artists' colony movement. Little is devoted to the paintings produced, where they were exhibited and patronage.

⁵⁷ Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Laing Art Gallery, *A Romance with the North East: Robert and Isa Jobling*, ex. cat., J. Millard, 1993.

⁵⁸ Hartlepool, Gray Art Gallery, *The Life and Career of F. H. Mason*, ex. cat., E. Yardley, 1996. The bibliography lists the books Mason illustrated and the articles written by him.

⁵⁹ M. S. Lawson, 'An Account of the Dialect of Staithes in the North Riding of Yorkshire', M.A., University of Leeds, 1949; D. Clark, 'Folk Religion in a North Yorkshire Fishing Village', M.A., University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1978.

⁶⁰ J. Howard, *A History of Staithes* (Scarborough 2000).

⁶¹ W. Brymner, 'Village Life in Three Countries', *University Magazine* [Toronto], 1912, vol. XI, 309-326.

⁶² J. S. Johnson, *The Nagars of Runswick Bay* (Runswick Bay 1992).

⁶³ G. Young, *A History of Whitby* (Whitby 1817); J. Ord, *The Antiquities of Cleveland* (Edinburgh and Stokesley 1846).

⁶⁴ See Jacobs, 144.

Lübbren's book includes some discussion of Staithes, but not Runswick Bay.⁶⁵ She adopts a macrocosmic approach, looking at a wide range of artists' colonies, as opposed to the microcosmic approach of this work where two colonies are examined. Cullercoats, a fishing village near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, is situated around 60 miles north of Staithes and Runswick Bay. L. Newton has undertaken research into this artists' colony.⁶⁶ Some of her study compares it with Staithes, but she fails to recognise the importance of Runswick Bay. She does show the co-operation between some Staithes and Newcastle-upon-Tyne artists in the 1880s and 1890s.

Most attention on English artists' colonies has focused on Newlyn. Exhibitions held in 1979 and in 1985 increased interest in this artists' colony and others in England. They also made a contribution to the study of art outside London.⁶⁷ However, in the exhibition catalogues there is little comparison with other artists' colonies. T. Cross provides information on the painters who worked in Newlyn and St Ives. R. Langley has also written about the life and works of W. Langley. Relatively little research has been undertaken on women artists in Newlyn, but the importance of Elizabeth Forbes was highlighted in a book in 2000.⁶⁸

In a broader context, the movement of artists from urban centres to artists' colonies is also examined in this study. In particular, the works of Herbert, Lübbren, Colls and Dodd are considered. Herbert states: 'The peasant was among the most important subjects for the embodiment of artists' attitudes toward the urban-industrial revolution'.⁶⁹ His article is important in the study of this area of art history.⁷⁰ Herbert's argument is extended in this work to include fisherfolk, whom many artists saw as similar subjects to peasants. Following on from Herbert, Lübbren argues that: 'Bourgeois nostalgia for the pre-modern informed

⁶⁵ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 175.

⁶⁶ L. Newton, *The Cullercoats Artists' Colony, c.1870-1914*, unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, University of Northumbria, 2001, 3: 'Issues of nationalism, and regionalism, race and gender, and the impact of tourism, urbanisation and industrialisation must all be considered as possible influences on, and points of entry into, the Naturalistic imagery found at Cullercoats and other colonies...'

⁶⁷ *Artists of the Newlyn School, 1880-1900*, ex. cat., C. Fox and F. Greenacre, 1979; London, Barbican Art Gallery, *Painting in Newlyn, 1880-1930*, ex. cat., C. Fox and F. Greenacre, 1985; Newlyn, Orion Art Gallery, *Painting in Newlyn, 1900-1930*, ex. cat., C. Fox, 1985.

⁶⁸ T. Cross, *The Shining Sands: Painters in Newlyn and St. Ives, 1880-1920* (Tiverton 1994); R. Langley, *Walter Langley: Pioneer of the Newlyn Art Colony* (Bristol 1997); Newlyn, Orion Art Gallery, *Singing From the Walls: The Life and Work of Elizabeth Forbes*, ex. cat., J. Cook, M. Hardie and C. Payne, 2000.

⁶⁹ R. L. Herbert, 'City vs. Country: The Rural Image in French Painting from Millet to Gauguin', *Artforum*, 8.2. 1970, 44.

⁷⁰ F. Fowle and R. Thomson, eds., *Soil and Stone: Impressionism, Urbanism, Environment* (Aldershot 2003), R. Thomson, 1, states that Herbert's article: '...formed a sub-stratum in art historical scholarship of this period'.

virtually all artistic practice in rural artists' locations, irrespective of style, and it was central to the way the locals were represented as other than themselves'.⁷¹

Colls and Dodd's work is of relevance in terms of how the paintings produced by artists at Staithes and Runswick Bay articulated conceptions of Englishness and national identity. They assert that: '...the remaking of class, gender and national identity was undertaken at such a variety of social locations'.⁷² In this thesis it is argued that it is important to look in detail at sites such as Staithes and Runswick Bay, and the individual artists who worked there, taking into account local conditions and local markets.

As stated above, the art and artists in the two villages were marginalised as they were not seen as a part of the modernist canon. The complexities surrounding the use of the terms modern, modernity and modernisation are beyond the scope of this study and are considered in detail elsewhere.⁷³ Recent scholarship on British art between 1880 and 1914 has endeavoured to revise and reclaim the modern status of the art and artists. There has been discussion as to how Britain, a sophisticated, developed country, apparently failed to produce a distinctive modern art. D. Solkin has suggested that:

To speak of "the British" in conjunction with 'the Modern' is to suggest a linkage that goes against the grain of the narrative that dominates our understanding of the history of western art from the eighteenth century to the present day.⁷⁴

In recent years some writers have questioned the privileging of French art which has confined British art to the margins. One writer who has been involved in the recovery of artists who were excluded by the modernist perspective is T. Barringer.⁷⁵ He explores this approach in relation to Delaroche and Leighton. In discussing Leighton, Barringer contends that:

If the narratives displayed on the walls of public galleries marginalise British art between the death of J. M. W. Turner in 1851 and the emergence of Vorticism and the Bloomsbury Group in the early twentieth century, this effect is even more marked in the literature of art history. The status of "Victorian" art has perhaps remained lower than that of French academic painting.⁷⁶

⁷¹ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 38.

⁷² R. Colls and P. Dodd, eds., *English Politics and Culture, 1880-1920* (London 1986), 2.

⁷³ These are summarised in the introduction to D. P. Corbett, *The Modernity of English Art* (Manchester 1994).

⁷⁴ D. H. Solkin, 'The British and the Modern' in B. Allen, ed., *Towards a Modern Art World* (New Haven and London 1995), 1-6, especially 1.

⁷⁵ T. Barringer and E. Prettejohn, eds., *Frederic Leighton: Antiquity, Renaissance, Modernity* (New Haven and London 1999).

⁷⁶ T. Barringer, 'Rethinking Delaroche/Recovering Leighton', *Victorian Studies*, vol. XLIV, 2001, no. 1, 12.

Writers have focused on different aspects of modernist practice and many have called for an expanded notion of modernism. It has been noted that artists who 'failed' to conform to the accepted standards of aesthetic innovation or technical radicalism were nevertheless interested in the challenge of painting modern life.⁷⁷

This thesis is related to the recent historiography in this area, in concerning itself with artists and sites of artistic production falling outside conventional modernist histories. In line with the work of writers like Corbett, it is concerned to re-evaluate British art in its own terms, rather than as a pale imitation of French art. This necessarily entails the recovery of the conditions in which artists worked. Unfortunately, many of the artists addressed by this study and the places where they produced their art are still generally unfamiliar.

Artists' colonies are a largely neglected aspect of late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century British culture. Lübbren contends that: '...rural artists' colonies do not fit seamlessly into any of the standard histories of nineteenth-century art'.⁷⁸ She also argues: '...artists' colonies in general tend to be misunderstood as amusing but marginal footnotes to the central history of modern art'.⁷⁹ This must be seen in the broader context of the marginalisation of many artists associated with the colonies, detailed above.

Considering that the Knights spent their formative years in Staithes and Jackson and Hopwood painted mainly in Runswick Bay, it is surprising that these two artists' colonies have received little attention. For example, H. Knight's obituary in *The Times* does not mention that he had worked for many years in Staithes, and only refers to his time in Cornwall.⁸⁰ Again it raises the question why certain artists' colonies are studied and others are relegated to obscurity. Newton also stresses the point that Cullercoats has been neglected: 'This serves to highlight one of the central questions that this thesis will address; namely, why has the Cullercoats colony been ignored?'⁸¹ As Lübbren maintains: '...most histories of art of this period are preoccupied with the urban avant-garde and have little time for a movement that, on the surface, seems anti-urban and not very avant-garde'.⁸² Should certain artists be

⁷⁷ See D. P. Corbett and L. Perry, eds., *English Art, 1860-1914* (Manchester 2000); L. Tickner, *Modern Life and Modern Subjects* (London 2000); L. Tickner, *The World in Paint* (Manchester 2004); D. P. Corbett, Y. Holt and F. Russell, eds., *The Geographies of Englishness: Landscape and the National Past, 1880-1940* (London 2002); McConkey, *Memory and Desire* (Aldershot 2002); McConkey, ex. cat. *Impressionism in Britain*.

⁷⁸ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 11.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁸⁰ *The Times*, 4. 10. 1961, 15.

⁸¹ L. Newton, thesis, 'The Cullercoats Artists' Colony,' 2.

⁸² Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 1.

confined to the footnotes of history, or should they be reassessed and re-evaluated and their role in British art recognised? Is the culture of one area more important than another? As the first academic study of artists' colonies in Staithes and Runswick Bay, this work is written in the belief that it is important to study the art produced in these villages as this can, with other studies, contribute to a better understanding not only of the artists' colonies but of British art more generally during this period.

L. Knight is an example of an artist whose work was marginalised as it was seen not to conform to a modernist line of development.⁸³ There are other examples and by using contemporary publications, for example, *Royal Academy Pictures*, it can be seen that some artists, who were important at the time and had many paintings featured in this publication were later forgotten.⁸⁴ For example, Richardson, W. G. Foster and Friedenson, who worked in Staithes and Runswick Bay, seem to have been 'airbrushed' out of most art histories between c.1914 and c.1975. Publications such as *Royal Academy Pictures* provide an insight into art as contemporaries saw it rather than according to modern criteria. As Lübbren contends: 'Art History as a discipline should be able to illuminate all the manifestations of art, regardless of "quality" or "critical" potential, not just the minority singled out by museum curators and modernist teleologists'.⁸⁵

British art has been neglected, but art in northern England has been even more sidelined. In a book on painters who worked there, D. Child echoes this sentiment: 'I do believe that northern artists are underrated and surprisingly little has been written about them'.⁸⁶ Metropolitan art has been privileged over developments in the provinces. Northern art and artists, in many cases, are seen as outside the canon and not worthy of discussion. The lack of attention could be because of the geographical isolation of Staithes and Runswick Bay, which are approximately 250 miles north of London. There has been a serious underestimation of these artists' colonies. This lack of interest could be explained by the north/south divide in Britain. The north for some is still associated with industry and 'dark satanic mills' and art is not something that many people in London and the south link with this area. Art and artists in Staithes and Runswick Bay have been neglected, for as - McConkey maintains - 'In the last 20 years art historians, while receptive to new theoretical models, have clung to the security

⁸³ See Grimes, 25.

⁸⁴ This was published annually between 1888 and 1915 by Cassell, London.

⁸⁵ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 10.

⁸⁶ D. Child, *Painters in the Northern Counties of England and Wales* (Leeds 1994), iii.

of the equivalent of a modernist canon in British art at the turn of the century'.⁸⁷ He also argues that:

The term 'modernism' restricts our understanding of the period of British art with which I am concerned - i.e. c. 1890-c.1905. Although employed in France, it was not in common use in England and it would be misleading to attribute to those incidences where it occurs a contemporary understanding of the term.⁸⁸

From the discussion above it now seems that the canon of great painters and their work has been abandoned by some in favour of a more inclusive approach which views art and artists as part of a wider process of cultural production. For those with a metrocentric perspective, regions are seen as second best and increasing centralisation and elitism has led some to treat with contempt what is deemed provincialism. This approach has restricted the understanding of British art.

Art outside London was mainly neglected until the 1970s. There are some exceptions: for example, an article by E. Rimbault Dibden on 'Liverpool Art and Artists' written in 1918 and several articles on Inverness artists.⁸⁹ H. Hall's *Artists and Sculptors of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire*, published in 1953, is another example.⁹⁰ From the 1970s more work was published on provincial art, including a book by T. Fawcett and F. Greenacre's exhibition catalogue of the *Bristol School of Artists*.⁹¹ Other works on Norwich and Lancashire, particularly Merseyside, were also published.⁹² Further books on art in Birmingham and Manchester also became available.⁹³ S. Smiles has also undertaken research on art centres in south west England.⁹⁴

There are other examples of books and art exhibitions in northern England. M. Hall provides information on artists in Northumbria.⁹⁵ Turnbull has written on artists who worked in

⁸⁷ McConkey, *Memory and Desire*, 3, footnote 7 (253).

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ E. R. Dibden, 'The Liverpool School of Artists', *Walpole Society*, vol. VI, 1917-18, 90-6; 'Inverness Artists', *The Inverness Courier*, 30.12. 1924-20. 1. 1925. These are cited in H. Williams, 'The Lives and Works of Nottingham Artists, 1750-1914', vol. I, Ph.D., University of Nottingham, 1981, 6.

⁹⁰ H. C. Hall, *Artists and Sculptors of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, 1750-1950* (Nottingham 1953). This is also cited in H. Williams, Ph.D.

⁹¹ T. Fawcett, *The Rise of English Provincial Art : Artists, Patrons, and Institutions outside London, 1800-1830* (Oxford 1974); Bristol, Bristol City Art Gallery, *The Bristol School of Artists*, ex. cat., F. Greenacre, 1973.

⁹² M. Rajnai and M. Stevens, *The Norwich Society of Artists, 1805-1833* (Norwich 1976); M. Bennett, *Merseyside Painters, People and Places* (Liverpool 1978); P. Davies, *A Northern School: Lancashire Artists of the Twentieth Century* (Manchester 1989); A. S. Davidson, *Marine Art and Liverpool: Painters, Places and Flag Codes, 1760-1960* (Wolverhampton 1986).

⁹³ S. and K. Morris, *A Catalogue of Birmingham and West Midlands Painters of the Nineteenth Century* (Stratford upon Avon 1974); J. H.G. Archer, ed., *Art and Architecture in Manchester* (Manchester 1985).

⁹⁴ S. Smiles, *Plymouth and Exeter as Centres of Art, 1820-1865*, unpubl. Ph.D. thesis (Cambridge 1982).

⁹⁵ M. Hall, *The Artists of Northumbria* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne 1973).

Yorkshire, including some in Staithes and Runswick Bay.⁹⁶ Exhibitions were held in Newcastle-upon-Tyne on C. N. Hemy in 1984 and on R. Hedley in 1990.⁹⁷ Macleod has also written about patronage in this city.⁹⁸

Another area of marginalisation in art histories is the imagery of the labouring body. Again French art has been privileged.⁹⁹ However, there are many studies of the image of the agricultural labourer in English landscape painting in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹⁰⁰ In contrast, there are relatively few studies of fisherfolk in art in Britain, which is surprising considering their prevalence at this time. How is this lacuna to be explained? The imagery of fisherfolk is part of a wider maritime culture so closely associated with Englishness. Readings of the iconography of paintings of fisherfolk show how constructions of national identity were made in the works produced. They reflect the importance of the sea and the pride found in the associations with the sea, particularly by those living in cities. The sea shaped the culture and there was a focus outwards from urban centres to the coast from those escaping modernity. It is surprising that this area of art is not seen to be of greater significance. As G. Quilley has argued, maritime art has been marginalised.¹⁰¹ The representation of fisherfolk has largely been ignored, but there is increasing literature on the representation of labour in Britain in the nineteenth century.¹⁰² There is also increasing literature on the representation of working women during this period.¹⁰³

One of the central aims of this study is to examine the range of visual images produced. Paintings are not produced in a vacuum but are a product of their times and particular places. In a broader context the naturalistic portrayals of working people at Staithes and Runswick Bay fit into a genre made popular by the Newlyn artists' colony and by French and Dutch

⁹⁶ H. Turnbull, *Artists of Yorkshire* (Snape Bedale 1976).

⁹⁷ Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Laing Art Gallery, *C. N. Hemy*, ex. cat., A. Greg, 1984; *Ralph Hedley: Tyneside Painter*, ex. cat., 1990.

⁹⁸ D. S. Macleod, 'Private and Public Patronage in Victorian Newcastle', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. LIII, 1989, 188-208.

⁹⁹ Imagery of the labouring body is discussed in Chapter 3.

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, J. Barrell, *The Dark Side of the Landscape* (Cambridge 1980); A. Bermingham, *Landscape and Ideology* (London 1986); E. Helsinger, *Rural Scenes and National Representation, 1815-1850* (Princeton 1997); A. Hemingway, *Landscape Imagery and Urban Culture in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge 1992); C. Payne, *Toil and Plenty* (London 1993); and M. Rosenthal, *British Landscape Painting* (London 1992).

¹⁰¹ G. Quilley, 'Missing the Boat: The Place of the Maritime in the History of British Visual Culture', *Visual Culture in Britain*, vol. 1, no. 2 (2000), 79: 'This essay seeks to question the position of maritime visual culture and its history in relation to the core discipline of (art) history, against which the maritime is popularly perceived to have a marginal, specialised and even eccentric status'.

¹⁰² Some examples are T. Barringer, *Men at Work: Art and Labour in Victorian Britain* (New Haven and London 2005); G. Pollock and V. Mainz, *Work and the Image*, 2 vols. (Aldershot 2000).

¹⁰³ Some examples are M. Hiley, *Victorian Working Women* (London 1979); K. Huneault, *Difficult Subjects: Work, Women and Visual Culture 1880-1914* (Aldershot 2002); On women miners, see G. Pollock, 'With My Own Eye: Fetishism, The Labouring Body, and the Colour of its Sex', *Art History*, vol. XVII, 1994, 342-82.

artists. In this study the paintings are not used as mere illustrations to support historical arguments, the overriding concern is the circumstances regarding their genesis.

A study of this kind is necessarily constrained. It is only concerned with artists' colonies in England c.1880-1914 and therefore looking at Englishness. The terms Britishness and Englishness were generally used in a similar way at this time and are used throughout this work. Some of the central questions posed are: Why did artists seek places such as Staithes and Runswick Bay? Why did they paint fisherfolk? Which subjects did they paint? Where were the paintings exhibited? Why did patrons buy the paintings? Tackling this obscure subject and bringing coherence to the wide range of sources is fraught with difficulties. Dealing with the many artists who visited the fishing villages is problematic. Individual artists are used as examples but a biographical approach is avoided and further information on individual artists can be found in **Appendix 2**. Rather, this work provides a framework for understanding the practices and the production of artists working and living in or near the villages.

The argument of this work is organised into four chapters:

Chapter one establishes the context in which the paintings were produced. The economic structure is examined, particularly the fishing industry, the major source of employment, and the main attraction for the artists. For centuries fishing had been the mainstay of the economy, but was declining, and local people sought other work such as ironstone mining, while artists still chose to paint fisherfolk. The way the artists tried to come to terms with the impact of modernity is also examined. The social structure of both villages is also examined, but Staithes features more prominently in the discussion because it was the larger village. Government reports, contemporary accounts from books, local and national newspapers and magazines are used, as well as the works of social and economic historians. Use is also made of local historical documents such as the school logbooks.

Chapter two considers the principal characteristics of the two artists' colonies in part by a comparison with other English and international colonies of the same period. The chapter also looks at the role played by women artists.

Chapter three examines the paintings by resident artists as portrayals of the local communities and their livelihood, particularly, fishing. Such an investigation necessarily considers issues of national identity, gender, class, urbanisation, industrialisation and imperialism.

Chapter four examines exhibiting venues and patronage. These are considered in the broader context of an increasingly sophisticated art economy operating in this period. The paintings were sold in international, national and local markets. Yorkshire as a regional art economy is also considered as well as the attempts to develop a local art market through the establishment of the S. A. C. and the artistic infrastructure in Whitby.

The conclusion assesses the significance of the artists' colonies, their place in art histories and the contribution made by this study.

CHAPTER ONE THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONTEXT IN WHICH THE PAINTINGS WERE PRODUCED

'Here [in Staithes] and it is the same in Runswick - one is obliged to walk warily during the painter's season, for fear of either obstructing the view of the man behind the easel you have just passed, or out of regard for the feelings of some girls in front'.¹

The aim of this chapter is to examine the circumstances in which the works of art were produced. It begins by considering the economic structure and, in particular, the fishing industry that sustained the two communities and gave the villages their special character. The economic and social structure of the two fishing villages shaped the culture and this chapter seeks to convey the tone and flavour that artists experienced in the communities, which inspired them. Knowledge of the villages, the fishing methods and the boats used is required to analyse the paintings fully. Primary sources, particularly government reports, are used to demonstrate that the fishing industry was experiencing serious decline.

The paintings produced depict the fishing communities using traditional methods. The ancillary trades dependent on fishing and the role of women in the fishing industry are also examined. Other work such as ironstone mining and the impact of the railway are also considered; these rarely feature in the paintings. The second part of the chapter examines the social structure of the two communities, including their homes, health, sanitation, schools, religion, customs, traditions and superstitions and how local people perceived the artists. In essence, the features are examined which combined to make the fishing villages attractive to artists. The way the artists engaged with the impact of modernity is also considered.

The artists thought that workers were a subject worthy of portraying in their own right rather than being just part of the scene. This approach was influenced by Millet and Bastien-Lepage. Millet painted the French peasant in his own surroundings, extolling the virtues of a simple, dignified way of life close to the earth, following the seasons and the rhythm of life.² To artists in Staithes and Runswick Bay, fisherfolk were seen in a similar way to how the

¹ G. Home, *Yorkshire Coast and Moorland Scenes* (London 1904), 43.

² Williamstown, MA, U.S.A., Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, *Jean-François Millet Drawn into the Light*, A. R. Murphy, R. Rand, B.T. Allen, J. Ganz, A. Goodin, ex. cat., 1999, 1: '...his primary purpose was to portray the rural poor as icons: a noble peasantry condemned to backbreaking labour in a harsh environment who none the less remain dignified, even achieving spiritual power'.

peasant was seen by French painters. Artists came mainly from the northern cities, which had been blighted by industrialisation. They sought timelessness, but were living in a time of rapid change. They were idealists, seeking authentic locations in a materialist world and they saw the two fishing villages as primitive and natural. They did not come to terms with modernity, but escaped from it.³ Herbert has argued that artists who moved from the cities were seeking refuge from the evils of modernity.⁴

During this period, paintings by Millet and those of the Hague School fetched high prices in Britain and the United States.⁵ Many artists were able to see these at London exhibitions. Bastien-Lepage enjoyed huge fame when *Hayfield* (1878 Musée du Louvre, Paris) was shown in London in 1878. He had a strong influence on young painters who worked in the artists' colonies. His lack of sentimentality, *plein air* painting and working in front of the model were adopted by artists such as Clausen, who described his method: 'All his personages are placed before us in the most satisfactory completeness, without the appearance of artifice, but as they live; and without comment, as far as possible on the author's part'.⁶ Bastien-Lepage and Millet influenced Jackson, who was, in turn, a strong influence in the artists' colonies. In the introduction to the 1905 S. A. C. exhibition catalogue, he stated that the artists wanted to show works that 'represent their honest interpretation of nature'.⁷

In 1840 Staithes, despite its small size, was one of the most important fishing ports on the east coast of England. Two technological developments linked to steam power had a major impact on the two communities, particularly Staithes. As the number of steam-powered craft increased rapidly from the mid-1870s, the villages found their economies seriously affected. The second factor was the railway, which allowed easier access for artists and tourists and ended the isolation local people had experienced for centuries. It also contributed to the development of a national market for fish. This initially helped the fisherfolk, but later seriously affected their livelihood, as more steam-powered trawlers met the increased demand for fish. Frank contends that: 'The widespread introduction of trawling in the 19th century had

³ See R. Shannon, *The Crisis of Imperialism* (London 1974), 290.

⁴ Herbert, 'City vs. Country', 55, states that artists found in the: '...construction of rural subjects the vessel into which so many of their longings could be poured. It represented release and freedom from the regularity of mechanised life, from the impurity of city slums, from the degradation of factory labour. It permitted the expression by proxy of feelings hard to articulate directly...from nostalgia for that past being assaulted and torn asunder by industrialization, to admiration for the nobility of the man whose gestures force a pattern upon nature'.

⁵ Ibid., 50: 'In the quarter-century following Millet's death in 1875, peasant subjects enjoyed a widespread popularity never before equalled'.

⁶ G. Clausen, 'J. Bastien-Lepage and Modern Realism', *The Scottish Art Review*, vol. 1, 1888, 114.

⁷ S.A.C., 1905, ex. cat., Bagshawe family archives.

a revolutionary impact on the fishing industry in Britain'.⁸ This 'revolutionary impact' is not apparent in the paintings produced.

The contraction of fishing led to some taking other employment or moving elsewhere. In Runswick Bay this began earlier with men working in ironstone mines such as Grinkle and, perhaps, continuing to fish part time. The declining fortunes of Staithes and Runswick Bay can be contrasted with Newlyn. There they embraced modernity and warehouses were constructed which replaced cottages along the cliff. During the 1880s and 1890s there was an increase in mackerel and pilchard fishing. The fishing port expanded with the construction - from June 1884 - of the South Pier, which was 700 feet long and gave shelter from southerly gales. Between 1886 and 1894 further work was undertaken which gave greater protection to the fishing fleet.⁹ Much of this modernisation does not appear in the paintings. For example, S. Forbes' *A Fish Sale on a Cornish Beach* (**fig. 14**) was painted as these major changes were occurring, but he chose to portray a traditional fishing scene.

Nevertheless, faced with the expansion of the fishing industry, some of the original members of the artists' colony left as many of the quaint features, which had attracted them, disappeared. Garstin thought that:

It has all come too late, the colony in Newlyn is dispersing and some share of the blame must be taken by the new gallery [the Passmore Edwards Gallery opened in 1895]...It has seemingly led to a disintegration of the Newlynians...This is only a coincidence, but certainly we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that Newlyn has thinned lately-leaner by many good men and good painters.¹⁰

T. Cross also describes how, for some, Newlyn became less picturesque.¹¹ However, other artists came to stay, such as L. and H. Knight who moved there in 1907. The expansion of the fishing industry in Newlyn brought many changes.¹² Cullercoats, two miles from North Shields, was also seriously affected by the development of a harbour for steam-powered fishing craft at North Shields. Watson states: 'In a year or two it is probable that [North] Shields Harbour will no longer be picturesque in clustering masts and drying sails'.¹³

⁸ P. Frank, *Yorkshire Fisherfolk* (Chichester 2002), 19.

⁹ See Cross, 120.

¹⁰ Quoted in *Ibid.*, 127.

¹¹ Cross, 120: 'As Newlyn became more prosperous so new terraces and groups of houses began to appear in the upper part of the town, changing its appearance and losing forever that timeless quality that had attracted many of the artists'.

¹² Cross, 'Newlyn school (act. 1882-c.1900)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford 2004, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/64487>, [accessed 12 December 2007], 'By the turn of the century Newlyn had changed; the harbour had been enlarged and the fishing trade greatly expanded. The commercial development made it much less interesting to the artists, and many left'.

¹³ See A. Watson, 'After the Herring, II', *The Magazine of Art*, vol. V, 1882, 459.

Staithes and Runswick Bay were severely affected because steam-powered vessels could not operate from there as suitable harbour facilities were not available as they were at Whitby and Scarborough. As the industry modernised they were left behind, as the capital required to buy these vessels was not available locally. By 1914, only 93 people were earning their living as fishermen in Staithes. They had some success with crab fishing, but this only provided work for a few people. In the old fishing villages the existing layout did not allow for extensive new building and the physical structure was largely left untouched.¹⁴

The railway had a major impact and its physical presence, the steam and noise, were a constant reminder to artists of modern life. In Staithes the station was half a mile from the old fishing village. Runswick Bay did not have its own railway station; the nearest was Hinderwell, a mile away. The two communities, which had developed over centuries with their unique traditions, dialect, outlook and character, were now subjected to more outside influence.

The most striking example of the artists ignoring modernity was the viaduct in Staithes that carried the railway over Roxby beck. Constructed in 1883, it was a prominent sight, being approximately 790 feet long and 152 feet high. A train crossing the viaduct was a memorable sight (**fig. 90**), but they did not paint it. In the fishing village it could only be seen from a certain point, from the Cowbar side of Roxby beck. One example of a painting from whose viewpoint the viaduct could be seen, but was excluded, is *A North Sea Fishing Village* by Blandford Fletcher (**fig. 27**).

The artists also did not paint the railway, another modern development. In an article written about the opening of the railway there were no illustrations of the train or the railway track. Nor were there any illustrations of the Staithes station.¹⁵ In the early part of the twentieth century, cars were first seen in Staithes and the surrounding area, but these do not appear in any paintings.¹⁶ Artists could have condemned or celebrated modernity, but chose instead to ignore it and to present to the world images of a pre-industrial age.¹⁷

¹⁴ See the review of the first S. A. C. exhibition in the *W.G.*, 13. 9. 1901, 7.

¹⁵ *The Graphic*, September, 1884, 246, 253.

¹⁶ *W.G.*, 17.9.1909, 5: 'Staithes too, has been conquered by the motorist...I saw a big Newcastle car descend right down to the quay; and it afterwards climbed the steep road with a crowd of village children at its tail'.

¹⁷ See Herbert, 'City vs. Country', 44.

Were the paintings myth or reality? They were largely an idealised, romanticised view of life and many images were of communities frozen in time. Painters were seeking coastal idylls, and they were projecting myths in their paintings rather than reality as the fishing villages were undergoing rapid change. Most artists did not capture these major changes, the arduous life at sea or the physical and mental anguish of the fisherfolk faced with the constant threat of loss of life. In *The Last Coble* (fig. 81) and *Grief* (fig. 80) artists such as H. Knight, attempted to capture the grim reality of life in their paintings. The artists lived among the people so that they could say their paintings were authentic. Lübbren argues that: ‘...by the turn of the century most of these villages [artists' colonies] had ceased to be the timeless, pre-modern enclaves of peasant or fisherfolk mores that dominated artists' representations’.¹⁸

By the 1900s Staithes and Runswick Bay had ‘ceased to be pre-industrial enclaves’, but the villages were less affected by modern developments than other artists’ colonies. The artist and photographer, H. Wanless, describes in 1902 how Staithes had not been 'done', i.e. developed:

Almost totally unknown except to a few artists and still fewer amateur photographers, this Staithes exists now as it did in the old smuggling days...it is one of the few localities that have not yet been “done” and perhaps it is therein that lies its greatest charm.¹⁹

He is describing how little the villages had changed. In contrast, by 1890 many changes had occurred in Cullercoats and in Newlyn by 1895.

¹⁸ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 64

¹⁹ H. Wanless, ‘Staithes: A Fishing Village’, *W.G.*, 22. 8. 1902, 2.

Part A The Economic Context.

The Fishing Industry

In their study of Brittany, Orton and Pollock argue that, in order to understand the paintings, it is necessary to understand the conditions and cultural context in which the works were produced.²⁰ Similarly, in this study it is also considered important to examine the context in which the paintings were created.

In Britain, artists, writers and composers have used the landscape to help develop a national identity. The paintings of Staithes and Runswick Bay have contributed to how British people see themselves and, in imaging this area, painters touched the national psyche. Staithes was sometimes described as a former Danish settlement and thus could form a social location where the racial purity of local people could be stressed, as it had existed for centuries. The images of fisherfolk were appropriated as national symbols. There was a resonance as they were seen to possess many traits which people found attractive such as courage, strength and fortitude. In 1847, James Baker Pyne painted a view of Staithes, *Staithes-Fishing Town on the Yorkshire Coast* (1847 Government Art Collection). In this work fisherfolk are seen as small elements in the painting, whereas around forty years later they would have become the main subject.

Major changes were occurring in the two communities. Fishing was affected by the competition from steam-powered vessels, the railway had arrived, mining was becoming more important and tourism was now of greater significance.²¹ Only rarely are steam-powered fishing boats, miners and tourists seen in paintings. It was only later that tourists appeared in paintings, mostly in Runswick Bay. Artists depicted the shoreline in a certain way mediating the scene and excluding any aspects of modern life. This can be seen in three examples: *The Last Coble* by H. Knight (**fig. 81**), *The Fishing Fleet* by L. Knight (**fig. 79**), and Bagshawe's *The Lives o' Men* (**fig. 74**). Archetypes are presented in the paintings: for example, in *The Last Coble* the old fisherman looks sternly out to sea, the old widow looks like a symbol of death and the young boy is looking anxiously at the busy scene. In *The Fishing Fleet* a woman is

²⁰ F. Orton and G. Pollock, 'Les Données Bretonnantes: La Prairie de Répresentation', *Art History*, vol. III, no. 3, 1980, 321: 'In order to approach any single painting of Brittany we have to analyse a range of materials, networks of discourse which constitute both the conditions of representation in and against which that work was produced...'

²¹ Lübben, 'Toilers of the Sea', in Corbett, Holt and Russell, eds., *The Geographies of Englishness*, 31: 'Just as painters of agricultural labourers excluded steam threshers and telegraph poles from their canvases, so painters of fisherfolk nearly always banished steam trawlers, recently erected piers, the rail transport of fish (modernising forces within the fishing industry) and newly built hotels, pleasure yachts and urban bathers (the modernising impact of tourism) from their canvases'.

returning from seeing her husband off to sea. In the background many cobs are seen with their sails unfurled ready to go to sea. *The Lives o' Men* shows a young widow looking out to the sea that has claimed her husband. In these paintings, a timeless scene is presented with no aspect of modern life.

In Staithes local people were involved in deep sea and inshore fishing. The larger boats, yawls, were capable of staying at sea for weeks. Most boats used were cobs, which were involved in inshore fishing, only fishing near the shore for short periods. For centuries fishing had sustained both communities, but today only a few cobs remain, mainly engaged in crab and lobster fishing (**fig. 104**). The pattern of fishing was the same every year. Yawls usually started fishing in February, but this depended on the weather. They were stored over winter and when preparations were made for them to begin work, it was a busy time. Most fishing was by means of long lining, i.e. lines with a large number of hooks. Cod, haddock, skate and turbot were caught by this method and nets were mainly used to catch herrings. Herring fishing commenced in August, and from mid-September the Staithes yawls went to Great Yarmouth. They were based there until mid-November when they returned home. The yawls were then laid up, but the cobs continued to fish through the winter using lines.

The railway did not reach Staithes and Runswick Bay until 1883 whereas it had reached Whitby in 1836. Before the railway, the fisherfolk were faced with meeting the increased demand for fish, but they did not have the transport infrastructure to distribute it. Fish was transported by boat mainly to Hartlepool and Whitby or by carrier's wagon to Grosmont railway station, seven miles from Staithes. In the 1850s, trawling began to increase in popularity, which led to increasing friction between fishermen. A series of government reports provides information and an insight into the effect the decline of fishing had on local communities. The government reports were partly based on evidence from fishermen. They are one of the few sources of information from local people, as most references are from outside observers, such as journalists and writers of guidebooks.

In the 1863-6 Report on Sea Fishing, line fishermen complained of being driven from the better fishing grounds. The Commission visited Staithes on 30. 9. 1863 and took evidence.²² Trawling resulted in an expansion of herring fishing, which provided greater opportunities for

²² Report of the Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Sea Fisheries of England and Wales, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers (P. P.) 1866, XVII, qq. 3596, 5074-86, 5309.

all fishermen as a more sophisticated marketing infrastructure developed throughout the country.

From 1840 to 1880 there was general prosperity in Staithes. The national rail network provided a means of transporting fish to the rapidly expanding industrial cities. Fresh fish was now available at a reasonable price to people living in inland areas. But the increased demand led to over-fishing and a depletion of stocks as, with the exception of the restrictions on the size of crabs, there were no conservation measures. Another problem was the shortage of bait used for line fishing and this resulted in women having to spend a considerable time fetching this, sometimes travelling 10 miles to obtain it. Overall during this period, Staithes expanded its fishing activities while Runswick Bay's contracted.²³

From 1880 when more artists visited, they came to a community whose main industry was in slow decline.²⁴ Robinson argues that some fishing families moved to Whitby to be near the railway network.²⁵ The use of steam-powered vessels led to the development of large fishing ports such as Grimsby and Hull, which left Staithes and Runswick Bay marginalised as bases mainly for cobbles. The Whitby Custom House records show how many yawls were broken up and how many were designated 'not used for fishing'. Some were used for pleasure boat cruises in the summer, which shows the move from fishing to tourism. Yawls were also sold to other east coast ports.²⁶ See **Appendix 1**.

In 1876 there were no steam-powered fishing vessels in service on the Yorkshire coast, but by 1881 their numbers had increased rapidly. Steam-powered paddle tugs were modified for fishing and then steam-powered trawlers were built in increasing numbers. By 1900, most vessels fishing off the Yorkshire coast were steam-powered. Frank discusses the impact of these changes:

The trawl net was less discriminating, and it could be manipulated, thus giving man vastly superior advantage over his quarry. If to this is added steam-power, which, in the shape of railways, first created and opened up a truly *national* market for fish, and then, later, made possible the screw-propelled trawler, it becomes clear that fishing underwent several fundamental changes within a relatively short space of time.²⁷

²³ R. N.W. Robinson, *History of the Yorkshire Coast Fishing Industry* (Hull 1987), 65.

²⁴ Report on the Sea Fisheries of England and Wales by F. Buckland and S. Walpole, Inspectors of Fisheries for England and Wales and Commissioners for Sea Fisheries. P.P. 1879, XV1.

²⁵ Robinson, 65.

²⁶ Northallerton, N. Y. C. R. O., Ref. NG/RS/WH, Whitby Custom House, Register of Fishing Boats, 1869-1896.

²⁷ Frank, *Yorkshire Fisherfolk*, 19-20.

By 1878 there were numerous complaints from Staithes' fishermen about steam-powered paddle tugs.²⁸ These mainly worked in harbours and estuaries and operated close to the coast, thus affecting the normal fishing grounds of the Staithes' fisherfolk. The increasing resentment against trawlers led to an enquiry by the Inspectors of Fisheries for England and Wales, F. Buckland and S. Walpole, and a report of their findings was published in 1879. Their terms of reference were to investigate: '1) The use of the Trawl Net or Beam Trawl in the inland seas and territorial waters of England and Wales. 2) The use of the Seine Net or Ground Seine on the coasts of Cornwall or elsewhere. 3) The alleged destruction of fry and spawn of the sea fish, in the estuaries and in bays, by the above and other modes of sea fishing'.²⁹

On 22.10.1878, two commissioners heard evidence from George Verrill on behalf of Staithes' fisherfolk at Whitby. He spoke of the diminishing fishing stocks, stating that halibut was difficult to catch and skate was becoming scarcer. He described how, in the summer of 1877, steam-powered trawlers were fishing off Staithes and:

Took away the lines and the hooks. The line fishermen had to give up and go crabbing. There might be as many fish caught now as when I was a boy but there are three times the number of people catching them.³⁰

Verrill also argued that the fish stocks were decreasing because the trawlers were destroying the spawn and he thought that they should be kept around 20 miles from the coast. He spoke of the difficulties faced by line fishermen, describing how they now had to use more lines and had to increase the number of hooks on each line. One of the main complaints was the shortage of bait, which was due to a scarcity of mussels and this resulted in higher prices.

Verrill also complained about the trawlers damaging nets, particularly at night as they were often poorly lit. He stated his own nets were cut, and that he: '...took the number of the trawler but was frightened at the expense of prosecution'.³¹ There was also the threat, when fishing at night, of a steam-powered vessel colliding with a coble. There were some cases where they were cut in two and the occupants were drowned. Trawlers also adversely affected fisherfolk in Cullercoats.³² An article on Staithes in *The Times* stated: 'The steam trawlers they regard as bitter enemies', and quoted a fisherman as follows: 'They take more fish in two

²⁸ Report on Sea Fisheries in England and Wales. P.P., 1879, XVI.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² L. Wasserman, 'Some Fisher Folk', *The Art Journal*, 1887, 59: 'The fishermen are averse to appealing to the law. They find that the time wasted in all legal business makes it too costly a process for poor people'.

hours, than we take in twenty-four hours and they frighten away as many as they catch'.³³ The Commissioners concluded in their report that there should be a limit placed on fishing, but it was some years before conservation measures were introduced.

Hull, Grimsby and the Tyne ports developed because of good supplies of coal from nearby coalfields and the development of facilities to cope with larger steam-powered vessels. Villages such as Staithes could only offer basic facilities and did not have a constructed harbour until 1924.³⁴ As there were now fewer fish in the traditional fishing grounds, they had to go further out to sea. The continuing complaints about steam trawlers from inshore fishing centres, such as Staithes, led to the establishment of a Royal Commission on Trawling in 1883, which published its report in 1885. The Royal Commission took evidence from Staithes fishermen at the Town Hall, Scarborough, on 15.12.1883. Daniel Cole raised many points, some of which had previously been made in an earlier report.³⁵

Steam trawlers were blamed for disturbing fishing and spawning grounds and the fishermen in the yawls objected that they needed: '...more gear and much more bait, but we do not get half the fish'.³⁶ Whereas fishermen used to sail 30 miles from Staithes, they now had to travel 60 miles, but their catches were reduced. The greatest decrease in fish was in the late 1870s.³⁷ According to Daniel Cole, the first steam trawlers were seen in 1875.³⁸ Sometimes there were between 12 and 20 fishing off Staithes, some 12 miles out but others: '...so close inshore that I could have thrown a stone to them'. When asked how they wanted trawling to be regulated, Cole answered: '...the trawlers should go and catch fish with hooks and nets the same as we do'. He also complained of the effects of trawling on the fishermen's income, stating that he was now earning only half of what he was earning twenty years before. He also stated that: '...we have had to club money to pay expenses. There is not one of us but what is in debt this year'.³⁹

Cole was fishing in the previous winter [1882] '...and when I was done I was in debt all owing due to the steam trawlers. We had the first place in the North of England for catching

³³ *The Times*, 22. 9. 1885, 4.

³⁴ As early as 1846, in Ord's *The History and Antiquities of Cleveland*, 298-302, it was considered vital for Staithes to have harbour facilities.

³⁵ Report on Sea Fisheries in England and Wales, P.P., 1879, XV1.

³⁶ Royal Commission on Trawling, 1885, XVI, Minutes of Evidence, Q's. 9743 and 9744.

³⁷ Ibid., Q's. 9745-7.

³⁸ Ibid. Q's. 9750-1.

³⁹ Ibid., Q. 9772.

fish in the winter time, now it is like other places, there is nothing to catch'.⁴⁰ Cole confirmed that there were the same number of fishing boats in Staithes as 20 years previously i.e. 16 yawls and 43 cobs.⁴¹ Between 1890 and 1910 the number of boats, particularly yawls, declined.⁴² When asked what he was doing at that time, the report showed: '...he was doing nothing i.e. no fishing, he was working on shore mending his nets and making them ready to go out again'.⁴³ With fishing in decline, tourism brought a much-needed boost to the local economy and this explains why artists were made so welcome at this difficult time.

J. Verrill from Staithes told the Royal Commission he had been a fisherman all his life, but had earned enough to give it up and had been a shopkeeper for ten years. There was a shortage of fish, and fishermen now had to: '...shoot 20 or 30 lines [of hooks]. In my time we would only have shot 12 lines'. Men were not catching enough fish to cover expenses and to support their families.⁴⁴ Verrill wanted to ban the steam trawlers but not sailing smacks.⁴⁵ When asked how much the fishermen earned, he replied: 'Between £1 to £2 a week, many weeks they do not clear £1'. When asked how the fishermen paid their bills, Verrill replied that some shopkeepers gave credit; some fishermen repaid their debts, others did not. James Fell also gave evidence and stated that if: '...something is not done soon the German Ocean will be a dead ocean'.⁴⁶ This evidence shows the plight of the Staithes fishermen who, after decades of prosperity, had fallen on hard times. The Royal Commission, after detailed consideration, reached their conclusions.⁴⁷ It was now accepted that steam trawling was seriously affecting line fishermen in areas such as Staithes. It was recommended that restrictions should be placed on trawlers using 'Beam Trawl' or trawling nets in any of the territorial seas. The powers of the Sea Fisheries Inspectors were increased and they were ordered to collect annual statistics on fish catches.

By the early 1890s, steam-powered trawlers were, on average, earning three times as much as sailing vessels. *The Times* in 1885 stated that there were 120 cobs and yawls based in

⁴⁰ Royal Commission on Trawling, 1885, Q's. 9778-9781.

⁴¹ Ibid., Q. 9786.

⁴² Whitby Customs House, Vessel Registers.

⁴³ Royal Commission on Trawling, 1885, XV1, Minutes of Evidence, Q's. 9793-6.

⁴⁴ Ibid., Q's. 9802-9807.

⁴⁵ Ibid., Q. 9830.

⁴⁶ Ibid., Q's. 9851-9867.

⁴⁷ Ibid., Conclusion: 'There is no evidence that the use of the Trawl Net or Beam Trawl of the Seine Net or Ground Seine or any other mode of fishing involves the wasteful destruction of fish or spawn. There is no evidence that the supply of fish generally around the coasts of England and Wales is decreasing. That in those cases on which the supply is decreasing there is no evidence that the decrease is due to wasteful fishing or over fishing. That considerable injury is done by trawlers both to drift fishermen and to hook and line fishermen. That the injury has increased since the introduction of steam trawling'.

Staithes during the herring season, which ran from June to September. Fishing boats were attracted from Aberdeen, Penzance, Berwick on Tweed, Tynemouth, Sunderland, Lowestoft, Yarmouth and Grimsby. The area 30 miles off Staithes was reputed to be one of the best fishing grounds in the country. Visiting fishing craft also used Scarborough and Whitby as a base. During the herring season there was increased demand for fish gutters and packers, and these came from Staithes, whereas other fishing ports had to rely on outside help.⁴⁸

With steam-powered vessels catching considerably more fish, herring prices plummeted sometimes as low as 6d. for 100 compared with previous years when the price was 4 or 5 times that figure.⁴⁹ During the 1880s, herring fishing in Staithes and other Yorkshire ports declined as more boats came from other parts of the country. Competition was particularly strong from Scottish boats and there were many complaints about their working methods. For a time, Staithes' fishermen experimented with boats used on the Cornish coast, but they could not compete with the Scottish craft.⁵⁰ However, Canon G. Austen, who lived in Whitby, recalled that by 1905, the Cornish and Scottish boats had ceased to come to Whitby and preferred Great Yarmouth, which had better harbour facilities.⁵¹

By 1890, the yawls were turning from herring to line fishing.⁵² Many had paid for themselves over many years and were past the point of depreciation. Those who had turned from herring fishing to line fishing now found that yields were falling because of competition from steam trawlers. A Government report of 1885 found that half the fish caught by the trawlers were immature and not suitable for sale.⁵³

In 1890, the North East District Sea Fisheries Committee agreed a byelaw that banned trawling in inshore waters, but this came too late as, by this time, fish stocks were depleted. The strong opposition to steam trawlers can be seen in a newspaper article, which described their catch as: '...the mashed specimen of the sea that is raked up by the machines popularly known as trawlers'.⁵⁴ The decline of the fishing industry resulted in many local people becoming ironstone miners or workers in the Skinningrove Iron and Steel works, while others

⁴⁸ *The Times*, 22. 9. 1885, 4.

⁴⁹ Robinson, *The History of the Yorkshire Coast Fishing Industry*, 85.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁵¹ W. Austen, *George Austen: A Memoir* (London 1934), 37.

⁵² Whitby Custom House, Register of Fishing Boats, 1869-1896.

⁵³ Royal Commission on Trawling, 1885, XVI, Minutes of Evidence, xix.

⁵⁴ W. G., 2.1.1891, 3.

left the area to seek employment.⁵⁵ Some continued to fish part time, which provided food and supplemented their income. By 1900, it was estimated that one steam trawler was catching as many fish as was caught by six sailing vessels. The number of steam-powered vessels in 1890 was 338 and by 1899 it was 1116; meanwhile, first-class sailing vessels decreased from 2037 in 1893, to 1133 in 1899.⁵⁶ The average catch from 1868 to 1875 was 100 tons and, from 1878 to 1900 this had increased to 500 tons.⁵⁷

By 1914, the fishing industry was in serious decline and another government report expressed concern at the decreasing number of inshore fishermen in places such as Staithes, stating: 'We consider that the continued existence of a hardy race of inshore fishermen is of great importance to a great maritime nation and a great naval power'.⁵⁸ Concern was also expressed about the lack of sufficient inshore fishermen for the Royal Naval Reserve. There were still no powered boats in the village, which was owing to a lack of capital available for investment.⁵⁹

The decline in Staithes can be seen from the fact that in 1896 26,382 cwts. of fish were caught, but by 1909, this had dropped to 3,482 cwts. When asked why this had happened, a witness called by the North Eastern District Sea Fisheries Committee stated it was owing : '...to there not being good fishing. There has not been enough for the men to live on'.⁶⁰ Another reason put forward was that in places such as Staithes and Whitby, tourists were now providing income for the fishermen.⁶¹ Further evidence of the decline came from a North East Sea Fisheries Committee report in the *Whitby Gazette* in 1914 with a headline, 'Decrease of Inshore Fishing-Men Seeking Work Elsewhere'.⁶² This stated that in the last quarter, only 13 cobbles were working in Staithes compared with 26 in the previous year and that many fishermen had become miners.

⁵⁵ The Staithes School logbook, 8.5, 15.5, 1885, refers to boys leaving school as their families are leaving the area to seek work.

⁵⁶ Special Report from the Select Committee on the Sea Fisheries Bill, 1900, 287, VIII, 371.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 214.

⁵⁸ Report of the Departmental Committee on Inshore Fisheries, 1914, XXX, 569: 'In these circumstances we have no hesitation in saying that every endeavour should be made to arrest the falling off in numbers of this class of men. Some encouragement is needed at the hands of the state if they are to be preserved'.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, Appendix.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Appendix, 2623.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 2624, The North Eastern District Sea Fisheries Committee argued that: '...men take the summer visitors out boating and they make quite a lot of money that way, much more than they would do fishing. If they had to depend only on fishing I do not think they would have enough to live on all the year round'.

⁶² *W. G.*, 23.1.1914, 8.

The report also stated that, although the numbers employed in deep-sea fishing had increased at the expense of the inshore fishermen, few from Staithes had changed to deep-sea fishing. The reason given for this was that the inshore fishermen were their own masters and they did not respond well to employers.⁶³ The report also proposed that there should be more co-operation between fishermen, stating: 'The inshore fisherman is reticent, conservative, independent and distrustful of his neighbours'.⁶⁴ He had little knowledge of marketing and, in many cases, had insufficient landing facilities. Another major concern was the lack of technical education and Yorkshire, at this time, was lagging behind areas such as Cornwall.⁶⁵ It was proposed that there should be supplementary courses in schools and continuation classes on instruction in marine motors.⁶⁶ The government proposed a number of measures, but the outbreak of the First World War delayed the implementation of these.⁶⁷ Within a short period, fishing had undergone great changes.⁶⁸

The proceeds of the week's fishing were distributed on Saturday night at the 'reckoning', which usually took place in a public house. Money was laid on a table, the boat had one share to cover the costs of repairs and equipment, each of the owners of the boat also had a share, and other crew members received a wage. The 'reckoning' was sealed with a 'reckoning' cup passed around the table and sometimes children present would receive a 'reckoning' penny. The 'reckoning' was the subject of Hopwood's *Paying the Reckoning* (1897 not traced) which was priced at 30 gns. and was sold in an exhibition in London in 1897.⁶⁹

Up to 1840, Staithes had been a major centre of smuggling, but from this date this had largely ceased.⁷⁰ A small amount of smuggling continued between 1880 and 1914. Men who fished on the Dogger Bank could obtain contraband tobacco, cigars and spirits from Dutch boats.

⁶³ Report of the Departmental Committee on Inshore Fisheries, 1914, XXX, 2651-4.

⁶⁴ Ibid., Section 124.

⁶⁵ Ibid., Appendix XV.

⁶⁶ Ibid., Section 124.

⁶⁷ The first Staithes coble fitted with an engine was in 1923.

⁶⁸ Frank, *Yorkshire Fisherfolk*, 27: 'Trawling had created a fishing industry with its own socio-economic pyramid - a small group of owners (capitalists) at the top, and a large number of workers (wage earning proletarians) at the bottom'.

⁶⁹ London, F. A. S., Watercolour Drawings of Interiors and Markets in Normandy and Brittany by H. S. Hopwood, ex. cat., 1897.

⁷⁰ See Young, *A History of Whitby* (Whitby 1817), and for smuggling in Runswick Bay see Brymner, 'Village Life in Three Countries', 323-326.

There was great concern about the activities of the 'coupers' boats, which sold cheap drink. The authorities thought they encouraged drunkenness among the estimated 12,000 men fishing there.

How Yawls and Cobles were Portrayed

The yawl and the coble, particularly the coble, were featured in many paintings (**figs. 32-39**). The design of this boat has changed little in the last thousand years, and they are still in use today (**fig. 5**). The stern was flat and designed for local conditions; they also had a long, narrow rudder and a mast from which a lugsail was hung. They were similar to boats used in other parts of the east coast of England, such as Cullercoats, where they also featured in many paintings.

They were mainly built in Staithes and varied in weight from 1 1/2 tons to 10 tons, and in length from 17 to 30 feet and usually had a crew of two to four.⁷¹ Some of the larger cobles were called 'mules' as they contained elements of design from the coble and the yawl. They were designed for the difficult conditions of the North Sea and to be launched from open beaches as in Staithes and Runswick Bay. According to Bagshawe, they took many years to master.⁷² He has been recognised for his contribution to English maritime art by his depiction of fishing boats, and, in particular, of the coble.⁷³

Bagshawe and Dade also wrote articles on fishing boats which were based on their experiences at sea.⁷⁴ Most artists painted on land but these artists and others such as Hopwood and Mason painted at sea. Some examples of Dade's sketches are: *Fishing Coble Getting Underway* (**fig. 37**), *Fishing Coble Going off in a Smart Breeze* (**fig. 38**), and *Fishing Cobles* (**fig. 39**).⁷⁵ *Launching the Cobles at Staithes* (**fig. 40**) by Mason shows a

⁷¹ Whitby Custom House, Register of Fishing Boats, 1869-1896.

⁷² Bagshawe, 'Fishermen of the North East Coast', *The Field*, vol. CXIII, 27. 2. 1909, 378: 'I have sailed in many an open boat round our coasts, but in no case have I met such an easy and lightsome sailor as the coble. There is no butting and hammering into a sea; the sharp bow cleaves its way with a easy shearing of the blue water, the heavy tiller throbs with the pressure on the rudder deep beneath her, which enables her to "weather out" in noble fashion'.

⁷³ E. H. Archibald, *A Dictionary of Sea Painters* (Woodbridge 1982), 69: 'He had life-long experience of small boats and drew them with great skill; delineation of the Yorkshire coble, accounted a difficult subject, was particularly good'.

⁷⁴ J. Bagshawe, 'Fishermen of the North East' *The Field*, vol. CXIII, 375-382; E. Dade, 'The Old Yorkshire Yawls', *Mariner's Mirror*, 1933, 181- 195; 'The Cobles', *Mariner's Mirror*, 1934, 199-207.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

coble just launched from the beach. The fishermen are rowing from the shore and - when further out to sea - would unfurl their sail. On the right another coble is seen with fishermen rowing vigorously. After fishing and in times of bad weather, cobbles, which could not be moored in Roxby beck, were hauled on to Seaton Garth. This scene was portrayed in H. Knight's *The Last Coble* (**fig. 81**). Human labour was used for this arduous task; the oars and other pieces of wood were greased and placed under the coble to ensure easier movement (**fig. 7**). L. Knight assisted in hauling cobbles ashore.⁷⁶ She also describes how other artists helped in this task.⁷⁷ This is a distinctive scene in Staithes because there was no harbour.

The yawl was also known as a 'five man boat' because five men usually had shares in it (**fig. 6**). They do not feature in many paintings as they were often at sea for long periods.⁷⁸ They cost between £600 and £700 and were owned by several families and handed down from generation to generation. An example of a Staithes yawl was the 'Rose of England', which weighed 37 tons, was 50 feet long and had a crew of 7 men and 2 boys. The yawls carried one or two cobbles on their deck. They carried 45 to 60 nets, each costing £2 10s. and - with equipment - each yawl represented a capital investment of around £1,000 at a time when a week's wage for a local man was £1 to £2.

Dade produced many sketches of yawls at sea including: *Yawls Carrying on to Get to Market with their Fish* (**fig. 32**) and *Yawls Running for Shelter in a Gale* (**fig. 33**). His paintings are highly regarded for their technical accuracy, which came from first-hand experience of the boats and also from his skill as a model maker. Dade also produced sketches of life on board the yawls: *The Weary Tramp Round and Round the Capstan* (**fig. 34**) and *The Cabin of a Yawl* (**fig. 35**). *The Artist at Work* (**fig. 36**) shows a rare portrayal of an artist painting on board a fishing boat.⁷⁹

The yawls were clinker built and had three masts fitted with lugsails. Usually the crews were from families who owned the yawls, and boys, from an early age, learned the rudiments of seamanship. Fishing was labour-intensive and children helped in the processes associated with it. By 1914 only one yawl was left in Staithes.⁸⁰ See **Appendix 1**.

⁷⁶ See Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 77.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 109.

⁷⁸ *The Times*, 22. 9.1885, 4.

⁷⁹ E. Dade, *Sail and Oar*.

⁸⁰ Report of Departmental Committee on Inshore Fisheries, 1914, XXX, 569, Appendix V.

Fishing was a physically arduous job and one of the most dangerous occupations as, indeed, it still is. The gravestones at Hinderwell Parish Church where most fishermen were buried bear witness to the heavy loss of life at sea. Records of assistance received from the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners Royal Benevolent Society also show the impact the loss of fishermen had on their families and on the community.⁸¹ The Staithes School logbook contains details of fishing tragedies, as - if an accident occurred - attendance was affected.⁸²

Fishing was a way of life with long working hours and poor conditions. This was not questioned, for that was the only life most people knew. Before official weather forecasts, fishermen relied on their judgement before setting out to sea. The weather and the movement of fish governed the pattern of their working life. There were no regular hours of work as setting out to sea depended on the tides. There was no fishing on Sunday or on a religious festival as it was considered bad luck. Their main holiday was the annual Staithes Fair week in June. There were no trade unions, no social security, and no certainty of earning a regular wage; this resulted in communities whose people were proud, independent and self-sufficient.

Their homes were also workshops where much of the preparatory work for fishing was undertaken. Here nets were mended and the hooks on the long lines were cleaned and rebaited and, as some lines had 600 hooks, this was a time-consuming task. Outhouses were used for storing fishing equipment and some homes had their own smokehouses. The working clothes were also dried in the kitchen or living room. Most people did not retire from fishing but kept working until too frail to do so.

Women's Work in the Fishing Industry

Men went to sea but the women stayed on shore and without their assistance men would not be able to fish. They played a crucial role, particularly in obtaining bait and cleaning and baiting the long lines. They also mended nets, prepared fish for market by filleting and packing it in salt, and launched and hauled cobbles ashore (**fig. 7**). Some women also carried heavy baskets of fish and crabs to outlying villages to sell to local people, which brought a better price than could be obtained by selling through a dealer.⁸³ The best quality fish was sent

⁸¹ Chichester, The Annual Reports and Quarterly Statements of the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Royal Benevolent Society.

⁸² The Staithes School logbook, 23.1.1888: 'A boy named Francis James Doughty, one of the brightest and most intelligent boys in the school, was drowned on Saturday together with his father and uncle'.

⁸³ For more information see Frank, 'Women's Work in the Yorkshire Inshore Fishing Industry', *Oral History*, vol. IV, 1976, 57-72.

to the market and the rest was sold locally. Women also carried water from the beck and were responsible for fetching bread from the communal bakehouses, as very few houses had ovens. Women also looked after the house and cared for the children. In her autobiography, L. Knight sums up a 22-year-old woman's plight.⁸⁴

In these villages, women artists such as Knight were tackling real life subjects. They were free to pursue their interests unhindered by the pressures of middle-class society. The role of women was portrayed from 'skeining' mussels [taking the mussel from its shell], carrying 'skeels' [half barrels] from the beck, carrying bait and driftwood, and carrying the catch away from the beach (**figs. 58, 74, 75, 77**).

Any leisure time women had was taken up in knitting Guernseys, socks and mittens. With a large family and with the necessity of storing fishing equipment, there was not much space or privacy.⁸⁵ The work was arduous and they accepted it as their lot in life, but by 1914 the attitude of some women was changing. In a government report it was stated: '...as was freely asserted in some districts, the women folk may evince a growing distaste for the hard work which falls to the lot of the fisherman's wife'.⁸⁶

Collecting bait, mainly mussels and limpets, was a popular subject with artists and photographers (**figs. 77, 78**). Increasingly, there were problems of supply and a Staithes fisherman, Verrill, stated this in evidence to a government enquiry.⁸⁷ The demand was such that prices increased: '...the bait at Staithes is so expensive that it does not pay to go out fishing'.⁸⁸ This resulted in the use of limpets, 'flithers' in the local dialect, for baiting lines. Women were known locally as 'flither pickers' and collected them dressed in their everyday clothes. Rubberised boots were not yet in use and women walked for miles carrying heavy baskets of limpets on their heads.

⁸⁴ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 101.

⁸⁵ See Erichsen, 'A North Country Fishing Town', 462- 69. Brymner, 'Village Life in Three Countries', 321: 'It is wonderful what a weight these women can carry on their heads without an effort.' Women carried the coal, which was usually brought to the beach in boats and also carried baskets of bait.

⁸⁶ Report of the Departmental Committee on Inshore Fisheries, 1914, Sec. 27. This made tourism more attractive or increased the motivation for the family to move away for work, which offered an easier life.

⁸⁷ Report on the Sea Fisheries of England and Wales, P.P., 1879, XVI: '...the gear of the hook and line fishermen now is twice the length, and has twice as many hooks as formerly. The lines used to be 60 fathoms per "piece", and four pieces made a line. They now have 8 pieces of 60 fathoms each. There used to be 16 score hooks, now they have 28 score hooks. They do not catch so many fish as they used to'.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

The artists depicted the 'flither pickers' and one example is I. Thompson's *Fisher Folk* (**fig. 77**). Two women, possibly a mother and her daughter, are returning along the shore in Staithes. Newton describes this painting as about collecting driftwood, which is only partially true.⁸⁹ It is possible that, because of the lack of bait, one woman has collected driftwood. The woman on the left carries a 'skeel' on her head and a basket, containing bait, in her right hand. The women dominate the painting: they are not shy but tough, strong women whose gaze is confrontational. The muted palette conveys the grey colouring of the shoreline. Thompson conveys the colours of the seashore with the foaming sea and grey overcast skies in the background.

Staithes women were renowned for their physical strength and Thompson has effectively captured this. This painting also shows the grit and determination of these women who were capable of carrying heavy loads along the beach that could be treacherous because of slippery rocks. The painting is described in a newspaper review:

Miss Isa Thompson, particularly, exhibits a firmness in her pictures which might be envied by many of her brethren of the brush [and this is] a successful attempt to deal with a rather unpromising subject, the return of two fisherwomen from the shore. They are walking across wet, slippery rocks. It is a sombre but effective piece of work.⁹⁰

Photographers, as well as painters, were also producing images of the communities and their people. The Whitby-based photographer, F. M. Sutcliffe, recorded the women's work in a range of photographs and described their hard toil.⁹¹ (**fig. 78**). In his composition no specific site is conveyed and the powerful presence of the women in Thompson's painting is not so evident. The photograph shows a profile view of the women's faces rather than the confrontational stance of the two women in Thompson's painting. The women are reflected in the mirror-like sands against the backdrop of the grey sea. Sutcliffe was influenced by Millet and, in the painstaking work of these women and their oneness with the local environment, there are echoes of Millet's *Gleaners* (1857 Musée d'Orsay, Paris). As limpets became scarcer women had to travel as far as Robin Hood's Bay, seventeen miles away, to collect them. They stayed overnight in Whitby and sent them by carrier's cart to Staithes; the opening of the

⁸⁹ Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Laing Art Gallery, *Cullercoats: A North-East Artists' Colony*, ex. cat., Newton, 2004, 102.

⁹⁰ *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, 10. 2. 1893, 4.

⁹¹ *Amateur Photographer*, 24. 7. 1896, 68: 'The amount of hard work these fishermen's wives and daughters undertake is marvellous. Let the photographer follow them when out flither picking on the rocks, he will soon be wet through up to the waist'.

railway made it easier for them.⁹² In her autobiography, L. Knight describes the difficult work of the bait gatherers.⁹³

When the women returned they 'skeined' the limpets or mussels, which were then stored in jars. This time-consuming and repetitive task was also featured in paintings. One example is *Industry* (**fig. 58**) by Hopwood. There is a similar painting *The Busy Hour* (1900 Private Collection), by R. H. Hill, and it is possible the same model for the old woman was used. *Industry* was exhibited at the R. A. and was purchased for the nation by the Chantrey Bequest for £150. Hopwood was fortunate as it was only his second exhibit at the R. A.

A review praises *Industry* and also emphasises that this and another painting were completed in Runswick.

Mr. H. Hopwood, who has also done much good work in Runswick, is represented by two very large watercolours, one of which 'Industry' forms one of the principal features in the watercolour room. In a dark old-fashioned cottage a fisherwife is busy preparing bait [mussels] whilst a young lad is struggling over some scholastic work on a slate. The whole arrangement forcibly carries out the title of the picture and is full of sympathy, touched with sadness. This is a gallery picture and we hope that Mr. Hopwood will not be long in finding that his picture has been secured by some public institution.⁹⁴

It shows the dark cottage interior where an old woman and a child dominate the scene. The painting communicates dedicated hard work, peace, calm and domesticity, which would appeal to patrons. The Dutch influence, which is not mentioned in the newspaper review, can be seen with the shaft of light, which comes through the window on the left and illuminates the scene. Later, H. and L. Knight used the same techniques in their paintings of cottage interiors. Further light is provided on the right by an open fire. The old woman, sitting with her back to the window, is dressed in black with a black bonnet, a sign that she is a widow. her lap is a bowl of mussels which she is 'skeining' and care had to be taken as the hooks were sharp and could become embedded in fingers. The hooks had to be baited in a precise way or, when the lines were 'shot' [i.e. put into the sea], they could injure the fishermen and many bore the scars of having fishing hooks in their faces. This is a pre-modern image and shows the co-operative effort involved. As fish became more difficult to catch, more lines had to be 'baited' and this was a common scene in the village.

The child, next to the woman, has a slate in his hand and is working at his lessons. The painting captures the atmosphere of the cottage interior and shows the concentration on the

⁹² Frank, 'Women's Work', 64.

⁹³ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 80.

⁹⁴ W. G., 4. 5. 1894, 3.

woman's face as she undertakes this repetitive task. It contrasts youth with age, a popular theme at this time. It also shows two worlds, the old woman typifying tradition and the boy, education and progress. A 1904 F. A. S. exhibition catalogue states that Hopwood's work is: 'Influenced by the work of Millet, and still more by that of Israëls and his Dutch contemporaries, he started producing small pictures and watercolours of low toned interiors, and by these he has since been mainly known'.⁹⁵

When the boats returned, women collected the lines which were coiled round a 'skep', an oval shaped wickerwork basket. These were carried on the head, which was protected with a 'raith' [wreath], a circle of twisted cloth. They next cleaned the lines of seaweed and unused bait known as 'caving' and also replaced missing hooks. Women also undertook other tasks such as building work, carrying the stones, mortar and wood on their heads. When old enough, children helped in a variety of household chores and in other work associated with fishing. The Staithes School logbooks show how many times children were kept away from school to help with these chores.⁹⁶

Ancillary Trades Dependent on Fishing

The fishing industry supported a range of ancillary trades. Most cobsles were built at Cole's Boatyard in Staithes or at Whitby, and were constructed according to the owner's specification, costing around £20 in 1900. From the 1850s to 1870s, there was a steady demand for cobsles.⁹⁷ There is only one sketch of a coble being constructed and Dade's skill and detailed knowledge of these boats can be seen in this work ⁹⁸ (**fig. 92**). The yawls in Staithes were usually built in Scarborough or Whitby. Locally produced nets were gradually replaced by factory-made nets, which cost 50 to 55 shillings each. The fishermen disliked these because they thought '...anyone who has the means can fit out a smack and man it with chimney sweepers and scavengers who cast the nets into the water and let the fish catch

⁹⁵ London, F. A. S., *British Watercolour Art*, ex. cat., M. B. Huish, 1904, 138.

⁹⁶ Staithes School logbooks, 29. 4. 1881: 'Very small attendance this week and for several weeks past, the weather being finer children are taken to help their parents in the garden which is very backward from the long continuation of severe weather.' 14.11.1890: 'Attendance has fallen off. About a dozen of the boys sent for are reported to be gathering bait'. 23.10. 1891: 'The attendance has been very irregular this week. They make the excuse that they have to bait the fishing lines.' 20.10.1892: 'Winter line fishing has commenced and the children are kept from school to bait'.

⁹⁷ Whitby Custom House, Register of Fishing Boats, 1869-1896.

⁹⁸ Dade, 'The Cobsles', 199-207.

themselves'.⁹⁹ The sails were made and repaired in the village, as were hooks and rope. Generally, the fishermen did not market the fish themselves but sold their catch to merchants.

The artists were selective in what was painted and excluded certain aspects of the fishing industry and ancillary trades. For example, there are no paintings of the carriers, who transported the fish, coopers, the curing process or of women hawking fish door to door. Coopers made barrels in which fish was transported, and the preparation and curing of fish also provided employment. Cod liver oil was also processed in the village and this was a particularly noxious activity. The oil was used for a variety of purposes including lamp oil.¹⁰⁰ There are no paintings of this work.

The money generated by the fishing industry supported several public houses in Staithes: The Royal George, The White Horse, The Station Hotel, The Cod and Lobster, The Shoulder of Mutton, The Black Lion and The Golden Lion. Runswick Bay had one public house in the village, The Royal Hotel. Other businesses in a trade directory of 1890 list: shoemaker, dressmaker, joiner, tailor, grocer, baker, chemist, blacksmith and draper.¹⁰¹ Shops provided a range of services: for example, shoemakers who made sea boots and shoes. Sea boots were made of leather and in the 1880s cost 21s., a week's income for some fishermen.

Sometimes, depending on the fortunes of fishing, families helped out on local farms at harvest time and with other activities. The Staithes School logbooks record instances where children were kept away from school to assist with farm work.¹⁰² Jackson married Carrie Hodgson, a local farmer's daughter in Whitby on 13.9.1887. This allowed him access to local farms and some paintings feature agricultural activities but, as with fishing, no aspects of modernity were shown.¹⁰³

When fishing declined, fishermen worked in the ironstone mines and at the Skinningrove ironworks, which opened in 1874. In 1910, a steel producing plant began operating and this

⁹⁹ *The Times*, 22.9.1885, 4.

¹⁰⁰ J. Howard, *Master Mariner Extraordinary: The Life and Times of Captain Edward Theaker, 1776-1865* (Hull 1995), 9.

¹⁰¹ Bulmer's Trade Directory (Leeds 1890).

¹⁰² Staithes School logbooks: 5.10. 1891: '2 or 3 boys still absent, harvesting', and 16.10. 1891: 'The attendance has been irregular this week. This irregularity is owing principally to the taking up of potatoes'.

¹⁰³ This is discussed in Chapter 3.

provided further employment.¹⁰⁴ There are some paintings of farm work but none of ironstone miners, the iron and steel works or the people working there. Staithes and Runswick Bay were situated in the Cleveland ironstone mining area. By 1885, this area had 40 coal mines and 10,000 miners producing 6 million tons of ironstone, approximately one third of the total national production. As early as 1858, miners were a part of everyday life in Staithes, as W. White observed.¹⁰⁵ There were no mines in the villages, but 350 men and boys worked at the ironstone mines at Port Mulgrave nearby. In the 1870s, Rev. J. C. Atkinson, a writer, stated that: 'Besides the miners, a good many of the fishermen of the neighbourhood are employed during the winter season in the mines and other works at the harbour'.¹⁰⁶

In 1875, C. Palmer, M.P. opened a mine at Grinkle, which provided many jobs. The mine was in existence until 1934. One of the main obstacles to expanding mining in this area was the difficulty of transporting the ironstone. To overcome this problem, Palmer invested £40,000 to construct a harbour at Port Mulgrave, which could offer safe anchorage. He connected the Grinkle Mine to Port Mulgrave by means of a narrow-gauge railway, which was expensive, as several tunnels were constructed. Three bridges were also built to cross Roxby beck.¹⁰⁷

There were ironstone mines at Loftus and Skinningrove, four and five miles respectively from Staithes. The Skinningrove mine had a relatively short life but the Loftus mine, which opened in 1865, was in operation until 1958.¹⁰⁸ In 1903, the Skinningrove Iron Company developed drift mines near Boulby Cliff, close to Staithes, to provide ironstone for the blast furnaces. The mines were open until 1934 and the miners were housed in huts covered with corrugated sheets, the site being known locally as 'tin city'.¹⁰⁹ Staithes experienced an influx of miners who were housed in a row of cottages at Cowbar; many were tin miners who had moved north when mining in Cornwall was depressed (**Map 2**). With the development of the railways, the Cleveland iron industry expanded and, from 1873 to 1914, produced an average of 5 million tons a year. By the early 1900s, miners made up a large part of the population of Staithes but there are no paintings of them.

¹⁰⁴ For more information, see W. G. Willis, *Skinningrove Iron Company, 1880-1968* (York 1969).

¹⁰⁵ White, *A Month in Yorkshire* (London 1858), 155: '...now and then a few sturdy fellows stride past, yellow from head to foot with a thick ochre-like dust. They came from the ironstone diggings beyond Penny Nab - the southern bluff'.

¹⁰⁶ Atkinson, *The History of Cleveland* (Barrow in Furness 1872-77), 227.

¹⁰⁷ Northallerton, N. Y. C. R. O., ref., ZMP, Charles Palmer records.

¹⁰⁸ J. S. Owen, *Cleveland Ironstone Mining* (Middlesbrough 1986), 28.

¹⁰⁹ S. K. Chapman, *A Gazetteer of Cleveland Ironstone Mines* (Guisborough 1976).

L. Knight in *Dressing the Children* (**fig. 41**) did use a Staithes miner's family as models, but this is not communicated in the painting. She describes how she went to a miner's cottage at Cowbar Hill and was upset by what she saw.¹¹⁰ The poverty was because of the miner's illness rather than lack of work available locally. In her autobiography Laura Knight refers to the changes in the community as people left fishing for work in the mines or the ironworks at Skinningrove.¹¹¹

Alum was widely used in tanning and dyeing, and the industry was in existence from the middle of the seventeenth century to the early 1870s, when the invention of a synthetic dye led to its demise. Alum was previously worked at Boulby near Staithes, at Kettleness near Runswick Bay, and at Sandsend. The wealth generated by the alum industry was invested in the local fishing industry.¹¹² A few people were involved in mining jet out of the cliffs along the coast from Staithes and Runswick Bay. Jet is a hard, black mineral, which has been used for jewellery since the Bronze Age. Drift mines were cut into the cliffs to extract the jet, but this was not without risk and several fatalities occurred.¹¹³ It was also collected from the beach. From the beginning of the nineteenth century a jet trade was established at Whitby.

Increasingly, tourism provided work and contributed to the local economy. The railway resulted in increasing numbers of visitors; some stayed for a period of time, but most came for the day, mainly on Sunday.¹¹⁴ From 1900 to 1914, more people became involved in tourism by providing accommodation, opening shops or by taking visitors on trips to sea in boats formerly used for fishing.¹¹⁵ For centuries, men from the north Yorkshire coast have played an important role in the merchant navy and this is particularly true of Staithes and Runswick Bay. Some became master mariners or held other positions of responsibility.¹¹⁶ In a local trade directory for 1890, five people are described as master mariners in Staithes and Runswick and a further three in Hinderwell.¹¹⁷

Before 1883, Grosmont was the most accessible railway station. Earlier there was considerable pressure for a railway connection to Staithes and, in 1858, a petition was sent to

¹¹⁰ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 145.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 107.

¹¹² For more information on the Alum Industry, see R. Turton, *The Alum Farm* (Whitby 1938); R.P. Hastings, *Alum Mining: Essays in North Riding History* (Northallerton 1981).

¹¹³ W.G., 25.2. 1860, 4 'Staithes Fatal Accident' and 1. 2. 1862, 4, 'Runswick Man Killed'.

¹¹⁴ National Archives, British Transport Historical Records, RAIL, North Eastern Railway, Whitby, Middlesbrough and Redcar Railway, Weekly Traffic Receipts, 1884-1914.

¹¹⁵ Whitby Custom House, Register of Fishing Boats, 1869-1896.

¹¹⁶ National Archives, Census 1881 and 1891.

¹¹⁷ *Bulmer's Trade Directory*, 1890.

the railway companies. Local fishermen stressed the difficulties they faced in transporting fish by horse and cart over poor roads. It was also stated that they had to take their catches by sea to Whitby, Scarborough and Hartlepool.¹¹⁸

The line opened in December 1883, over 2 years behind schedule. This was due to several factors: some work by a previous contractor was of a poor standard and there were also difficulties in constructing tunnels and bridges.¹¹⁹ The railway station in Staithes, with a warehouse and a crane, was designed to cope with transporting fish. Several times a week a special fish train left at 5.15 p.m. and connected with the main line to London at Darlington.¹²⁰ The railway also provided transport for local people who worked in the iron works at Skinningrove and the ironstone mines at Loftus. There was also easy access to Whitby where work as domestic staff was available for young women during the summer season.¹²¹

Part A was concerned with the economic context in which the paintings were produced. Artists and photographers attempted to capture aspects of the distinctive local culture. Fisherfolk were a part of this and the boats they used and the different roles of men and women were examined. Using government reports and other sources, it has been possible to demonstrate that fishing was in serious decline, but this and the problems faced by local people do not register in the paintings. As the industry declined, fisherfolk sought employment in the ironstone mines and the local iron and steel works. Others became involved in tourism as they saw artists and other visitors as a means of replacing income lost from fishing. The railway overcame the village's isolation and provided transport for fish and allowed access for visitors. The artists avoided all aspects of modernity and did not paint the railway, miners or tourists as patrons were only interested in pre-modern images. Part B now looks at the social context in which the paintings were produced.

¹¹⁸ *Stockton and Hartlepool Mercury*, 27.2. 1858, 5.

¹¹⁹ K.. Hoole, *Railways in Cleveland* (Nelson, Lancashire 1970), 40-44.

¹²⁰ National Archives, The North Eastern Railway, Weekly Traffic Receipts, 1884-1914.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

Part B The Social Context.

Part B looks at the social context in which the paintings were produced. When artists visited in the early 1880s, they came to close-knit, isolated communities, which were slowly changing after the opening of the railway. In both villages the population fell from 1881 to 1901, but had increased by 1911. The parish of Hinderwell, which included Staithes and Runswick Bay, had a population of 2467 in 1881, 2021 in 1891, 1937 in 1901 and 2491 in 1911.¹²² The marked decline in population from 1881 to 1901 was mainly due to the contraction of the fishing industry.

In Staithes several families, such as the Coles and Verrills, dominated the fishing industry: the 1891 census lists 57 Coles and 90 Verrills.¹²³ There were family feuds, but people knew they had to rely on each other for help when an emergency occurred. In both villages most inhabitants still lived by the sea, but from 1900 in Staithes, the 'Lane End' area near to the Middlesbrough to Whitby road was developed (**Map 2**). Retired mariners and fishermen built houses there, finding the cottages in the old village by the sea too cramped and lacking in amenities. In Runswick Bay, houses were built at the 'Bank Top' as it was difficult to build in the cramped conditions of the village.

The Marquis of Normanby and C. Palmer were the major local landowners. When Palmer acquired the Seaton estate from Lord Normanby in 1869, he bought the freehold of Staithes and villagers paid him an annual ground rent.¹²⁴ Most houses in Staithes were small and were built from local sandstone or brick. Previously, many were thatched but later, red pantiles were used and these were a distinctive local feature seen in many paintings. Some houses on the seafront were liable to be flooded in stormy weather, as Erichsen observed.¹²⁵ Homes usually consisted of a living room, a kitchen and in some cases a parlour, and the number of bedrooms was limited.

The state of health and sanitation was an important factor in determining where the artists painted. They were escaping from urban centres to what they thought were healthier places.

¹²² National Archives, Census 1881-1911.

¹²³ National Archives, Census 1891.

¹²⁴ N. Y. C. R. O., ref., ZMP, Charles Palmer records.

¹²⁵ Erichsen, 'A North Country Fishing Town', 465: 'When a storm is coming they pack up their dearer household goods, lock the doors and retreat to higher ground.. But they are not always quick enough to escape the rising waters; and one hears many a tale of hurried flight and real danger'.

Archival evidence shows why the artists largely avoided Staithes until changes were made to the sewage system and water supply.¹²⁶ Living conditions were often cramped with some houses containing ten people and, because of this overcrowding, poor water and basic sanitation, disease spread quickly.¹²⁷ The actual conditions of overcrowding and the insanitary conditions are not shown in the interior scenes painted.

In Staithes the water taken from Roxby beck was suspected of causing many infections. The minutes of the Hinderwell Local Board of Health show the concern over the purity of this water.¹²⁸ Dr. J. Laverick was appointed the Medical Officer of Health for the local district on 1.6.1881 and he pressed for changes, which eventually brought many health improvements.¹²⁹ At a meeting of the Hinderwell Local Board of Health on 5.10.1881, there was concern about: a '...horse decaying by a stream in Roxby'.¹³⁰ As this stream fed into the beck that provided the drinking water for Staithes, it can be seen how easily water could become polluted. The Board of Health was required to take action on providing an adequate water supply for Staithes under the Public Health Act of 1875. However, eight years later, the Cleveland Water Company in the annual report of 2.3.1883, was criticised for its failure to act on this matter. Dr. Laverick linked the high infant mortality rate in Staithes to the poor quality of the water supply and also linked the death of 69 people in two epidemics to this.¹³¹

Despite continued pressure from the Local Board of Health, a safe water supply was not installed in Staithes until 1892 when taps were placed in accessible areas such as Barrass Square.¹³² Some women still continued to fetch water from the beck in 'skeels' on their heads and they feature in some paintings (**fig. 77**). Despite the health risks, some local observers thought these women a picturesque sight. J. Hawell, the Vicar of Ingleby Greenhow, a nearby parish, writing in 1896 was critical of the introduction of piped water.¹³³ The water supply in

¹²⁶ On a much larger scale Joseph Bazalgette, working for the Metropolitan Board of Works, between 1858-1865, constructed a sewage disposal system for London, which helped to prevent disease and made the city a healthier place to live in. See S. Halliday, *The Great Stink of London: Sir Joseph Bazalgette and the Cleansing of the Victorian Metropolis* (London 1999).

¹²⁷ National Archives, 1891, Census.

¹²⁸ N. Y. C.R. O., ref. DC/HIN, Minute Book, Hinderwell Local Board of Health, 1880-1885.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 1. 6. 1881.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.10.1881.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 2.3.1883.

¹³² Minute Book, Hinderwell Local Board of Health, 1890-95.

¹³³ Quoted in R. Lidster, *Railway Posters of the Yorkshire Coast* (Nelson 1985), 39: 'In 1896 the Rev. John Hawell, Vicar of Ingleby Greenhow, wrote about Staithes: "...until quite recently it was a pleasant sight to see the procession of fisherwives bringing home their water of an evening with their "skeels" gracefully placed on their heads, but we are given to understand that the District Council has largely disestablished these picturesque processions by bringing the people piped-water to their dwellings. The want of sanitation, however does not appear to affect the fishing colony. There is little or no disease in the district, and the mortality, save among infants, where it is somewhat heavy, can show favourably with that of any town in England or Scotland".

Runswick Bay was obtained from two springs situated either side of the village.

Sanitary arrangements in Staithes were poor and a journalist, who visited in 1872, observed that the only drains were those of 'open alleys'. He also commented on the inadequate supply of safe water, but despite this, concluded that: '...the inhabitants are exceedingly healthy and longlived'.¹³⁴ In the annual report of the Hinderwell Urban Sanitary Authority held on 2.11.1881, Dr. Laverick stated: 'The sanitary state of Staithes is very unsatisfactory, Church Street being in a disgraceful state and the landing at the steps behind the Post Office is in a dirty state'.¹³⁵ Some work was undertaken on drains but the disposal of sewage was still a problem. There were many complaints about middens because the human excrement was deposited on the beach and then removed to local farms. There were other complaints about the dumping of fish waste and the nuisance from a tannery.

Further evidence of the poor sanitary arrangements in Staithes came from *The Times* journalist who visited in September 1885.¹³⁶ He described the conditions when it rained and advised readers not to visit in warm weather.¹³⁷ The concerns of the local Medical Officer of Health and the description in *The Times* show that Staithes may not have been an attractive place for artists and other visitors until piped water was provided and sewers were installed in the 1890s. Also, with the contraction of the fishing industry at this time, the source of other nuisances, such as fish waste, would have diminished in the village.

The 1870 Education Act established School Boards and children were required to attend school. There was no school at Runswick Bay and children had to walk to Hinderwell. A journalist, who visited Staithes in 1872, remarked that a school was badly needed in the village.¹³⁸ But this did not occur until 30.12.1878 when C. Palmer, M.P. opened the school. From 1862, logbooks had to be kept and these provide information on many aspects of local life. They show the problems teachers faced as many children did not want to attend school.

¹³⁴ *Northern Echo*, 16. 8. 1872, 3.

¹³⁵ Minute Book, Hinderwell Local Board of Health, Annual Report, 2. 11. 1881,

¹³⁶ *The Times*, 22.9.1885, 4: 'The sanitary arrangements of the town [Staithes] leave very much to be desired...That Staithes indeed, in this respect may be said to be on a par with Dongola and other towns in Upper Nubia...But there are few European towns, excepting perhaps Toulon, that could vie successfully with Staithes in the matter of total disregard of sanitary precautions'.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 'When it rains heavily the townsfolk and the fishers' wives take brooms and sweep the street before their doors and the town being built on a steep hillside, the water carries the accumulated dross and refuse down to the sea... During a protracted spell of fine weather, sojourn in the town loses much of its charm. To thoroughly enjoy and appreciate Staithes, that place should be visited for as brief a time as possible and in the wettest season of the year'.

¹³⁸ *Northern Echo*, 16.8.1872, 3: 'Schools are needed for the children who are very poorly educated, if at all; a very large portion, I fear, can neither read nor write'.

In 1879, it was recorded that they were not used to discipline and this was reflected in their bad behaviour.¹³⁹ However, six months later, conditions in the school had improved.¹⁴⁰ Some parents were reluctant to send their children to school, as they needed their help.¹⁴¹ Attendance was a continual problem and varied according to the demands of the fishing industry. Every year when the yawls were being made ready for fishing, from early February onwards, children were kept off school to help.¹⁴²

The problems relating to attendance can be seen in the head teacher's comments in the school logbook. Children were kept away from school for many reasons. Coal was brought in by rail and by boat. The boats were beached near the village and were unloaded at low tide.¹⁴³ Coal ships were unloaded by hand and the children were required to help in this. Off the coast of Staithes, ships regularly ran aground which offered another excuse for missing school.¹⁴⁴ Children helped with salvage work or by unloading coals from the stricken vessels. One logbook entry reads: 'Another boy or two returned today having been in the fishing boats all summer'.¹⁴⁵

Religion played a central role in the lives of local people and was a powerful influence in the community. There was no Anglican Church in either village, the nearest being at Hinderwell. In Runswick Bay there was a small Methodist Chapel built in 1829. In Staithes, in 1849, the National School rooms, which had been in use since 1816, were licensed for Church of England worship. In 1874, they were rededicated as The Mission Church of St. Peter the Fisherman.¹⁴⁶ In 1821, an adapted Wesleyan Chapel at Staithes appeared on the Guisborough Circuit list.¹⁴⁷ A purpose-built Wesleyan chapel was also opened in Staithes in 1866.¹⁴⁸ The increasing population in the area resulted in a Loftus Circuit being established in 1871 and Staithes was a part of this.¹⁴⁹ There was also a Congregationalist Chapel, which opened in 1823. A Catholic church, Our Lady of the Sea, was built in 1886 in the 'Lane End' area of

¹³⁹ Staithes School logbooks, 31.1. 1879: 'Admitted and classified approximately 80 children most of them in a very backward state. The children are rough and undisciplined in the extreme'.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 3.1. 1879: 'Discipline has improved and there is much less shouting, whistling and stamping'.

¹⁴¹ See *The Times* 2. 9. 1885, 9.

¹⁴² Staithes School logbooks, 15.2. 1881: 'Attendance very low suddenly, attributed by children to the fishing boats starting today, the weather having been too stormy hitherto'.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 4. 9. 1879: 'Very thin school attendance today due in some measure to a coal ship on the beach'.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 24.11. 1880: 'A large screw steamer has come ashore last evening; much excitement exists in the place and attendance has suffered'. On 26.11. 1880: 'Attendance has suffered much during the latter part of the week owing to a greater quantity of work going on in unloading the screw steamer now on the rocks'.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 21.11. 1881.

¹⁴⁶ See D. Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*, 58.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 53.

¹⁴⁸ See J. Howard, *A History of Wesleyan Methodism in Staithes* (Guisborough 1966) 16-24.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 25.

Staithes.

The Times correspondent observed that for the inhabitants of Staithes: 'Many of them - the majority indeed - have gone over to dissent, the primary cause for this inclination being, as in the case of the Durham pitmen, that the Church has left them greatly to themselves'.¹⁵⁰ According to the Ecclesiastical Census, undertaken on Sunday 30. 3. 1851, two thirds of the population attended a chapel during this day. The largest congregation was for the afternoon and evening services of the Primitive Methodists with 200 people attending. The largest congregation for the Wesleyan Methodists was 170 on Sunday morning.¹⁵¹ As in Newlyn, the fisherfolk did not work on Sundays and this meant that artists were also discouraged from working. One artist E. Rigg, was said to '...have tried to paint on a Sunday and was eventually stopped by a volley of fish heads'.¹⁵²

A few families dominated the community and family members supported a particular chapel. There was rivalry between the members of each chapel, but to outsiders this would not be apparent. However, beneath the surface, the undercurrents of rivalries and tensions could be seen. At Staithes L. Knight attended the 'Ranter Chapil' i.e. the Primitive Methodist Chapel.¹⁵³ In her autobiography she describes how she became involved with the 'Ranters'.¹⁵⁴ Primitive Methodism was also followed by fisherfolk in Newlyn. There was one painting of the Primitive Methodists in Staithes, *O Hear us When we Cry to Thee* (1901 Untraced) by L. Knight, which was exhibited at the Society of Oil Painters in 1901. W.H.Y. Titcomb painted a similar subject, *Primitive Methodists at Prayer, St. Ives* (1889 Dudley Museum and Art Gallery).

The churches and chapels were the centres of social life. On Sunday evenings after the service, local people walked around the village in their 'Sunday best'. Teas and suppers were also held to boost funds and Chapel and Sunday School Anniversaries, and Clark argues that these were probably the most important events in the chapel year. He also observes that the anniversaries were held in February and March rather than later in the year, because of the '...changeover in the annual fishing cycle'.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁰ *The Times*, 22. 9. 1885, 41.

¹⁵¹ National Archives, Ecclesiastical Census, 1851, HO, 129/531, X/K, 6572.

¹⁵² Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, ex. cat., 92.

¹⁵³ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 84.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*, 95-96.

Many customs, superstitions and traditions were rooted in local folk culture.¹⁵⁶ These contributed to the 'quaintness' of the inhabitants and made them attractive to artists. The communities produced distinctive individuals in a country which was rapidly becoming urbanised and homogenised.¹⁵⁷ The secretiveness and air of mystery of the inhabitants made them attractive to middle-class tourists who thought them exotic. Local people were deeply superstitious and many of their superstitions were also found in other parts of north Yorkshire. Fishermen and miners were particularly superstitious and there were many taboos, which the men believed would break their luck.¹⁵⁸ Both groups were superstitious about robins and children were forbidden to disturb robins' nests; a dead bird found near a house was considered bad luck.¹⁵⁹

Writing in 1846, Ord comments on the superstitious nature of the fishermen.¹⁶⁰ Gordon, in 1869, also remarks on this.¹⁶¹ Many visitors thought it was strange that local people would not venture out at night for fear of evil spirits. There were, and still are, a rich variety of superstitions which the fisherfolk observe.¹⁶² It was considered superstitious to carry anything white on board and, if seagulls swooped into the water for the bait on hooks and were drowned, this was considered a bad omen.¹⁶³ L. Knight describes some of the superstitions that she observed when living with her landlady, Mrs. Crooks.¹⁶⁴ Some of these were also found in Cullercoats.¹⁶⁵ A journalist, who visited Staithes in 1885, commented on how superstitious the local fisherfolk were.¹⁶⁶ Snell contends that the interest by visitors in local

¹⁵⁶ Frank, 'Women's Work', 66: 'Staithes remained isolated as a community for longer than any of the other coastal villages and customs and superstitions have survived there with greater tenacity than elsewhere'.

¹⁵⁷ British artists who travelled to Brittany were influenced by books such as Blackburn's *Guide to Brittany* (London 1878). This described the quaint dress, customs and superstitions of the inhabitants which the artists found so attractive.

¹⁵⁸ See Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*, 8.

¹⁵⁹ See T. Leonard, *Cleveland Customs and Superstitions* (Guisborough 1976).

¹⁶⁰ Ord, *The History and Antiquities of Cleveland*, 299: 'The fishermen although hardy, brave and adventurous, are nevertheless strongly tinctured with superstition, to an extent scarcely credible in these days of enlightenment'.

¹⁶¹ S. Gordon, *The Watering Places of Cleveland* (Redcar 1869), 111: '...the fishermen are a stalwart race; blunt, rude and with a strong dash of superstition....The fishermen regard Good Fridays, Christmas Day and Sundays with so much veneration, or more properly, perhaps, superstition, that they will on no account put to sea on one of them, as that would be unlucky'.

¹⁶² See Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*, 145-160.

¹⁶³ See Leonard, *Cleveland Customs and Superstitions*, 39.

¹⁶⁴ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 74.

¹⁶⁵ P. F. Anson, in *Fisherfolk Lore* (London 1965), describes superstitions in other parts of Britain, particularly Scotland and in French fishing communities. See also Wasserman, 60.

¹⁶⁶ *The Times*, 22.9 1885, 4: 'They have a firm belief in witchcraft...the witch being wholly unconscious of his or her power of evil. Until quite recently - and I am informed by some of the older inhabitants the custom is secretly maintained - it was customary, when a smack or coble had had a protracted run of ill-fortune, for the wives of the crew and owners of the boat to assemble at midnight and, in deep silence, to slay a pigeon whose heart they extracted, stuck full of pins, and burned over a charcoal fire'.

customs, traditions and superstitions may have been a way to show how unsophisticated local people were in comparison with those living in urban areas.¹⁶⁷

The way the community dealt with births, marriages and deaths gives an insight into the deep-rooted folk culture. Most children were born at home and it was the custom to hold the child high so that in its future life it would rise in spiritual and material terms. The mother did not leave the house until it was time to be 'churched', i.e. attend church or chapel for the first time after the birth. Following the christening, the child was taken to neighbouring houses where it was presented with a pinch of salt, some sugar and a silver coin. The salt was so that life would never lack savour, the sugar in the hope that life would be sweet and the coin in the hope that the child would not be short of money. An egg was also given as a symbol of fertility.

At a wedding, a breakfast was held at the bride's home followed by a procession led by her father to the Parish Church. Sometimes the bride carried a coin in her left shoe, which was kept afterwards for good luck.¹⁶⁸ Following the service young men raced back to where the reception was to be held, the winner received a ribbon, some money and a drink. Brymner gives an eyewitness account of a wedding he attended at Runswick Bay.¹⁶⁹

When a person died all ornaments were removed from the room where the corpse lay, and tall candles were kept burning continuously. During this period the family undertook most of the funeral arrangements. A 'bidder' was employed to 'bid', i.e., invite people to the funeral and inform them of the date and time. At the funeral a service was held inside the house around the coffin. Following this the procession, led by women, made its way to a chapel for a service, and then to Hinderwell Parish Church, the nearest cemetery. L. Knight attended several funerals and describes one in her autobiography.¹⁷⁰ Those attending the funeral dressed in formal clothes, men in full dress suits with black gloves, and women dressed in black. Similar customs were also followed for funerals in Cullercoats.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁷ Snell, *The Regional Novel*, 2, : [the] '...depiction of customs and traditions may be to reassure town dwellers that they are superior and have developed since leaving rural areas and these reinforced stereotypes of rural workers as primitive and unenlightened'.

¹⁶⁸ A. S. Umpleby, 'T' White Hoss', in *A Cleveland Anthology*, ed., B. Cowley (Leeds 1963), 45.

¹⁶⁹ See Leonard, *Cleveland Customs and Superstitions*, 15-18 and R. Brown, *W.G.*, 14 and 21.3. 1924, 4. See also Brymner, 'Village Life in Three Countries', 324 for a description of a wedding, which he attended with fellow artists Tollemache and Kerr Lawson.

¹⁷⁰ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 112.

¹⁷¹ See Wasserman, 'Some Fisherfolk', 59.

After the funeral there was a long period of mourning: women wore black clothes and a black bonnet at all times, and they did not leave their house or attend chapel. Widows in black bonnets appear in many paintings, for example, in the work of H. Knight (**figs. 80, 81, 84**). A family that had been bereaved, added a maroon stripe on their coble when it was painted in the spring and, after twelve months, it was removed.¹⁷² Artists must have witnessed many funerals, but there is only one painting, *A Staithes Funeral* (c.1902 Private Collection) (**fig. 95**) by H. Knight. In the painting six women, who are professional mourners, are seen leading the funeral procession. They are dressed in black with white shawls and are singing from hymn books. Behind the women are the pallbearers, and in the distance the masts of fishing boats. A funeral described by L. Knight in her autobiography is possibly the one depicted in the painting.¹⁷³ The local newspaper, in a feature on the 1904 R. A. exhibition, observed: 'Mr. Harold Knight has a large and striking picture of a funeral at Staithes, which is conspicuously hung. The latter embraces much local sentiment and character'.¹⁷⁴

In contrast to Newlyn, many popular subjects such as weddings and schools, were not painted.¹⁷⁵ There were also no paintings of sickness, doctors and patients. No paintings exist of the Fishermen's Institute at Staithes, the main centre of relaxation for fishermen. There was only one charcoal drawing of *The Fishermen's Club* (1902 untraced) at Runswick, produced by Hopwood in 1902.¹⁷⁶ There are also no paintings of christenings. The two groups of fisherfolk and artists, so different in their backgrounds and working lives, managed to co-exist amicably mainly out of economic necessity. As L. Knight pointed out, previously Staithes had not been so welcoming to visitors.¹⁷⁷ Of the few paintings of fisherfolk at leisure, for example, R. Hedley's *Fisherfolk at Staithes* (1886 Private Collection) the fishermen are either elderly or they could not go to sea because of the poor weather. The women in the painting are all occupied with various tasks. The artists needed the co-operation of local people as models. They also needed permission to use houses and land and also required 'props.', for example, nets and lobster pots. There was no problem in obtaining models here as there was in Newlyn, where they came from outside the village.

¹⁷² Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*, 133.

¹⁷³ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 112.

¹⁷⁴ W. G., 6.5.1904, 5.

¹⁷⁵ For example, S. Forbes, *The Health of the Bride* (1889 Tate Gallery, London) and E. Forbes, *School is Out* (1889 Penlee House Art Gallery, Penzance).

¹⁷⁶ London, F. A. S., *Charcoal Drawings by H. S. Hopwood*, ex. cat., 1902.

¹⁷⁷ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 76.

Local people now needed the artists and became more welcoming as there was an increasing awareness of their importance to the local economy.¹⁷⁸ L. Knight describes this in her autobiography.¹⁷⁹ Tourists were seen as an economic opportunity and brought out the entrepreneurial spirit of local people who helped to change their communities to profit from the artists.¹⁸⁰ Food and accommodation was provided and tourist facilities were developed, for example, postcards for sale and boats for hire. Knight grew close to many local people.¹⁸¹ She was an important member of the artists' colony as she provided a bridge between the artists and local people and she describes the relationship she formed with them.¹⁸² She also adopted some of the local costume.¹⁸³ Despite this closeness, outsiders were often regarded as 'foreigners' and were not truly accepted as Johnson recalls in Runswick Bay.¹⁸⁴ L. Walmsley's family was also regarded as outsiders when they moved to Robin Hood's Bay in 1894.¹⁸⁵

The fisherfolk were physically strong, as in this tough environment only the fittest survived. To row out on the North Sea required immense strength, as did hauling in the nets and baited lines. Their lives were full of danger and risk. Both artists and fishermen were affected by the vagaries of the weather, but for the fishermen it was a more serious business as their livelihood depended on going to sea.¹⁸⁶ Erichsen describes how the local people helped her.¹⁸⁷ The fisherfolk had known hard times whereas many artists came from comfortable middle-class homes. They came mainly from large cities whereas most local people were born and bred in small, tight-knit communities. L. Knight's autobiographies, and articles by Erichsen

¹⁷⁸ W. G., 7. 8. 1903, 5: 'The appearance of Hinderwell town street has been greatly marred by the erection of some plain high hoardings as a garden fence abutting on the footpath. It is one way of frightening artistic people - who greatly help towards the prosperity of this village, and Staithes and Runswick - away to other retreats'.

¹⁷⁹ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 101.

¹⁸⁰ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 64: '...villagers took an active part in the modernisation and re-shaping of their home communities'.

¹⁸¹ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 75-6.

¹⁸² Ibid., 100.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 81, Knight wore a Ganzi (Guernsey). She also wore a bonnet: see D. Cleverley, 'Staithes Bonnets', *Dalesman*, vol. XII, 1950-1, 402.

¹⁸⁴ Johnson, *The Nagars of Runswick Bay*, 3.

¹⁸⁵ L. Walmsley, *So Many Loves* (London 1944), 7.

¹⁸⁶ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 101-2.

¹⁸⁷ Erichsen, 'A North-Country Fishing Town', 463: '...but by the beginning of October, when I had settled down to work and my solitary easel was daily set up on the beach, or in the steep and somewhat evil smelling paths about the town, the good folks became interested [and] made hospitable advances.

and R. Jobling, project a positive image of local fisherfolk.¹⁸⁸

Few paintings remained in the villages but sometimes they were given as presents locally or in return for goods. Local people did not produce art themselves and the artists were seen as from a different cultural milieu. Some artists were respected by local people because of their skill and hard work but others were a source of amusement because of their 'bohemian' dress and manner. Most were living away from their families, and the restrictions of middle-class life. In contrast, local people were living within strict codes of behaviour imposed by family life and the local community. Some artists met the fishermen in local public houses, whereas at Newlyn many of the inhabitants were teetotal. There the artists met at each other's houses or travelled to nearby Penzance.

This chapter has discussed the circumstances in which artists produced their work. The co-operation of local people was vital to the artists. They came to the villages to escape from modern life; however, they were still confronted by aspects of modernity such as mining, iron and steel workers, the railway and tourism, which generally are absent in paintings. From 1880 to 1914, the fishing industry declined and many people moved to find work.¹⁸⁹ Fisherfolk clung to their traditional costume, boats and way of life. The physical structure of the villages was slow to change, there was no room to build new houses, and this quaintness made them attractive to artists. By 1914, the social structure of the villages had changed, reflecting wider society as Britain became a modern state. For those who stayed, many changed from fishing and relied on tourism for an income.

The railway made the villages more accessible; this ended their isolation and gradually many customs, traditions and superstitions began to disappear.¹⁹⁰ There was an increasingly sophisticated administrative system at national and local level. Schools had improved, a basic infrastructure of a water supply, roads, drains, and sanitation had developed which contributed to a healthier life. Social security was introduced, with Old Age Pensions starting in 1908. Communities slowly lost their strong individual identity as they became more integrated into wider society. The next chapter is concerned with examining the different characteristics of the artists' colonies.

¹⁸⁸ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint* (London 1936); Knight, *Magic of a Line* (London 1965); Erichsen and R. Jobling.

¹⁸⁹ Frank, *Yorkshire Fisherfolk*, 31: 'From the late 1870s the traditional inshore fishermen were left to cope with trawlers and new market conditions as best they could'.

¹⁹⁰ See P. Thompson, T. Wailey, T. Lummis, *Living the Fishing* (London 1983), 3-43.

CHAPTER TWO THE ARTISTS' COLONIES

‘The life in the open air together with the absorbing delightful occupation of painting from nature followed by pleasant reunions in the evening constitutes an ideal existence to which I know no parallel’.¹

This chapter examines the principal characteristics of the artists' colonies in Staithes and Runswick Bay. By unravelling the factors relating to each artists' colony, a more complex structure than was previously thought has emerged. The areas of commonality with other artists' colonies in England and in Europe will be examined. Artists were seeking similar things in Newlyn, Cullercoats and in European artists' colonies such as Pont Aven, Skagen and Worpswede.

The chapter is organised into four parts: Part A examines the general factors relating to the artists' colonies; Part B the artists' colony in Staithes; Part C the artists' colony in Runswick Bay and Part D comparisons with other English artists' colonies. Essential points in determining if artists' colonies existed are: which painters visited them, when they visited and how long they stayed? Using evidence from new research, a comprehensive list of those who worked in each village is presented. See **Appendices 3 and 4**.

Evidence will be presented which supports my thesis that there were two distinct artists' colonies, with a larger number of artists than was previously thought working in each village. It will be demonstrated that Staithes and Runswick Bay were part of a wider international movement of artists' colonies. Other writers have approached artists' colonies from different perspectives. Jacobs and Lübbren have taken a broader view while Newton examines one artists' colony, Cullercoats. Jacobs states that artists sought pre-industrial locations, which had suitable cheap accommodation and a supply of models. He also argues that the artists' colonies were fluid, informal structures and not rigid regimes where one had to become a member. In England he examined Newlyn and St. Ives.²

Lübbren in her study of European artists' colonies looks at the interaction between artists, the communities and the artists, how artists related to the rural environment and: ‘...how artists were instrumental in shaping the stereotypical images of their specific locations’.³ Newton examines Cullercoats in terms of the locality, student experience, the local population,

¹ H. J. Thaddeus, *Recollections of a Court Painter* (London 1912), 25.

² See Jacobs, 7.

³ Lübbren, *Rural Artist' Colonies*, 13.

practical features and colony dynamics. She also examines membership, support, social life, belonging, communal living, style and Dutch influence.⁴ In applying the definition of artists' colonies outlined in the introduction to Staithes and Runswick Bay, do the artists' colonies fit the criteria outlined in this definition? This will be examined throughout this chapter.

⁴ Newton thesis, 'The Cullercoats Artists' Colony', 96.

Part A The Factors Relating to the Formation of Artists' Colonies.

In this section, it is argued that the following factors contributed to the formation of English artists' colonies: the back to nature movement and the search for pre-industrial sites, the alienation of many young artists when they returned from France, improved access to artists' colonies and proximity to a nearby town. French and Dutch influence and the impact of tourism are also considered.

Lübbren quotes Peter Howard's book which analyses works shown at the R. A. between 1770 and 1980. This found that between 1870 and 1910 the most popular sites for painting in Britain were the Cornish coast and the north Yorkshire coast near Whitby.⁵ The latter area included Staithes and Runswick Bay and attracted many artists escaping from the polluted industrial cities of the north.⁶ Artists' colonies can be seen as part of the wider back to nature movement at a time of increasing urbanisation and industrialisation.⁷ The movement of artists from cities to villages such as Staithes and Runswick Bay was part of the *Zeitgeist*. There was an anti-urban, anti-industry sentiment, which prevailed amongst some groups in Britain and Europe.⁸

The Arts and Crafts Movement can be seen as a part of the back to nature movement. It was a reaction against mass production, uniformity and the brutalisation of people forced to work in factories. It was hoped that workers' conditions could be improved, that they would have pride in their work and that craftsmanship would be valued in wider society. Morris, one of the most influential figures in the Arts and Craft Movement, was critical of many aspects of modern society.⁹ He was opposed to cities and wanted a return to a rural idyll.¹⁰ Some utopian colonies were established, one example is C. R. Ashbee's Guild of the Handicraft in Britain, which was established in London and later moved to Chipping Campden.¹¹

⁵ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 145, Note 8, 201: 'By 1880, most of the earlier great sites of artistic activity (the Lake District, Devon, Brighton, Hastings, Welsh lakes and mountains) were deserted by painters; the most popular sites for landscape painting between 1870 and 1910 were the coast near Whitby (which includes Staithes) and the Cornish coast, areas that had attracted almost no pictorial interest before'. See Peter Howard, *Landscapes: The Artists' Vision* (London 1991), 89-102.

⁶ See T. Hunt, *Building Jerusalem: The Rise and Fall of the Victorian City* (London 2004), Chapter 1, 'The New Hades', 11-34, describes the noise, smells, diseases, poor housing, overcrowding and poor air in industrial cities.

⁷ Corbett, Holt and Russell, eds., *The Geographies of Englishness*, ix: 'The years following 1880 were a time when the rediscovery of national identity and native traditions prevailed throughout the western world....'

⁸ See Shannon, 284-6.

⁹ Ibid., 275.

¹⁰ Ibid., 285.

¹¹ See F. MacCarthy, *The Simple Life: C.R. Ashbee in the Cotswolds* (London 1981).

It was thought that '...modern urban culture thwarted spontaneity'¹² and what really mattered was instinct and freedom. Shannon argues that the urge to go back to nature was part of a tradition that extends back thousands of years.¹³ In this context Herbert quotes Castagnary

It is an old truth that eclogues and idylls have nearly always been the reflection of social agitation. Jostled by the tumults of events, poets and dreamers seek refuge in the peace of the countryside, in the contemplation of calm and serene nature.¹⁴

S. West also maintains that:

The city changed the ways in which people lived, their relationships with each other, their pace of life and their priorities. Sociologists and philosophers found it increasingly necessary to define urban experience as essentially different from rural life, as compromises like the garden city became less viable.¹⁵

Artists lamented the passing of the traditional rural way of life and writers such as T. Hardy also described this in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Under the Greenwood Tree*.¹⁶ Many were anxious to save what they thought was rapidly disappearing. There was concern about the effects of urbanisation, particularly pollution and the poor working and living conditions of many people.¹⁷ In *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*, published in 1887, the German sociologist, F. Tonnies, drew a distinction between increasing urbanisation and industrialisation, where *Gesellschaft* (society) replaced *Gemeinschaft* (community).¹⁸ Tonnies's ideas also provide a way of understanding the changes brought by urbanisation replacing pre-industrial communities and their traditional values and kinship ties. These communities were seen as purer, more spiritual places and not contaminated by modernity. An example of this is Staithes where the inhabitants are described in a local newspaper in the following terms: 'People are simple and kindly, admirable as models and unspoiled as yet with the fashionable people who run down from Whitby or Saltburn or Scarborough to inspect and exclaim over its quaintness'.¹⁹

Lübbren maintains that the urge to escape from cities was a widespread phenomenon in Europe and in the United States: 'This unwillingness to confront industrial transformations in contemporary society was, of course, not confined to English painters of fisherfolk. It is a

¹² Herbert, *From Millet to Léger: Essays in Art History* (New Haven and London 2002), 54.

¹³ Shannon, 284.

¹⁴ Herbert, 'City vs. Country', 49.

¹⁵ S. West, *The Visual Arts in Germany, 1890-1937: Utopia and Despair* (Manchester 2000), 41-42.

¹⁶ T. Hardy, *Under the Greenwood Tree* (London 1872) and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (London 1891).

¹⁷ McConkey, 'Haunts of Ancient Peace', in Corbett, Holt and Russell, eds., *The Geographies of Englishness*, 65: 'In recent years the late-Victorian bourgeois impulse to rusticity has been exhaustively studied. The broad characteristics of rapid social change in the countryside have been noted, as have the impressive rearguard actions of writers and intellectuals from Ruskin and Morris to Rider Haggard, in the long list of guilds, preservation societies and pressure groups acting on behalf of ancient buildings, nature, customs, folksongs and handicrafts. The arts and crafts movement, utopian socialism, garden suburbs and other manifestations of these rearguard tendencies were largely motivated by anti-urban, anti-mechanised industrial convictions'.

¹⁸ F. Tonnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (Berlin, 1887).

¹⁹ W. G., 13.9.1901, 7.

pan-European and widely remarked phenomenon of nineteenth-century painting'.²⁰ Artists worked in rural areas and on the coast where they could represent what they thought were acceptable images of England.²¹ Most artists' colonies were located in northern Europe because painters wanted the grey skies and the special light found there.

The coast had a special attraction for some artists who were inspired by the untamed power of the sea, which was controlled by nature not man. It was seen as healthy and for some the land's interaction with the sea had almost a supernatural hold on them. The sea was thought to be mysterious and unpredictable and on the coast artists saw themselves on the fringe of society. J. House in his essay, 'The Viewer on the Beach', maintains there are: '...two key themes...the sea as danger and foe, that man sets out to conquer, and the sea as bountiful and fecund, a source of love, not fear'.²² The Staithes and Runswick Bay artists were to experience both sides of the sea, which could be both provider and killer.

In the early part of the period Staithes, Runswick Bay and Newlyn were attractive places to paint but as early as 1882 Cullercoats was being rapidly modernised. This does not fit in with the pre-industrial sites artists preferred. West contends that in Germany: '...artists' colonies were paradoxical places: artists claimed that they went to colonies in order to get "back to nature", but many colonies were within 30 kilometres of a large city and easily accessible by rail'.²³ This was true in Cullercoats where Newcastle-upon-Tyne was 10 miles away. Most artists were local and were not escaping industrialisation, which was on their doorstep.

The artists in Newlyn came from across Britain with a strong contingent from Birmingham. In the early 1880s it was thought suitably primitive but the village was modernised with the building of a new harbour in the 1880s and 1890s. In contrast, Staithes and Runswick Bay were relatively unspoiled.

Another general factor in the formation of English artists' colonies was the alienation that many young artists experienced when they returned from studying at art academies in France

²⁰ Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 43.

²¹ A. G. Robins, 'Living the Simple Life: George Clausen at Childwick Green, St. Albans', in Corbett, Holt and Russell, eds., *The Geographies of Englishness*, 1: 'In the 1880s an idea of Englishness took shape which was closely tied to a popular image of England that gave a central place to the countryside. Artists born and bred in towns and cities moved to small English villages where they professed to live and paint the simple country life'.

²² J. House, 'The Viewer on the Beach', in F. Fowle and R. Thomson, eds., *Soil and Stone: Impressionism, Urbanism, Environment* (London 2003), 6.

²³ West, 42.

and Belgium.²⁴ Older academic artists were in well-established positions and had considerable influence over the art market. Many were responsible for the inward-looking nature of English art and opposed *plein air* painting. Most young artists were from large cities and in coming to small villages were sometimes lost and needed help from other artists to integrate into the community. Perhaps one of the attractions of Staithes and Runswick Bay was the ease with which artists were accepted. For L. Knight, Staithes was an ideal place to paint and she easily settled into the community. In contrast, in *The Geographies of Englishness* it states that: 'Young painters like Spencer Gore, when they left the urban milieu for the countryside, directly experienced a sense of disjuncture'.²⁵

Young painters joined artists' colonies for mutual support and the feeling of camaraderie many had experienced in the ateliers of Paris and Antwerp.²⁶ Many studied in France and Belgium because they rejected the training available in Britain, which placed an emphasis on copying and portraying historical and mythological subjects. In 1884 the conservative Royal Academician P. H. Calderon commented on this desire to study abroad: 'Your English feelings and reticences imperceptibly fall away - you find you have lost your touch, as it were with the intellect of your country, and you are a stranger in your own land'.²⁷ Bendiner asserts: 'Curiously, the dwindling faith in British artistic traditions in the 1880s came just when the country's wealth and political power were at their zenith'.²⁸ At a time when most thought that British institutions and ways were superior and European neighbours inferior, some artists showed their faith in the training on offer by catching the ferry to France.

In joining artists' colonies, painters were seeking freedom from the rigidity of the British art establishment.²⁹ It could be argued that their formation shows the growing gap between artists and wider society.³⁰ When some returned from studying in France they felt outsiders as there was considerable criticism of French ideas and methods. There was anxiety about the threat to British painting from foreign influences. Ruskin, for example, expressed concern that artists were at risk: '...of losing their national character in their endeavour to become sentimentally German, dramatically Parisian or decoratively Asiatic'.³¹ In an article J. Linton, President of the R. S. W., thought that artists who had trained in France and were followers of Millet and

²⁴ See Bendiner, 119.

²⁵ Corbett, Holt and Russell, eds., *The Geographies of Englishness*, xiii.

²⁶ See Jacobs, 10.

²⁷ *The Art Journal*, 1884, 58-59.

²⁸ Bendiner, 108.

²⁹ Ibid., 119: 'The creation of miniature communities devoted to art, surrounded by "primitive" villagers and untouched nature, reveals the artists turning inward, away from the public eye and the public taste'.

³⁰ Ibid.: 'Despite the artists' dependence upon the exhibition and sale of their works in major cities, Newlyn and the international artist-colony movement as a whole represent the alienation of the artist from society...'

³¹ Quoted in E. Chesneau, *The English School of Painting* (London 1885), ix.

Bastien-Lepage were more French than English. He described how they: ‘Speak to us not in English or in French, as they fondly imagine, but simply in broken English’.³²

The anti-French comments show the cultural xenophobia which prevailed at this time.³³ French art academies were seen as a bad influence on young painters and Paris as a corrupting force.³⁴ However, painting *en plein air* in the fashion of Bastien-Lepage was popular with young painters studying in Paris.³⁵ This was perceived as a product of foreign academies and artists, which was contaminating British culture.³⁶ Typical of the anti-French feeling from conservative, academic painters was P. H. Calderon’s observation:

Like many other fashions, it has come to us from across the channel...In painting what has realism done? Again, taking its subjects from the same (low) class, it has given us portraits (badly painted mostly) of sodden beer and absinthe drinkers moodily scowling at us with bleared eyes; it has given us hundreds of blue-bloused labourers, of a debased type, doing nothing in particular; and thousands of ill-favoured, wooden-shod females awkwardly perspiring in the sun.³⁷

He recommended that students should investigate

The noble halls and beautiful chambers of the Palace of Art, and should not waste their time among its backyards, outbuildings and dark entries.³⁸

Young painters wanted to experience life at first hand and not from inside a studio.³⁹ S. Forbes did not retreat to his studio and *A Fish Sale on a Cornish Beach* was largely painted on a beach. This received considerable attention when it was shown at the R. A. in 1885 (**fig. 14**). Its success may have inspired others to break away from the rigid regime of studio-based academic painting. The Chantrey Bequest may have acquired Forbes’s painting were it not for its French influence. According to *The Magazine of Art*:

It is said there was a half-proposal to buy the Stanhope Forbes, which is one of the chief successes of the year; but that the picture was thrown out, not, as some have suggested because it was a good one, but because it is too positively the outcome of the foreign school.⁴⁰

This painting was important in signalling a new approach from foreign-trained painters who worked in the artists’ colonies:

A Fish Sale on a Cornish Beach was the most ambitious large-scale work painted in the new style, and it came to stand for the ideals and sensibilities of the entire group of British artists trained in France.⁴¹

³² J. D. Linton, ‘The Practical Education of the Artist’, *The Magazine of Art*, vol. X, 1887, 159.

³³ See E. Morris, *French Art in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London 2005), Chapter 16, ‘The Opposition to France’.

³⁴ See McConkey, *Impressionism in Britain*, 30-32.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 20-21.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 30-31.

³⁸ *The Art Journal*, 1884.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ See McConkey, *British Impressionism*, 49.

⁴¹ ‘Art in June’, *The Magazine of Art*, vol. VIII, 1885, xxxiii.

⁴² Bendiner, 108.

Garstin summed up its direct approach and impact on the academy:

The fresh vitality of it seemed like a wholesome breeze from the sea breathed in a studio reeking with oil and turpentine, while its brilliant new technique fell upon the younger painters as a revelation.⁴²

Many who had trained in Paris also worked in Staithes and Runswick Bay. In contrast, Cullercoats did not have many young artists, and few had studied at French and Belgian ateliers, so the feeling of alienation among young painters was not a factor there.

Improved access mainly through the growth of the railway system was another general factor in the establishment of artists' colonies. Ironically the artists were escaping from modernity but used a technological development, the railway, which provided access to remote villages. Newlyn developed after the railway opened in 1877, Cullercoats in 1882 and Staithes and Runswick Bay in 1883. Artists sought isolated places, but - as Jacobs has argued - this was illusory, as the railway brought to an end the feeling of remoteness and primitivism experienced there.⁴³ Prior to the railway, Staithes and Runswick Bay were secluded communities.⁴⁴

Proximity to a town, where artists could obtain supplies and enjoy the amenities, was another factor in the development of the artists' colonies. Penzance was situated one mile from Newlyn and S. Forbes saw this close proximity as an advantage. Cullercoats was around 10 miles from Newcastle and 2 miles from North Shields. For Staithes and Runswick Bay, Whitby was the nearest large town, respectively 10 and 7 miles away. It was an art centre and a popular place for artists who were attracted by the topography, the opportunity to paint fisherfolk and to meet other artists. Throughout the nineteenth century many visited, including Turner, A. Goodwin, A. Hunt and H. M. Marshall. An American journalist in 1884 observed: 'Whitby has been painted oftener than any professional beauty, and the easel is so common a feature in the season that an artist can work in the streets without being irritated by peeping children and ignorant commentators'.⁴⁵

⁴² Garstin, 'The Work of Stanhope Forbes', *The Studio*, vol. XXIII, 1901, 84.

⁴³ See Jacobs, *The Good and Simple Life*, 12.

⁴⁴ *The Times*, 7.9.1885, 8: 'Staithes has until latterly been completely cut off from land communication with the busy world...'

⁴⁵ *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, vol. XLVIII, March 1884, 530.

Some artists lived in Whitby and many visited in the summer months.⁴⁶ From there they travelled to the Staithes and Runswick Bay, which were a part of the local tourist circuit and could be easily reached by train and boat. Whitby inspired many artists. Sutcliffe also captured scenes of Whitby and its inhabitants in his photographs, as did Du Maurier in his *Punch* cartoons. W. H. Rideing, an American journalist, described its attractions:

Coming down the winding steps from the cliff, we soon learn what the charm of Whitby is for artists. It is unmodern, a survival of more peaceful and poetic time than ours. It is rich in quaint architecture, and the atmosphere is full of memories.⁴⁷

Many motifs were painted by the artists - the abbey, the harbour, the quayside, the market place and the bridge. Scenes of Whitby feature in paintings by L. T. Crawshaw, C. H. Mackie, F. W. Jackson and E. E. Anderson. From 1904 the S. A. C. exhibitions were held in Whitby and more paintings of the town were displayed. At the 1904 S. A. C. exhibition *Whitby* (1904 untraced) was shown by Anderson and Crawshaw also displayed *Whitby* (1904 Private Collection). At the 1905 S. A. C. exhibition the following were displayed: *Old and Young Whitby* (1905 Private Collection) by Crawshaw; *Whitby* by Mackie (1905 Private Collection) and *Whitby* (1905 untraced) also by Jackson. It was a popular place for wealthy visitors and paintings of Whitby may have been acquired as souvenirs.

Some artists painted Whitby market place, one example is Hopwood's *Whitby Market* (1907 Private Collection). Whitby was an important centre for fishing and the harbour inspired many artists. *Whitby Quayside* (1881 Private Collection) by Jackson, is one of his earliest works. At the 1904 S. A. C. exhibition there were several paintings of Whitby harbour including: *Evening, Whitby Harbour; Low Tide, Whitby Harbour* and *Whitby Wharf* (1904 all untraced) by local artist E. E. Anderson and *Whitby Harbour* by R. Jobling (1904 untraced). Mackie produced several paintings of Whitby in the early 1900s. *Fishing Boats at Whitby* (c.1902 Private Collection) was shown at the Shipping Exhibition held at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in 1903. The catalogue describes the painting:

Scotch herring boats coming into Whitby by night. In the narrowest part of the harbour is a bridge connecting the old town with the new, and in the middle of this is a swing bridge that opens to let vessels pass. The lofty lug sails, so characteristic of the Scotch fishing boats, may be noted. Few places can surpass old Whitby for picturesque effects, the steep cliffs and crowded ruddy houses closing in on the sails of the fishing boats.⁴⁸

Considering how close they were to the town, there are few paintings by the Knights of

⁴⁶ Artists listed in the Whitby and District Directory (W. J. Cook, Hull), for 1901 are E. Bancroft, Whitehall Shipyard; Miss Douget, 3, Duck's Yard, Flowergate; A. G. Morgan, Elgin Square; J. Rogers, 12, St. Hilda's Terrace; J. Syer, 1, Well Close Square; F. Wasley, Well Close Square; J. E. Wilson, 2, Mulgrave Place.

⁴⁷ *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, vol. XLVIII, March 1884, 530.

⁴⁸ London, Whitechapel Art Gallery, *The Shipping Exhibition*, ex. cat., 1903.

Whitby. H. Knight painted *Staithe Pier*, (**fig. 91**). This is not Staithe Pier, as one was not constructed until 1924, but Whitby Pier. The mistake in the title was made when this painting went to auction. The painting shows a dramatic scene as viewed from Whitby Pier. A crowd is gathered at the end of the pier to see a sailing ship being towed by a steam-powered paddle tug. The heavy seas make it difficult for the crew of the sailing ship to manoeuvre her into harbour and the tug has come to the rescue. The painting is of significance because it is one of the few by artists from Staithes and Runswick Bay which shows a modern steam-powered vessel.

The railway had reached Whitby in 1836. From 1850 it developed as a seaside resort and accommodation was built mainly in the West Cliff area to cater for the increased number of tourists.⁴⁹ It was considered a fashionable place for wealthy visitors to stay and was featured in *Punch* and other magazines (**fig. 12**). Many visitors brought their families and servants and sometimes stayed for a month, usually in August.⁵⁰ It was so popular that by 1890 visitors were warned to: 'Avoid the madding crowd, and go to Sandsend'.⁵¹ This popularity can also be seen in an article, 'Whitby Jottings' which appeared in *The Illustrated London News* (**fig. 13**).⁵² The availability of patrons during the summer months was another factor in attracting artists.

The town was a cultural centre with a theatre, publishers and intellectual groups and societies such as the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society, founded in 1823. In the summer there was the 'Whitby Season' and a variety of entertainment was on offer.⁵³ Visitors were recommended to visit the fish auction, stroll on the pier and visit the beach with its tents, music and donkeys.⁵⁴ Other attractions were the ancient abbey and the proximity to Scarborough. Whitby was a centre for buying artists' supplies and other goods and in a 1901 trade directory two artists' colourmen were listed.⁵⁵

The town offered a higher standard of accommodation for middle-class tourists. An article, 'The Season at Whitby', states: 'Further north at Runswick and Staithes scores of families

⁴⁹ See A. White, 'The Victorian Development of Whitby as a Seaside Resort', *Local Historian*, vol. XXVIII, no. 2, May 1998, 78-93.

⁵⁰ W. G., 4.8. 1883, Lodgings Supplement. Lord and Lady Lewisham and Lord and Lady Powercourt were staying at the Crown Hotel and Lord and Lady St. John and family and General and Mrs. Ashbourne were staying at the Royal Hotel.

⁵¹ W. G., 26. 9. 1890, 3.

⁵² 'Whitby Jottings', *The Illustrated London News*, 19.10.1889, 1.

⁵³ W. G., 4. 10. 1895, 3.

⁵⁴ *Leeds Mercury*, 31. 8. 1901, 1.

⁵⁵ Whitby and District Directory 1901, Artists' Colourmen, E. E. Anderson, 24 Skinner St., and F. Mallinder, 49 Flowergate.

may be found rustivating under primitive conditions'.⁵⁶ Also based there was the photographer F. M. Sutcliffe who recorded many aspects of local life (**figs. 4, 26, 30, 78, 96**). During the 1880s and 1890s, J. Russell Lowell and Henry James were regular visitors to Whitby, where they met their friend G. Du Maurier. This group visited Staithes, an event described in a biography of Du Maurier.⁵⁷ He also visited Runswick and expressed his admiration for the fishing community in *The Martian*:

The sturdy mariners...with their hands in their pockets and their pipes in their mouths and the stalwart scaly fisherwomen with baskets on their heads...One afternoon - a perfect afternoon - we took tea at Runswick...and had ourselves rowed round the cliffs to Staithes, which we reached just before sunset; Chips and his sister also taking an oar between them, and I another. There, on the brink of the little bay, with the singularly quaint and picturesque old village behind it, were fifty fishing boats side by side waiting to be launched and all the fishing population of Staithes were there to launch them - men, women and children; as we landed we were immediately pressed into the service.⁵⁸

The presence of these famous writers may have attracted others. Du Maurier usually stayed for one month during 'the season' with his family and servants.⁵⁹ He recorded the lives of local people and his *Punch* cartoons show fisherfolk posed next to middle-class visitors, something that rarely occurs in paintings or photographs (**figs. 12, 93**). Bram Stoker wrote *Dracula* following a visit to Whitby with Henry Irving who besides being a close personal friend employed him as a manager from 1878 to 1905. In *Dracula* Stoker refers to the fact that: '...the great body of holiday-makers set out yesterday for visits to Mulgrave Woods, Robin Hood's Bay, Rigg Mill, Runswick, Staithes and the various trips in the neighbourhood of Whitby'.⁶⁰

As well as the factors discussed, which contributed to the development of artists' colonies, French and Dutch influence and tourism also affected them. There was a strong French influence on Newlyn, Staithes and Runswick Bay, but less so at Cullercoats. Barbizon, Pont-Aven and Concarneau were seen as model artists' colonies and influenced English artists particularly in the subjects chosen, painting *en plein air*, and the fascination with working people. S. Forbes in a letter of 24.2.1884 to his mother shows his anger with *The Times*' critic who was scornful of artists drawing inspiration from Cornish people. Forbes wrote:

I wonder at your inviting my attention to the worthless opinion of The Times' critic. Did anyone ever find any fault with Israëls for taking his subjects from the life of the Dutch fisherfolk or Millet - from French peasant life - why not Cornish people?⁶¹

⁵⁶ W. G., 28. 8.1903, 3.

⁵⁷ L. Ormond, *The Life of George Du Maurier* (London 1969), 412: 'In the late afternoon the Du Mauriers and their group helped to push the fishing boats into the water, and men stood gazing out to sea as, "the boats all sailed westwards, in a cluster, and lost themselves in the golden haze" '.

⁵⁸ G. Du Maurier, *The Martian* (London 1897), 460.

⁵⁹ W.G., 8.8.1890, 3, 'Mr. Du Maurier has arrived in Whitby'.

⁶⁰ B. Stoker, *Dracula* (London 1897), 75.

⁶¹ Quoted in Bendiner, 110.

Many artists had attended *ateliers* in Paris where they were exposed to a range of influences, particularly those of Millet and Bastien-Lepage. S. Forbes describes how:

Under the spell of the genius Jean-François Millet, and the more recent, and then living, Bastien-Lepage, most of us young students were turning our backs on the great cities, forsaking the studios with their unvarying northern light, to set up our easels in country districts, where we could pose our models and attack our work, in sunshine or shadow, under the open sky.⁶²

Forbes gives the contemporary view that it was Millet and Bastien-Lepage who encouraged many to work in artists' colonies. He followed Millet's example in ensuring the people in his paintings were not posed but were working naturally.⁶³ In painting *A Fish Sale on a Cornish Beach* he describes the influence of Bastien-Lepage.⁶⁴ In a rapidly changing society fisherfolk and peasants were seen as timeless compared with urban workers.⁶⁵ Millet's work is described in a book of 1898 in the following terms: 'His peasant is certainly the French peasant to begin with, but beyond that he is the peasant of all times and all places'.⁶⁶

A. Legros also increased awareness of Millet, as Treuherz argues: 'Interest in French artists who depicted peasant hardship, such as Millet and Lhermitte, was fostered by Alphonse Legros, who became Slade professor in 1876'.⁶⁷ Millet, Lhermitte and Bastien-Lepage portrayed peasants undertaking their daily tasks and in painting fisherfolk in Staithes and Runswick Bay the artists adopted a similar approach. After Millet's death his work became even more popular.⁶⁸ It was collected in Europe and the United States where it fetched increasingly high prices. Exhibitions and the publication of a biography further enhanced his reputation.⁶⁹ The universal appeal of Millet's work established him as a champion of the labouring poor.⁷⁰ Sensier described how Millet was close to the soil and the peasants who cultivated it.⁷¹ He never forgot his background and showed his contempt for modernity by

⁶² S. Forbes, 'Cornwall from a Painter's Point of View', *Annual Report of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society*, 1900 (Falmouth 1901), 4-5.

⁶³ Clausen, *Royal Academy Lectures on Paintings* (London 1906), 108: 'There is never, in the work of Millet, any consciousness of the spectator. His people are always intent on their occupation, not posing to the painter, not regarding anything outside their work'.

⁶⁴ Forbes, 'A Newlyn Retrospect', *The Cornish Magazine*, vol. 1, 1898, 81: '...I elected to paint my first Newlyn picture, and out on that exposed beach, for many a month, struggled over a large canvas... Yes, those were the days of unflinching realism, of the cult of Bastien-Lepage. It was part of our artistic creed to paint our pictures direct from Nature, and not merely to rely on sketches and studies which we could afterwards amplify in the comfort of a studio'.

⁶⁵ See McConkey, *British Impressionism*, 21.

⁶⁶ H. Naegely, *Jean-François Millet and Rustic Art* (London 1898), 59.

⁶⁷ J. Treuherz, *Victorian Painting* (London 1993), 193.

⁶⁸ Lübbsen, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 3: 'The growing cult around Jean-François Millet, boosted by the death of the artist in January 1875 and reflected in the dramatic rise of prices for works by Millet and his rural colleagues, doubtless accounted in part for both the growing numbers of visitors to Barbizon and the spate of new artists' colonies founded elsewhere'.

⁶⁹ A. Sensier, *Jean-François Millet: Peasant and Painter* (Paris 1881).

⁷⁰ *The Art Journal*, 1875, 108: 'Millet was truly a peasant-painter; for he was the son of a peasant, and lived the greater part of his life among the peasant class'.

⁷¹ Sensier, *Millet*, xi.

painting pre-industrial labour. Millet's influence can be seen in the work of Clausen and a review of a Grosvenor Gallery exhibition refers to:

The influence of France upon the art of today is to be found in the contributions of Mr. Clausen...Mr. Clausen has been coming into notice for some few years as a follower of Jean-François Millet, the illustrious painter of peasant life...The fame of Millet, who was a peasant born, and went through a life of struggle and privation such as no artist of real talent can ever go through again, has experienced a wonderful reaction since his death. He is now, perhaps, too celebrated; there is a Millet cult and a Millet school with worshippers wise and foolish, and students good and bad.⁷²

Clausen acknowledged the importance of Millet:

The work of Millet was a new note in modern art. No other has seen so clearly and shown so well the beauty and significance of ordinary occupations, the union of man with nature, and the dependence of man on nature...One remembers too, an ideal sort of peasant, painted by men who did not realise that his labour is hard, constant and exacting, and who did not see the beauty of the simple movements necessitated by it. But Millet was painting things, which he understood and felt thoroughly.⁷³

He also explored the spiritual element in Millet's work in an article of 1888.⁷⁴ He observed that: '...people doing simple things under good conditions of lighting, nothing was made easy for you: you had to dig out what you wanted'.⁷⁵ The artists in Staithes and Runswick Bay were influenced by Millet and like him painted the working people of a particular area and had, as one of their central themes, the dignity of labour.

Bastien-Lepage was another major influence on British artists in the late 1870s until his death in 1884.⁷⁶ He exhibited at the R. A. and in 1880 at the Grosvenor Gallery summer exhibition, where:

Around each painting at the Grosvenor Gallery, "a little knot of worshippers or scoffers, admiring or condemning in the most vehement manner".⁷⁷

Bastien-Lepage believed in absolute fidelity to nature and painting outdoors to ensure this.⁷⁸ Clausen was one of Bastien-Lepage's disciples and a painting that clearly shows his influence is *The Girl at the Gate* (1889 Tate Gallery). *Plein air* realism was a common aim between these painters who had mostly trained in France.⁷⁹

Like Millet, Bastien-Lepage believed that artists should live amongst the people to gain a real

⁷² *The Times*, 4.5.1883, 3.

⁷³ Clausen, *Royal Academy Lectures on Painting* (London 1906), 104-6.

⁷⁴ Clausen, 'Bastien-Lepage and Modern Realism', *The Scottish Art Review*, vol. 1, 1888, 114-5.

⁷⁵ Clausen, 'Autobiographical Notes', *Artwork*, vol. XXV, 1931, 12.

⁷⁶ McConkey, 'The Bougereau of the Naturalists: Bastien-Lepage and British Art', *Art History*, vol. 1, no. 3, September 1978, 372: 'Bastien's contact with Britain can be said to have begun in 1878'.

⁷⁷ *Spectator*, 12.6.1880, 751, cited in McConkey, *Impressionism in Britain*, ex. cat., 21.

⁷⁸ McConkey, *Impressionism in Britain*, 21: 'It was clear that the visual authority of Bastien's work lay in the rendering of real people and places under actual conditions of climate'.

⁷⁹ Wortley, 71: 'Evidence of Bastien-Lepage's influence in British painting at this time is not hard to find. Clausen and LaThangue were to some extent indebted to him all their lives, while many artists like Stanhope Forbes, Arthur Hacker, Fred Hall, W. B. Fortescue in England and James Guthrie, E. A. Walton or Alexander Mann in Scotland, came under his sway temporarily'.

understanding of them, particularly their work practices.⁸⁰ How much artists in Staithes and Runswick Bay really understood the harsh lives of the fisherfolk in their overcrowded houses is open to question. Their paintings were essentially an urban middle-class view of working people and the world they lived in, aimed at a primarily urban middle-class audience. Bastien-Lepage's approach was: '...to paint beneath an overcast sky so that the sun would not be constantly shifting, changing shadows or tones, highlighting or concealing details and all could be recorded with equal authenticity'.⁸¹ In time many artists moved away from Bastien-Lepage's teaching to other ways of depicting their subjects.⁸²

Millet and Bastien-Lepage's influence can be seen in Jackson's work (**figs. 63, 64**). He painted local fisherfolk *en plein air*, which meant suffering a degree of discomfort.⁸³ The artists were seeking isolated communities, which retained their own costumes, dialect, customs and superstitions. For the Knights, the two fishing villages were ideal locations. At Staithes: 'In the healthy and stimulating atmosphere the Knights painted pictures of the everyday occurrences around them, in which the life of the toilers of the sea was usually the motif'.⁸⁴

The French influence on English painters has been studied in detail, but Dutch influence, which was particularly strong in Staithes and Runswick Bay, has received little attention. During the 1880s and 1890s Dutch paintings, particularly those of the Hague School were popular and collected by Europeans and Americans, as with Millet.⁸⁵ J. Staat Forbes, the uncle of S. Forbes, was a major collector of Dutch paintings. He lived in Holland for a period, where he met Israëls and acquired 90 of his works.⁸⁶ When Forbes died he left a substantial

⁸⁰ C. Phillips, 'Jules Bastien-Lepage', *The Magazine of Art*, vol. XV, 1892, 269: 'It is in his own ploughed fields ...in his own homely village, that Bastien sought the elements of his most pathetic landscapes. It is here that he found the framework of those rustic idylls and those rustic portraits in which the uncompromising fidelity was less remarkable...than the rare power which they revealed of penetrating to the very core of human individuality'.

⁸¹ Wortley, 71.

⁸² McConkey, *Impressionism in Britain*, 64: 'This was more clearly evident in the work of the rustic naturalist painters who had become prominent in the 1880s. In most instances these artists moved from a strict adherence to the dogma of Bastien-Lepage to a more personal style which exhibited some of the features of Impressionism'.

⁸³ See Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 133.

⁸⁴ E.G. Halton, 'Modern Painting: The Work of Harold and Laura Knight', *The Studio*, (Special Supplement) 1921, 2.

⁸⁵ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 171, 'The immense success of Neuhuys' and Mauve's paintings of peasants on the Dutch and American art market alerted other painters to the existence of Laren which soon grew into an international art and tourist centre'.

⁸⁶ See E. G. Halton, 'The Staat Forbes Collection: 'I The Barbizon Pictures', 'II The Modern Dutch Pictures', 'Third and Concluding Article', *The Studio*, vol. XXXVI, 1905, 30-47, 107-117, 218-230.

number of paintings by Hague School artists and French artists.⁸⁷

Israëls was one of the leading artists of the Hague School. One of his best known paintings is *Fishermen carrying a Drowned Man* (1861 National Gallery), exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1861 and the R. A. in 1862. Israëls and other Dutch artists were influenced by Millet, and they were particularly impressed by his feeling for peasant life. The Dutch landscape and the coast and the people who lived there inspired the Hague School artists. Many windmills were still in use and local costumes were still worn. Fisherfolk continued to fish as their forefathers did and this provided a range of motifs such as mending nets, women waiting for their husbands to return and children playing on the beach. Such scenes were similar to those painted in Staithes and Runswick Bay. R. de Leeuw et al maintains that: 'They completely ignored, city life particularly any modern aspects of it'.⁸⁸ Interior scenes, which featured copper pans and delftware tiles, were also an important part of their work as was the depiction of light and shadow in the rooms painted.⁸⁹ Earlier Dutch painters such as Vermeer and de Hooch influenced these scenes.

In Britain, Dutch paintings were in demand, as a review in *The Times* in 1896 described: 'For the modern Dutch art which is just now so much in vogue, we have to go next door to Mr. McLeans, where the first room is hung with important watercolours by J. Israëls, A. Mauve, H.W. Mesdag and the rest of the group'.⁹⁰ This popularity continued and in 1905 *The Times* described the growth in the sale of Dutch art:

There is a "boom" just now in the works of the modern Dutch school - Israëls, Mauve, the brothers Maris and their colleagues. No fewer than four exhibitions of them are opening simultaneously in London. The choicest, perhaps, is at Messrs Knoedler's, 15 Old Bond St., but high praise is also due to the pictures and drawings at the Dutch Gallery, 14, Grafton St. and at Messrs Lefevre's in King St., St. James.⁹¹

The Hague School artists had a strong influence on British painters. For those studying in Antwerp, the close accessibility to Holland may have been a factor in them choosing this location.⁹² Holland was a fashionable place for American artists to work.⁹³ German, French

⁸⁷ R.de Leeuw, Sillevis, Dumas,125: 'On his death he left no fewer than 3,200 paintings and watercolours, the largest private collection that had hitherto existed in Britain, over a third of which consisted of Josef Israëls, Mauve, the Maris brothers, Bosboom, Mesdag, Blommers, Gabriël, Roelofs, Neuhuys, De Bock and other contemporary Dutch painters. Works by French painters, with an accent on Corot, Millet and the Barbizon School, made up almost another third of the collection'.

⁸⁸ R. de Leeuw, Sillevis, Dumas, 34.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 120-123.

⁹⁰ *The Times*, 3.11.1896, 12 .

⁹¹ Ibid., 27. 5. 1905, 7.

⁹² Wortley, 65: 'One of the more persuasive attractions that Belgium must have had for British artists was the closer contact it probably gave them with the Hague School artists'.

⁹³See A. Stott, 'Dutch Utopia: Paintings by Antimodern American Artists of the Nineteenth Century', *Smithsonian Studies in American Art*, vol. III, no. 2, 1989, 47-61. Also A. Scott, *American Painters who Worked in the Netherlands, 1880-1914*, Ph.D. thesis, Boston University, 1986.

and British artists also worked there. Clausen was painting there as early as 1874.⁹⁴ Many artists who worked in Staithes and Runswick Bay visited Holland.⁹⁵ Barrett was there in 1880.⁹⁶ F. S. Richardson also painted there many times from around 1894 to 1913.⁹⁷ Some of his paintings were inspired by Holland and some were exhibited at the R. A.⁹⁸ Hopwood was influenced by Dutch painting as can be seen in *Industry* (fig 58). *The Times* review of this work shown at the 1894 R. A. Summer Exhibition states: ‘...but a word of praise may be given to Hopwood’s *Industry* (939) a large drawing inspired by Israël’s, but more gloomy even than he’.⁹⁹

The Knights saw an exhibition of Dutch art at the Guildhall Art Gallery, London, in 1903 during their honeymoon and were particularly impressed by M. Maris’s work.¹⁰⁰ L. Knight recalls the impact of the exhibition on them.¹⁰¹ Following an invitation from Hopwood, the Knights visited Holland for the first time in 1904 and returned there in 1906 and 1907. Much of their work was inspired by these visits. Other artists who visited include Mason, R. Jobling and Senior. In Newlyn, Langley was particularly influenced by Dutch painting. In Cullercoats, there was also a Dutch influence on artists such as G. Horton who provided illustrations for an article, ‘South Holland as a Sketching Ground’, in *The Studio*.¹⁰²

Tourism had an impact on the artists’ colonies in Staithes and Runswick Bay. The north Yorkshire coast from Saltburn to Scarborough was a popular tourist area and as early as 1650 Scarborough had attracted visitors, first the wealthy taking the waters at the spa and then middle-class visitors. With paid holidays and improvements in communications a broader section of society visited, mainly from the Yorkshire working class. Some local entrepreneurs realised there was money to be made in seaside tourism, and resorts, such as Whitby, attracted prosperous visitors by providing theatres, promenades and gardens.¹⁰³ Before the influx of artists, an infrastructure to cater for visitors had been established. Up to around 1900 there were relatively few visitors and these did not impinge on Staithes and Runswick Bay.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁴ R. de Leeuw, Sillevius, Dumas, 123: ‘Thus, the heyday of the Hague School had coincided with a period in which the Netherlands was in vogue, a period in which countless artists visited the country in order to study, to draw and to paint the scenery and people among whom the Hague School artists lived and worked’.

⁹⁵ See Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, 23-25.

⁹⁶ *Volendam* was shown at the Nottingham Society of Artists exhibition in 1880.

⁹⁷ Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, 24.

⁹⁸ R. A., Summer Exhibition, ex. cat., 1898, *Katwijk Sands*.

⁹⁹ *The Times*, 26. 5. 1894, 17.

¹⁰⁰ Dunbar, 229.

¹⁰¹ See Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 124.

¹⁰² *The Studio*, vol. X1, 1897, 26-31.

¹⁰³ See J. Urry, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Society* (Bristol 1990), 16.

¹⁰⁴ *The Times*, 2.9.1885, 8: ‘Situated some distance away from the direct tourist coach route from Whitby to Saltburn, and offering but little attraction to, or accommodation for, outsiders...’.

The Bank Holidays Act of 1871 and the development of the rail network contributed to the development of seaside tourism throughout the country. Railway companies promoted tourism to boost their business.¹⁰⁵ For example, the North Eastern Railway offered cheap excursion tickets, circular tours, cycling and walking tours.¹⁰⁶ It also published guides to the Yorkshire coast, such as *Summer Holidays in North-East England* and *Pocket Guides to the Yorkshire Coast* and information on accommodation such as a *List of Hotels and Furnished Lodgings to Let*¹⁰⁷ (**fig. 10**). Many tourists travelled from Whitby to Staithes and Hinderwell and, in July 1885, a service was opened from Saltburn to Scarborough, which allowed visitors access to Staithes and Runswick Bay. This also improved access for visitors from London. The railway also led to the first hotel, The Station Hotel, being built in Staithes.

In visiting Staithes and Runswick Bay tourists were following a well trodden path, but their presence from 1880 to 1914 may have encouraged others to visit. Pollock and Orton in their work on Brittany argue that middle-class visitors had a range of experiences when visiting the area.¹⁰⁸ The same was true of the north Yorkshire coast and in some cases the artists also became a tourist attraction, much to their annoyance. The artist, H. Bacon observed: 'Follow artists and journalists and you will find something worth finding'.¹⁰⁹ It could be argued that the artists encouraged tourism, as their paintings can be seen as promotional material attracting visitors to this area.

In recent years much has been written on the history and development of tourism.¹¹⁰ Buzard contends that there were two groups, tourists and anti-tourists. The term tourist had negative connotations as they were seen as 'one of the herd' following the latest fashion. Anti-tourists regarded themselves as independent people who made their own decisions on where to travel. The anti-tourists saw themselves as superior to tourists and they were critical of them.¹¹¹ The artists regarded themselves as anti-tourists and perceived tourists as intruders spoiling the villages and their inhabitants, pushing up prices and interrupting their work. As much as they despised the visitors, in many ways they shared the same urban middle-class gaze of the fishing villages and their inhabitants. As Lübbren argues:

Painters [in fishing villages] viewed their surroundings as a spectacle, or to phrase it differently, as a tourist sight. They shared this mode of viewing with their urban audiences, and this common attitude was instrumental

¹⁰⁵ See J. Walvin, *Beside the Seaside: A Social History of the Popular Seaside Holiday* (London 1978).

¹⁰⁶ For more information on the development of seaside resorts see J. Simmons, *The Victorian Railway* (London 1991), 290-300.

¹⁰⁷ British Transport Historical Records, RAIL, The North East Railway 1884-1914.

¹⁰⁸ Orton and Pollock, 326.

¹⁰⁹ See Jacobs, 15.

¹¹⁰ For example, see J. Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature and the Ways to Culture* (Cambridge 1990) and F. Inglis, *The Delicious History of the Holiday* (London 2000).

¹¹¹ Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, 1-2.

in the popularity of fisherfolk paintings. Fishing itself was, for artists and tourists, an impressive or picturesque sight rather than an economic activity.¹¹²

By 1914 tourism contributed to the local economy, more so in Runswick Bay than Staithes.

Lübbren argues that:

The high moment of fisherfolk painting came at a time when many of the painted villages (which were also chosen abodes of artists) were no longer entirely traditional fishing ports nor were they yet fully-fledged tourist resorts.¹¹³

The general factors which contributed to the formation of the English artists' colonies have been examined. There was a commonality with other artists' colonies in Europe. Most English artists' colonies included artists who wanted to get back to nature, and felt alienation when they returned home from their studies. Young people were escaping from cities and were seeking freedom from the stuffy art world. All colonies developed following improved access, most were in proximity to a town or in the case of Cullercoats to a large city. There was a strong French influence on English artists' colonies. Bastien-Lepage and Millet strongly influenced artists in the subjects chosen and their approach, for example *plein air* painting. There was also Dutch influence particularly from the Hague School. The impact of tourism which affected all artists' colonies has also been examined. Modernity had less impact on Staithes and Runswick Bay, which made the villages attractive to artists. Parts B and C look at the specific factors relating to Staithes and Runswick Bay as artists' colonies.

¹¹² Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 48.

¹¹³ Ibid., 47.

Part B The Artists' Colony in Staithes.

Part B looks at the specific factors which particularly attracted artists to Staithes: Why did artists go there? Which artists worked there? What was the structure of the artists' colony? From outward appearances, what was the identity of the colony? The specific impact of tourism is also examined.

Artists visited Staithes for a variety of reasons. In her autobiography, L. Knight describes what attracted her.¹¹⁴ L. Knight visited Staithes for the first time in 1895, and spent the summers of 1895-1899 in the village before living there and in the surrounding area from 1900 to 1907.

As noted earlier, French artists' colonies, particularly Barbizon and Pont-Aven, were a strong influence on the development of the English artists' colonies. Bendiner describes how French artists left Paris to work in remote villages:

Paul Gauguin's radical innovations at Pont-Aven in 1888 continued this tendency among Parisian painters to spend months at some archaic site, working side by side with other artists and forgetting the degenerate culture of the modern city.¹¹⁵

Some thought Barbizon a model artists' colony. A contemporary observer, A. B. Blake describes how:

The village of Barbizon distills the atmosphere of labour, of unprogressive, unchanged, unmodernised labour. Therein lies to the artistic sense its perfect and complete charm. Labour there has all the naturalness and sincerity of toil, which smacks of real struggle with the soil. The peasants of Barbizon are "real countryman", as Millet says of them, rude, simple, hard-working folk, with some of the serious melancholy and earnestness unending labour brings with it.¹¹⁶

This is, in essence, what artists were looking for in Staithes, Runswick Bay, Newlyn and Cullercoats. In Staithes and Runswick Bay they were mixing with workers who lived much as their ancestors had. These were the 'unprogressive, unchanged, unmodernised labour' they sought. Wasserman described the fisherfolk in Cullercoats and this could also apply in Staithes and Runswick Bay:

It is surprising how strongly they retain their peculiar characteristics, while places and things about them change continually. There must be a great amount of individuality in the race to withstand the influence of this new flood of new life which has poured in upon it of late years. They keep apart, intermarry amongst themselves, stick to their own ways, and wear their own particular costumes, just as their fathers and mothers, and

¹¹⁴ See Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 75. Before she married in 1903 her name was Laura Johnson but, throughout this work, for reasons of simplicity, she is referred to as Laura Knight.

¹¹⁵ Bendiner, 104.

¹¹⁶ A.B. Blake, 'Fontainebleau and Barbizon', *The Art Journal*, 1882, 328.

grandfathers and grandmothers did before them.¹¹⁷

Another attraction for painters was the availability of cheap accommodation. From 1881 to 1901, because of the decline in the fishing industry, many local people sought work elsewhere, leaving houses empty. In her autobiography, L. Knight describes the availability of studio space.¹¹⁸ The artists were outsiders who never truly belonged to the villages. Robins, in an essay on Clausen, describes how he tried to belong to a community where he painted.¹¹⁹ The artist's preferred milieu was a 'primitive' village, but somewhere accessible to a nearby town.¹²⁰

For first-time visitors the visual impact was striking. Staithes was situated in a cleft with cliffs either side and a beck running to the sea; in contrast, Runswick was set in a large bay (**figs. 44, 45**). Both villages were centuries old and sufficiently far apart to be seen in the area as distinct communities. Members of each village saw themselves as distinctly different. An early visitor was the London artist, Erichsen, who describes the atmosphere in Staithes:

Down on the very edge of the North Sea, thrust out on rocky ledges, washed in winter by the salt foam, and climbing backwards up two steep headlands that tower above a brawling beck, lies a little fishing town...Even before the dawn it is alive with flitting lanterns, and you may hear the regular rhythmical shouts of the fishermen as they haul down their cobbles to the sea.¹²¹

In her autobiography, L. Knight describes her feelings about Staithes.¹²² She was from Nottingham and provides an eyewitness account of living there.¹²³ Like other artists, she saw the village as an escape from the hectic, impersonal life of the city.¹²⁴ Knight built a close relationship with local people.¹²⁵

Each village had its own distinctive dialect, barely intelligible to outsiders. A. S. Umpleby, a former Station Master at Staithes, was a dialect poet whose work has helped to preserve the Staithes dialect. The following extract of verse by him is about a first time visitor to Staithes who is about to be deserted by his guide. It was written in 1934, but the dialect had changed

¹¹⁷ Wasserman, 'Some Fisherfolk', 57.

¹¹⁸ See Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 79.

¹¹⁹ Robins, 'Living the Simple Life', 5: 'Clausen also consciously constructed myths about his experience of living and working in the English countryside. Forming a link to a single locale was a way of securing the illusion of an enduring past within the present, and Clausen, like so many of his generation, consciously sought an English locale to call his own. But without childhood memories, family ties and a long established attachment he remained an outsider in the rural communities where he lived'.

¹²⁰ Corbett, Holt and Russell, eds., *The Geographies of Englishness*, xi: 'The geographical retreat...was highly selective and the search was for sites which either were, or could appear to be, pre-industrial and anti-urban'.

¹²¹ Erichsen, 462.

¹²² See Knight, *The Magic of a Line*, 107.

¹²³ See Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 73.

¹²⁴ See *Ibid.*, 100.

¹²⁵ See Grimes, 28.

little from 1880 to 1914.

Away', ah sez, 'deean't leave ma ere' –
I' Jane Wade yard they ed ma -
Ah's nivver finnd mi rooad oot ere!
Seea oot i t'street they gat ma.¹²⁶

A study of the dialect gives an insight into the rich and varied speech of the fisherfolk and underlines how different the communities were.¹²⁷

In order to prove that there were two artists' colonies, it is essential to look at who worked in Staithes and Runswick Bay. Both Phillips¹²⁸ and Haworth¹²⁹ argue that the most active period for painters was between 1894 and 1909 in Staithes. Haworth also argues that '...after 1909 the group disbanded and the Staithes Art Club was once again incorporated into the Yorkshire Union of Artists', this is not the case.¹³⁰ By using a variety of sources including auction records, R. A. and other exhibition records, as well as local newspapers, it can be shown that more artists were present than was previously thought. In the summer months the local newspaper printed details of where individuals were staying, and this can be used to prove the presence of artists. Each village had a core of artists living there, others who divided their time between locations and many who came to work in the summer.

On the basis of new research, it can be shown that there were three identifiable periods before 1914 when artists were active, and this challenges the existing view. Runswick Bay was the most important centre for art from 1880 to 1892. Many artists came together here in 1884, as they did in Walberswick and Newlyn. Some were former Académie Julian and Herkomer students. Runswick Bay was more popular with tourists and had better facilities. Secondly, during the period from 1893 to 1907, Staithes was more popular. In 1901 the S. A. C. was established but artists still continued to work in Runswick. Thirdly, between 1908 and 1914, Runswick Bay once more became the main centre for artists in the area. Many had settled there, including Jackson who had been working there since around 1881, Friedenson, Hill, Hopwood and Ingall also lived there while Senior spent half the year there. Foster had died in 1906. Newton mistakenly contends that:

The most important painters at Staithes - Ernest Dade, Arthur Friedenson, Henry Hopwood, Harold Knight, Fred Jackson, Charles Mackie, Fred Mayor, Lionel Crawshaw, John Ingall, Fred Richardson, Ernest Rigg and Percy

¹²⁶ A. S. Umpleby, 'T' White Hoss' in *A Cleveland Anthology* ed. B. Cowley, Yorkshire Dialect Society (Leeds 1963), 42.

¹²⁷ M. S. Lawson, 'An Account of the Dialect of Staithes in the North Riding of Yorkshire', M. A., University of Leeds, 1949.

¹²⁸ Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, ex. cat., 11: 'However, the intense period of activity revolved around a fifteen year span from 1894 to 1909'.

¹²⁹ Haworth, *Artists of the Staithes Group*, ex. cat., 8: 'This coming together [of artists] lasted only fifteen years from 1894 to 1909'.

¹³⁰ Ibid. 10.

Teasdale had all trained in Paris...¹³¹

Many of these artists, in fact, lived in or near Runswick Bay. Mackie did not train in Paris. It is not the case that Ingall and Teasdale could be regarded as the most important artists, since they were on the periphery.

The three phases of the artists' colony in Staithes are examined. For more information on who worked there see **Appendix 3**. In the first phase, between 1880 and 1892, T. M. M. Hemy, the brother of C. N. Hemy, lived there in the summers of 1884 and 1885 and exhibited *Staithes* at the R. A. in 1886. H. Mann worked there from 1885 to 1887, but was probably only there in the summer. He was an associate of 'The Glasgow Boys', and had studied at the Slade and Julian's. Some of his paintings of Staithes were exhibited at the G.I. from 1886 to 1887.¹³² Erichsen lived there from 1885 to 1886.

Barrett visited Staithes for the first time around 1886. He taught at the Nottingham School of Art and the Knights, Bowman and Gardner were some of his students. He visited every summer until around 1903 and he encouraged other Nottingham painters to work there. E. Dade and F. Short also visited around 1886. Foster and Jackson also painted in the village although they were based in Runswick Bay, and later mainly worked there. Others who worked in Staithes include: T. B. Hardy, V. Yglesias, C. Robertson, W.W. Manning and H. M. Marshall. In 1892, the Newcastle artist, I. Thompson visited for the first time. Following her marriage to R. Jobling they stayed there in 1894 and continued to visit, mainly in the summer, until around 1920. Millard argues that they were there from 1895.¹³³ This was not the case as new evidence obtained from the local newspaper proves.¹³⁴ Their visits encouraged other Newcastle artists to work there.

During the second phase, from 1893 to 1907, more artists visited partly because of a newly installed water supply and the improved treatment of sewage, which made it a more attractive location. The Knights stayed for the first time in 1895. There is some confusion as to the date of their first visit. Fox argues they were there in 1894, but there is no evidence to support this.

Late in 1894, Laura's great aunt took Laura, Harold and Sissy for a month's holiday to Staithes in Yorkshire, a coastal village with particular attractions for artists.¹³⁵

¹³¹ Newton thesis, 'The Cullercoats Artists' Colony', 97.

¹³² Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts, ex. cats., 1886-7.

¹³³ Millard, *A Romance with the North East*, ex. cat., 41.

¹³⁴ W.G. 9. 9-30. 9.1892, Miss Isa Thompson, (Newcastle), was staying at Mrs. Verrills, Freemason Arms, Staithes. W.G. 26.7-10.8, 1894, Mr. and Mrs. Jobling at Mrs. Ward, Church St., Staithes.

¹³⁵ Fox, *Painting in Newlyn, 1900-1930*, 97.

Phillips argues that L. Knight lived in Staithes from 1898.¹³⁶ Bolling and Withington argue that their first visit was in 1903.¹³⁷ Following extensive research on local newspapers which recorded when artists stayed in the village, it is proved that she spent every summer there from 1895 with H. Knight except when he was studying in Paris.¹³⁸ From c.1900 they lived there full time until 1907.

L. Knight's sister also stayed with her, as did R. Good, a student and a close friend. Good was there every summer from 1896 to around 1901 when she married O. Sheppard, a teacher at the Nottingham School of Art. Friedenson visited in the early 1890s, but from this time he mainly painted in Runswick. Following his earlier stay, H. Mann returned to Staithes in the summers of 1897 to 1899. More artists visited from 1899. F. Mayor was painting in the area from around 1899 to 1902 where he met his future wife, the artist H. Hoyland. Mason was there from around 1900, but did not return after 1902. The Newcastle-upon-Tyne artist, W. H. Charlton worked there, also the London based artist, S. Lee. Bagshawe was there before his marriage in 1901. Blandford Fletcher stayed in Hinderwell in 1899 but worked in Staithes where he produced paintings such as *A North Sea Fishing Village* (**fig. 27**). J. Bowman, originally from Nottingham, lived in Staithes in the summer of 1902.

From 1901, the S. A. C. was set up and many artists visited, particularly in the summer when exhibiting their work or when they were proposed for membership. Full details of the membership of the S. A. C. from 1901 to 1907 can be found at **Appendix 5**. From 1901, there is little information in the local newspaper on who was staying in the village. It could be the case that some stayed with friends and therefore did not appear in the accommodation listings. Guttridge Sykes was working there in 1903, W.W. Ball in 1905 and 1906, and the Australian artist Burgess was also there in 1906. In late 1907 the Knights left for Newlyn.

The third phase was from 1908 to 1914. After the Knights left, no artists were resident but some stayed for short periods, such as J. R. Reid in 1913. Those who remained stayed at Runswick Bay or the surrounding area. By this time the number of people involved in fishing had declined, the taste of the art-buying public had changed and fisherfolk paintings were no longer in such demand.

¹³⁶ Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, 20.

¹³⁷ Bolling and Withington, *The Graphic Work of Laura Knight*, 103: '[In] 1903 she started to visit Staithes with Harold and Sis'.

¹³⁸ W.G. 16.8.1895, Misses Johnson, Mrs. Laverick's, Staithes.

Some artists lived in Whitby, Robin Hood's Bay and Scarborough and travelled to Staithes to paint. Bagshawe lived in Whitby from 1901 and A. Stevens and his wife also lived there. Crawshaw spent little time in Staithes and from 1903 he had a studio in Whitby, which was only used in the summer. Mackie also lived in Whitby for a time and Terry settled in Sleights near Whitby in the 1890s. His friend Garrido also lived there from 1906 to 1907. J. Atkinson lived first in Sleights and then in Glaisdale, near to Whitby. Other artists lived in Scarborough including Booth, at nearby Scalby, E. Dade until 1913 and Mason around 1898 to 1903. A. Strange, the head of the Scarborough School of Art, also lived there. Some of these artists had stayed for varying periods of time in Staithes and Runswick Bay. J. Wright lived in Robin Hood's Bay, as did O. Bowen in the summer months from 1898 to 1908.

In examining the structure of the artists' colony the following points are discussed: leadership, sub-groups, group dynamics and the relationship between experienced painters and young painters. Other factors examined are: who worked in other artists' colonies, their relationship with the community, where they stayed, their leisure activities and the S. A. C.

Most artists who worked in Staithes, as in Newlyn, were not from the local area. E. E. Anderson was born in Whitby and Dade, who was born in London, moved to Scarborough at an early age. Newton asserts: 'Both the Cullercoats and Staithes colonies contained a high proportion of artists from surrounding towns and cities, thereby significantly lessening the sense of discovery'.¹³⁹ Based on the available evidence, this is clearly not the case in Staithes. In contrast, most artists in Cullercoats were local, living in or near Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Many in Staithes were from further away than 'surrounding towns and cities', for example, Barrett and the Knights were from Nottingham, 145 miles away, and many artists came from Leeds, 83 miles away. Lübbren also states that the: '...catchment area of Staithes was confined to Yorkshire and Nottingham'.¹⁴⁰ It is clear that Manchester and Newcastle-upon-Tyne were also important catchment areas. There was also Scottish influence with Mann from Glasgow and Mackie from Edinburgh.

As Lübbren contends: 'It is crucial to note that artists' colonies were not simply haphazard collections of individuals who happened to share the same space, but cohesive social entities with shared rituals and commitments'.¹⁴¹ In each artists' colony there were sub-groups based on where artists came from and the schools and art academies, usually Paris and Antwerp,

¹³⁹ Newton, *Cullercoats*, ex. cat., 14.

¹⁴⁰ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 2.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

which they attended. Many of the artists, who studied in Paris and Antwerp, later established the N. E. A. C. in 1886.¹⁴² Previous student group experience was one of the key determinants of which artists' colony painters joined. Those who attended the Académie Julian formed a distinct sub-group that shared the same inspiration and ideas.¹⁴³ Julian's exerted an important influence on the development of the artists' colonies. The approach adopted there is described by Fehrer:

Julian's Académie never deviated from the original purpose of its founder: to instill in its students a respect for classic artistic models, but a keen and sympathetic observer of people, Julian had also realised the importance of freedom in order to develop an individual point of view...It becomes clear that Julian's Académie occupied a significant position in the art world during its existence. By making a fundamental and practical training available to a large and varied group of students, it widened opportunities open to them...By welcoming a large number of women and students of all nationalities it became truly international and universal.¹⁴⁴

It was a private art school, which had no entrance examination. Here students had the opportunity of life work and received criticism from their tutors. Living in Paris, mixing with a wide range of nationalities and absorbing new ideas, contributed to an artist's development. Writing in 1902 C. Holland observed: 'A year or two at Julian's, the Beaux-Arts, or Colarossi's, is worth a cycle of South Kensington with all its "correctness" and, plaster casts'.¹⁴⁵ Artists who had trained at the Académie Julian in Paris and worked in Staithes include: F. H. Swinstead (studying there 1881) J. Charles (c.1881), H. Mann (1883), F. Mayor (1885), E. Dade (1887), W. W. Manning (c.1890), H. Conway (c.1893), and H. Knight (1896). Besides attendance at Julian's, F. S. Richardson studied with Carolus-Duran in Paris (c.1883). L. T. Crawshaw (c.1891), S. Lee (c.1887) and J. Terry (c.1895) also studied at the Académie Colorossi. J. H. Parkyn was also in Paris c.1883 and Frank Short c.1885. Other artists studied at Antwerp and were taught by Verlat including A.G. Stevens, T. M. M. Hemy, Fletcher and Friedenson. Bagshawe also studied in Bruges around 1890.

The number of artists who had attended Académie Julian was a factor which made Staithes and Runswick Bay distinctly different from other colonies and it is possible they were places for reunions for former Julian students. Having experienced the camaraderie of the art academies, they wanted to continue this in the artists' colonies. C. Gotch and Titcomb were at Julian's for a period but most Newlyn artists studied at various academies in Belgium and

¹⁴² E. Morris and A. McKay, 'British Art Students in Paris, 1814-1890', *Apollo*, vol. CXXXV, February 1992, 80: 'The distinctive identity of the Paris-trained British student was first asserted in 1886 by the founding of the New English Art Club which at first consisted simply of young British artists recently returned from French studios...'

¹⁴³ Nottingham, Castle Museum and Art Gallery, *British Impressionism*, ex. cat., 1989, 12: 'Jackson, for example, was in Paris at the same time as fellow north countrymen, Edward Stott, William Stott of Oldham and others such as La Thangue. He also shared with these artists a fascination for large pictures where *plein air* observation - pursued in all weathers - was combined with a reverent approach to the mysticism of nature.'

¹⁴⁴ C. Fehrer, 'New Light on the Académie Julian', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, vol. CIII, 1984, 214.

¹⁴⁵ C. Holland, 'Student Life in the Quartier Latin, Paris', *The Studio*, vol. XXVII, 1902, 33-34.

France. T. Gotch, Harris, Wainwright, Garstin, Bramley and Hall studied in Antwerp. Gotch and Wainwright also studied in Paris, alongside Tuke and Millard, at Lauren's atelier. Stanhope Forbes also studied at Bonnats in Paris. Detmold and Chevallier Tayler attended classes taught by Carolus-Duran.

Few Cullercoats artists studied in Paris. Newton states that J. Chambers, Emmerson, I. Jobling, T. B. Garvie and T. E. Macklin were there, but she presents no evidence on where they studied and when they were there. W. H. Charlton was at Julian's and met up with other students at Runswick Bay and T. M. M. and C. Hemy also studied at Antwerp.¹⁴⁶ Another group at Cullercoats were those taught by W. Bell Scott and William Cozens Way, at the Newcastle School of Art. These include the Joblings, Atkinson, Charlton and Hedley.¹⁴⁷

Another sub group at Staithes was existing or former students of the Herkomer School, founded in 1883, by Herkomer at Bushey, Hertfordshire.¹⁴⁸ Most Herkomer students worked in Runswick Bay, but R. H. Hill (1895) and P. Paul (1897) also worked in Staithes. According to Hill, Herkomer '...praised good quality paint and simple technique...His great aim was to encourage individual expression without eccentricity'.¹⁴⁹ The Newlyn artists A. Talmage and Titcomb were at Herkomers, but no Cullercoats artists studied there.

Young painters received criticism and encouragement from older, more experienced artists. This supportive environment allowed painters such as the Knights to learn from others, to enjoy social events and to experience a sense of belonging. One of the few photographs of artists working together is of the Knights with Jackson at Runswick Bay. It is possible that Jackson is giving instruction in painting (**fig. 94**). L. Knight describes visits with H. Knight to the homes of Hopwood and Jackson, respected artists, from whom they received help and criticism.¹⁵⁰

Hopwood and Jackson were significant influences on young painters, as was Barrett who had exhibited at the R. A., R. E. and other bodies. L. Knight recalls his advice to her on where to paint.¹⁵¹ Barrett's first painting of Staithes was exhibited at the N. S. A. in 1886.¹⁵² By this time he had also painted in several artists' colonies, for example, Clovelly in 1880.¹⁵³ He also

¹⁴⁶ See Newton thesis, 'The Cullercoats Artists' Colony', 117.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ See A. L. Baldry, *Hubert von Herkomer, R. A.: A Study and a Biography* (London, 1901).

¹⁴⁹ Hill, 'Memories of an Old Student', *West Herts. and Watford Observer*, 24.3 and 31.3.1939.

¹⁵⁰ See Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 133-134.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 70.

¹⁵² N. S. A., ex. cat., 1886, 375) *One by One, the Fishing Boats set Sail*.

¹⁵³ N. S. A., ex. cat., 1880, 27) *Morning, Clovelly Quay*.

worked in Volendam and Penzance in 1890.¹⁵⁴

E. Dade worked in Staithes, but most of his paintings are of Scarborough, where he lived from 1889 until 1913. Before 1889 he shared a studio with Brangwyn at the Manresa Road studios in Chelsea. He may have encouraged others linked with Manresa Road, such as Short and Llewellyn, to visit Staithes. Dade achieved early success at 24 with an exhibition at the Dowdeswell Gallery, London, in January 1888.¹⁵⁵ Most exhibits were of Whitby and Scarborough but there were some of Staithes.¹⁵⁶

Mackie was working in Staithes from c.1900 to c.1905 but maintained close links with Scotland. In 1900, he was elected Chair of the S. S. A. And, in 1902, was elected both as a member of the R. S. W. and as an associate of the R. S. A. Mackie was a mentor to artists such as L. Knight.¹⁵⁷ She describes how he advised which subjects to choose and on how to use colour in her work.¹⁵⁸ As with Barrett, Mackie was there to help her and without this, it is possible that she may have abandoned painting.

There was no single dominant personality in Staithes who became a leader, as with S. Forbes at Newlyn. There was a hierarchy within the colonies based on age, success and talent. The most influential figure in both colonies was Jackson, who acted as a mentor to young artists and as a critic to established ones. Barrett and Foster were professional art teachers, and Mackie, Senior, Bowen and E. E. Anderson also undertook teaching on an informal basis.

Improvements in communications enabled artists to travel with greater ease throughout Britain and Europe. Many worked in other artists' colonies: Foster and Barrett painted in Clovelly and F. Mayor painted in Amberley, Sussex, with his friend E. Stott around 1890. Blandford Fletcher was a friend of S. Forbes and worked with him in the artists' colonies of Quimperlé and Pont-Aven. On a visit to France he met Bastien-Lepage.¹⁵⁹ He later joined Forbes in Newlyn where they shared accommodation. After Newlyn he subsequently lived in Hinderwell around 1899, but mainly painted in Staithes. J. Robertson Reid worked in Newlyn and, in 1913, worked in Staithes. Some painters from Cullercoats worked in Staithes.

No artists from Staithes and Runswick Bay painted in Cullercoats, although some exhibited in

¹⁵⁴ N. S. A., ex. cat., 1890, 1) *Penzance* 4) *Volendam*.

¹⁵⁵ The exhibition was entitled *A Series of Drawings and Oil Paintings of the Herring Fishery, Whitby*.

¹⁵⁶ For example, 123) *Staithes (When the Boats are Away)*, (untraced).

¹⁵⁷ See Knight, *The Magic of a Line*, 118.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Cross, 57.

the Newcastle-upon-Tyne area.¹⁶⁰ Newton describes how: ‘Other Bewick Club members also used Staithes as a sketching ground, including J. Watson, W. H. Charlton, T. M. M. Hemy, John Hodgson Campbell and H. C. Charlewood’.¹⁶¹ Of these W. H. Charlton and T. M. M. Hemy did paint in Staithes but also worked at Runswick. Charlewood and Campbell produced little work in the village. J. Watson was a teacher in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and was mainly associated with Runswick Bay where he painted as early as 1894. Some who were based in Staithes also worked in Walberswick, including Blandford Fletcher and Short, who were there in 1884.¹⁶² V. Yglesias also worked there in 1884-5, 1888-9 and 1897. Paul displayed two Walberswick paintings in 1903 at the R. B. A.; he joined the S. A. C. in 1905. Mackie also worked in Kirkcudbright in 1885.

The close relationship between the artists and the villagers, influenced the paintings produced. Some artists lived there; others, like Barrett, had a cottage where they stayed in the summer. In Runswick Bay artists tended to move away from local people and lived in their own houses or stayed in more expensive accommodation. L. Knight describes how much it cost to board with Mrs Crooks.¹⁶³ She also says that, further along the street, H. Mann, his wife and two children were lodging. The local newspapers provide details of where artists stayed.¹⁶⁴

Runswick Bay was the first village to develop accommodation of a good standard. In contrast, Staithes was slow to develop tourism until the railway came. Artists stayed with local families mostly in small cottages with smoky interiors, the smell of fish and home baking.¹⁶⁵ There were many public houses which offered rooms. These were not the centre of the artists' group, unlike the Pension Gloanec in Pont-Aven or the Spaanders Hotel in Volendam.¹⁶⁶ In each place the artists stayed in one hotel.¹⁶⁷ Lübbren argues that innkeepers such as Hamdorrf at Laren and Brondrum at Skagen provided a service as middlemen between the artists and the community.¹⁶⁸ There is no evidence of this in Staithes and Runswick Bay.

Evaluating painters' leisure activities in an artists' colony shows how they interacted with

¹⁶⁰ This is discussed in Chapter 4.

¹⁶¹ Newton, *Cullercoats*, ex. cat., 55.

¹⁶² See R. Scott, *The Walberswick Enigma* (Ipswich 1994).

¹⁶³ Knight, *The Magic of a Line*, 107.

¹⁶⁴ *Whitby Times*, Visitors' Supplement, 16, 23, 30. 8 and 6. 9. 1901: R. and I. Jobling, Dalehouse, [a hamlet near Staithes]; Bagshawe, Blue Jacket House; H. Knight, Mayor and Friedenson, Mrs. Porritt's, Gun Gutter; Mr. and Mrs. Barrett, Kirkhill House and L. Knight and sister, Broom Hill.

¹⁶⁵ Accommodation was available at the following: Mrs. Bennison, High Street; Mrs. Brown, High Street; Mrs. Harburn, High Street; Mrs. Stewards, Cliff Top Village and Mrs. Verrill, Mrs. D. Cole, Mrs. Featherstone, Mrs. Lavericks, Mrs. J. Ward.

¹⁶⁶ See Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 64-75.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 70-72.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 70-73.

each other as well as with local people. An examination of these activities shows that they were not only staying there for a week or a fortnight, but for considerable periods of time. There are few images of the artists at work. For the young artists, the social life on offer was a key factor in attracting them. An obituary of Bagshawe describes: 'This painting Colony of the North comprised a merry company of artists; smoking concerts and cricket matches went hand in hand with a devotion to Art in most of their lives'.¹⁶⁹ They arranged their own entertainment, sometimes organising shows where individuals or groups performed for a local audience, but there are no paintings of these events. Nor are there any paintings of informal or formal gatherings and no portrayals of dinners or picnics. This is in contrast to artists' colonies such as Skagen in Denmark. Here P. Kroyer entertained other artists and was involved in communal meals and festivities.¹⁷⁰

The artists involvement in local cricket clubs and in organising social activities shows that they were integrated into village life and accepted by local people. Many visited in the summer when the annual agricultural shows were held. The Whitby Regatta was one of the social highlights of the year, and many visited this. In contrast, the fisherfolk had little leisure time, except on Sunday. Artists' colonies were social entities where artists met their friends and it was an extension of the social networks they knew in their home cities.¹⁷¹

Bagshawe, Dade, Mayor and Mason were interested in sailing, which required great skill in the treacherous seas off the north Yorkshire coast. This interest brought them closer to the fisherfolk and offered more painting opportunities. Other sporting activities were available and L. Knight describes hockey matches played at Hinderwell. At one match she met Mackie who gave her considerable help in developing her painting style.¹⁷²

Some artists were enthusiastic cricketers and, during the summers of 1901 and 1902, played in the Staithes Cricket team. On 19.7.1901, Staithes played Grosmont and the team included Senior, Friedenson, Richardson, Knight, Bagshawe and Mayor. The other members were local people, and this is a sign of how the outsiders were accepted. The following week, they played against Moorsholm with Senior as the opening batsman.¹⁷³ On 16.8.1901, 'Mr. F.

¹⁶⁹ H. Walker, 'A Yorkshire Artist and his Work', *The Yorkshire Weekly Post*, 30.4.1910, 15.

¹⁷⁰ See Jacobs, 96, plates 4 and 5 and illustrations on 103, 109.

¹⁷¹ L. Birch, Stanhope A. Forbes R.A. and Elizabeth A. Forbes A.R.W.S. (London 1906), 27. [As Stanhope Forbes has written] 'The brotherhood of the palette is a strong bond and should unite us very closely. There are few painters, I think, who will not have to confess that the society they take most pleasure in is that of their brother artists for it is a charming and fascinating country this little Bohemia of ours, in which we are privileged to dwell'.

¹⁷² Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 87.

¹⁷³ *Whitby Times*, 19. 7.1901, 5 and 26. 7. 1901, 6.

Meyer's [Mayor's] XI' including Friedenson, Knight and Bagshawe played Whitby.¹⁷⁴ The following year Staithes had H. Knight as their opening batsman.¹⁷⁵ There are no paintings of these cricket matches. The Newlyn artists also enjoyed cricket, as can be seen from a 1895 article.¹⁷⁶

Staithes and Runswick Bay were bases for walking either along the coast or inland on the North Yorkshire moors. The moors also provided opportunities for grouse shooting, and on local estates, such as Grinkle Hall, there was an abundance of game. Salmon and trout fishing were also available. After a day spent painting, the men could meet in a public house. Other meetings were held in people's houses where there was conversation and singing around the piano.¹⁷⁷

M. Cross argues that: '...the artists at Staithes...lacked that vital Bohemian element which was a feature of its counterpart in Cornwall, the Newlyn Group'.¹⁷⁸ New evidence shows this is not the case, there was clearly a 'Bohemian element':

Staithes Torchlight Dance

Saturday last must be forever a red-letter day in the annals of the ancient fishing town of Staithes. With a confidence not always justified in our proverbially fickle climate for *al fresco* entertainments, the artists now visiting Staithes arranged for a public torchlight dance to be holden on the Staithes sea front...producing the effect of a Venetian fête...A string band stationed on a raised platform...furnished the music...The brilliance of the scene was enhanced by rockets, lime-lights etc...¹⁷⁹

L. Knight describes a concert held to raise funds for the Fishermen's Institute organised by the artists.¹⁸⁰ Another concert was held in September 1892 at the Staithes School by: '...visitors assisted by local artists' particularly solos and a duet by Friedenson and Hopwood'.¹⁸¹ The *Whitby Gazette* also describes another benefit concert with Foster in the chair.¹⁸² At a benefit concert held in Staithes School in aid of J. Verrill, a local fisherman, the artists Ingall and Rigg, who were living at Runswick Bay, provided the entertainment.¹⁸³

Another feature of the artists' colony was the S. A. C., which existed from 1901 to 1907. Full

¹⁷⁴ W. G., 16. 8. 1901, 7.

¹⁷⁵ W.G. 23.5.1902, 5: 'Knight was the only batsman to make any show against the Whitby attack, he playing a very patient innings of 11'.

¹⁷⁶ In *The Studio*, vol. V, 1895, 179, Frank Richards records that: 'On hot summer's days, we indulge in cricket. Newlyn versus St. Ives is the match of the year, generally terminating in a victory for the home team.' See also Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 183, note 12; and Jacobs, *The Good and Simple Life*, 75, 154-5.

¹⁷⁷ Sheppard Papers, Rosie Good Letters, 1899-1901, National Irish Visual Art Library, National College of Art and Design, Dublin. Rosie Good, letter to Sheppard, 28.5.1899, 3.

¹⁷⁸ Rochdale, Rochdale Art Gallery, *F.W. Jackson, 1859-1918*, ex. cat., M. Cross, 1978, 6.

¹⁷⁹ W. G., 23. 9. 1892, 3.

¹⁸⁰ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 92.

¹⁸¹ W. G., 2. 9. 1892, 4.

¹⁸² W. G., 28. 8. 1896, 3.

¹⁸³ W. G., 13.5. 1898, 3.

details of membership can be found at **Appendix 5**. It was not like the St. Ives Art Club as there were no premises and it only existed to organise a small-scale annual exhibition.¹⁸⁴ The impetus for the club was from the artists and there is no evidence to support Haworth's assertion in his exhibition catalogue that: 'In 1901 the Staithes Group broke away from the Yorkshire Union of Artists and decided to hold their own exhibition at the Fishermen's Institute in Staithes'.¹⁸⁵ 'The Staithes Group' was not a recognised group at this time, and it is not proven that the S. A. C. was affiliated to the Y. U. A.

The S. A. C. was the closest they came to a formal structure but there was no written manifesto. There was no venue in both villages on the scale of the art gallery in Newlyn, which opened in 1895. Barrett was a founding member, a teacher and an 'elder statesman'. He could have been the driving force behind setting up the S. A. C. The early meetings were held at his accommodation at Kirkhill in Staithes. A hanging committee was established for each exhibition and in 1902, for example, this comprised Hopwood, Jobling, H. Knight, Barrett, Friedenson and Bagshawe. The S. A. C. should be seen in perspective, it was a minor exhibition venue compared with Leeds or Manchester.

The artists only met a few times a year to organise the exhibition in August and September and there is no evidence of the club undertaking other activities. There was a plan to organise an exhibition in London but this did not materialise.¹⁸⁶ Lübbren refers to a similar organisation in Worpswede, Germany, although she does not discuss the S. A. C. in this context. Some of the painters, who founded the artists' colony in 1889, established the *Künstler-Vereinigung Worpswede* in 1894: '...complete with statutes and secretary'. Its main purpose was to '...facilitate exhibition and the dissemination of prints' but 'disbanded only four and a half years later'.¹⁸⁷

The S. A. C. was established as some of the original members of the Newlyn artists' colony were leaving and the Cullercoats artists' colony was also in decline. The first exhibition was held on 27.7.1901, but no records survive of this.¹⁸⁸ A second exhibition was planned for 1. 8. 1902, to be held at the Fishermen's Institute in Staithes. At the 1902 planning meeting held in July, Hopwood was in the chair and many artists were proposed as members.

¹⁸⁴ The S. A. C. exhibitions are discussed in Chapter 4.

¹⁸⁵ Haworth, *Painters of the Staithes Group*, ex. cat., 8.

¹⁸⁶ See the S. A. C. ex. cat., 1905.

¹⁸⁷ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 18.

¹⁸⁸ Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, 15.

Although Senior is mentioned in these minutes he did not display work in the club's exhibitions.¹⁸⁹ The S. A. C. shows a degree of organisation not seen previously. Rules were established and only members who had paid their subscriptions could exhibit. All paintings had to be framed and artists could only display a limited number of works. Large pictures were not permitted owing to the lack of space. The exhibition catalogues are useful in providing details of who exhibited and when, which motifs inspired the artists and what prices were asked for the paintings. There is no information available on the purchasers of the works. Seven small exhibitions were staged from 1901 to 1907 and in total approximately 400-500 paintings were shown. This compares with the Y. U. A. and the Leeds Spring exhibitions, which had around 1000 paintings at each exhibition.

No catalogues are available for the 1906 and 1907 exhibitions. Using evidence from local newspapers, it is now possible to prove for the first time that the Australian artist A. J. W. Burgess, who had worked in St. Ives and had been taught by J. Olsson, showed work at the 1906 exhibition.¹⁹⁰ The works exhibited have not been traced. Along with Garrido, his presence proves that overseas painters worked there. Although Lübbren argues that the artists' colony in Staithes was '100 per cent British', this is not the case.¹⁹¹ By 1906 the exhibitions were not attracting much publicity and many artists were not displaying their work. An article mentions that as well as the S. A. C. Exhibition, there were two other art exhibitions in Whitby, in Silver Street and in the Rembrandt Gallery. The exhibition in Staithes is mentioned last and the impression is given of it being an afterthought.¹⁹²

The final exhibition was held in 1907. Some new young members showed their work but the Knights, the Joblings, Hopwood, Mackie, Paul, Wright, Watson and Gardner did not exhibit. The Knights were about to leave for Newlyn and artists such as Mason and Mayor were painting elsewhere. The last two exhibitions featured fewer paintings with Staithes as their subject. Runswick, Whitby and scenes from Italy and France proved more popular.

Why were the S. A. C. exhibitions organised? They may have been held to attract more visitors to the village which, in 1901, was suffering from the effects of the decline of the fishing industry. They may also have been organised to provide younger artists with an

¹⁸⁹ Minutes of the S. A. C., Bagshawe Family Archive.

¹⁹⁰ *W. G.*, 3. 8. 1906, 4.

¹⁹¹ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 175.

¹⁹² *W.G.*, 31.8.1906, 4: 'There is ample room for the satisfaction of the varied tastes of picture lovers and buyers in the exhibitions now open at Whitby...A third show is that in Waterloo Place, at the top of Flowergate. This is the product of the Staithes Art Club, and affords a good opportunity of inspecting several pictures of unique merit. The mention of F. W. Jackson is sufficient guarantee of the choiceness of the display'.

exhibition venue. By 1904 the exhibitions were moved to Whitby, where there was more space and more visitors came in the 'season'. The importance of the S. A. C. should not be overestimated, but it does show collaboration and a unity of purpose among the artists.

Like other artists' colonies, Staithes was affected by tourism. Before 1880, it was known because of its associations with Captain Cook, who spent a year there around 1745 working in a draper's shop before going to sea.¹⁹³ Some visitors may have become acquainted with the villages through guidebooks. These were written by outsiders and generally projected an image of them as romantic, picturesque, timeless and traditional. Much is made of the topography. There was also a focus on fishing but there was no mention of its declining fortunes and any aspects of modernity were avoided. Lübbren argues that many fishing villages were portrayed in tourist guides as on the edge of society and as former centres for smuggling. This is true of Staithes and many writers described its isolation and its notoriety as a major smuggling centre in the early nineteenth century.

The earliest book on the area by Graves was published in 1808. Further publications appeared by Ord in 1846, W. White in 1858, S. Gordon in 1869, and by J. C. Atkinson between 1872 and 1877.¹⁹⁴ After the railway opened, more guidebooks appeared to cater for the increased number of tourists. These were mostly aimed at the discerning middle-class visitor.¹⁹⁵ They were mainly written by urban middle-class writers and provide an insight into how they perceived the area. In some cases the tone is of explorers venturing into unknown regions.¹⁹⁶ These publications may have encouraged artists to visit the area as Blackburn's *Breton Folk* did with Brittany.¹⁹⁷

Staithes appears in *Seaside Watering Places*: '...a guide for strangers in search of a suitable place in which to spend their holidays'. The village was described as: 'This curious old-fashioned village is situated in a deep chasm-like opening in the rough high cliffs which

¹⁹³ W.G., 31.8.1906, 8: [Staithes] '...is mainly dependent, even for its guide-book reputation, limited to a very short paragraph, on its brief connexion with the fortunes of the celebrated circumnavigator, Captain Cook, who "was apprenticed in this town to a grocer and general merchant". See also W. Besant, *Captain Cook* (London 1890), 4-17; besides information on Cook's time in Staithes, there is also a description of the village c.1890.

¹⁹⁴ See Graves, *A History of Cleveland*; Ord *The History and Antiquities of Cleveland*; White, *A Month in Yorkshire*; S. Gordon, *The Watering Places of Cleveland*; J. C. Atkinson, *The History of Cleveland*.

¹⁹⁵ J. Black, *Black's Guide to Scarborough, Whitby and Vicinity* (Edinburgh 1883); A. Jackson, *Jackson's Guide to Yorkshire* (Leeds 1891); J. Leyland, *The Yorkshire Coast* (London 1892); A. C. Dutt, *Health Notes for the Seaside: With Special Reference to Whitby and District* (Whitby 1895); G. S. Forman, *A Holiday Tour in and Around Whitby* (Bradford 1896); M. Heavisides, *Rambles in Cleveland* (Stockton on Tees 1901); G. Home, *Yorkshire Coast and Moorland* (London 1904); J. S. Fletcher, *A Picturesque History of Yorkshire* (London 1908).

¹⁹⁶ See P. Keating, ed., *Into Unknown England, 1866-1913* (Manchester 1976).

¹⁹⁷ H. Blackburn, *Breton Folk* (London 1880).

abound on the Yorkshire coast...lodgings can be got very cheaply'.¹⁹⁸ An article in September 1884 described the newly opened railway linking the fishing villages to the outside world:

...the fishing town of Staithes is reached. If possible, it is still a quainter place [than Runswick]. Here the houses, instead of facing the sea, mostly turn their backs on it, and look out on one another, or at the steep cobbled-stoned High Street. The prospect towards the seashore shows a bold jutting promontory... At the foot of this are clustered a few houses, in front of which are laid numerous smartly painted fishing boats.¹⁹⁹

Staithes was usually described as a quaint place with strange customs and superstitions:

Until the railway passed through this place a few years ago it was one of the most out of the world spots to be found in England. It retained quaint superstitions, with singular manners and peculiar customs, until then not assailed to any great extent by the outside world. [Staithes is]...snugly ensconced in an inlet with a dangerous rocky coast on either side.²⁰⁰

Other than the above, little appears in contemporary magazines. Erichsen wrote about life in the fishing village, as did R. Jobling at a later date.²⁰¹ Little appears in art magazines such as *The Magazine of Art* and *The Studio* and most attention was focused on Newlyn.²⁰² *The Studio*, established in 1893, ran a series of articles on various places in Britain and Europe, which were popular with artists, but the fishing villages were not featured. Hopwood's work appears in *The Studio*, and *The Artist* also published an article on Mayor.²⁰³ There were also articles in the *Northern Echo* and *The Times*. Cullercoats received more publicity through magazine articles.²⁰⁴

During this period Staithes changed from a fishing village to a place where ironstone miners and ironworkers lived.²⁰⁵ The impact of modernity affected the village, but not as much as in other artists' colonies. In 1904, L. Knight was concerned about the disappearance of the old bridge and for her this was a symbol of modern changes.²⁰⁶ The local newspaper stated that a replacement would cost £80 for a girder bridge, or £70 for wood.²⁰⁷ By 1907, the Knights wanted a change of scene and she also says that fewer painters were working in Staithes.²⁰⁸ The constant tension and the hazardous lives of the fisherfolk also influenced them to leave, Harold Knight was particularly affected.²⁰⁹

¹⁹⁸ *Seaside Watering Places* (London 1885).

¹⁹⁹ *The Graphic*, vol. XXXII, September 1884, 246, 253.

²⁰⁰ *Horne's Guide to Whitby* (Whitby 1904), 129.

²⁰¹ Erichsen, 'A North Country Fishing Town', 462-469; Jobling, 'Word Pictures', 86-92.

²⁰² For example, see A. Meynell, 'Newlyn', *The Art Journal*, 1889, 97-102 and 137-142.

²⁰³ *The Artist*, 1899, 92-95 and *The Studio*, 1910, vol. XLVIII, 27-33.

²⁰⁴ For example, Wasserman, 'Some Fisherfolk', 57-60.

²⁰⁵ See Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 107.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ *W.G.*, 10. 6 1904, 5.

²⁰⁸ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 160.

²⁰⁹ Knight, *Magic of a Line*, 135.

L. Knight describes in her book, how living in the village had such an impact on her.²¹⁰

Based on new evidence presented, it can be shown that Staithes was an artists' colony with a larger number of artists working there than was previously thought. The artists' colonies and the painters who worked in them were largely forgotten until recent times. There were three phases of development up to 1914 and the most important period for Staithes was from 1893 to 1907. Many lived there or stayed for a large part of the year, while others stayed in the summer. By examining the relationships between fellow-artists, and between the artists and the community, the artists' colony shows a more sophisticated social structure than was previously thought. There were sub-groups of artists according to the city they came from or the academy or school they trained at. The support that younger artists received from older artists has been discussed as well as where they stayed and their leisure interests, which sheds more light on the interaction between themselves and the local community. The S. A. C. has been examined and evaluated. Tourism in both villages was less developed because many local people gained employment in ironstone mining and iron production when fishing declined. The artists were not just a random collection of people, but a coherent group pursuing certain aims, such as painting outdoors and depicting the lives of the fisherfolk without any artifice.

²¹⁰ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 161.

Part C The Artists' Colony in Runswick Bay.

Part C looks at the specific factors relating to this artists' colony and, as with Part B, explores the following questions: What attracted the artists to this location? Which artists worked there? What was the identity of the colony? The structure of the artists' colony and the impact of tourism are also examined.

As stated earlier, most attention has been focused on Staithes as the only centre for art production in the area. This approach is misleading and Runswick Bay should be seen as an artists' colony in its own right. The *Whitby Gazette*, in an article in 1904, stated: 'The S.A.C., founded under the presidency of Mr. E.W. Beckett, M. P. [was] composed of artists working chiefly at Runswick and Staithes...' ²¹¹. This contemporary account shows that both villages, not just Staithes, were seen as important painting venues.

The oeuvres of many artists were inspired by Runswick Bay, particularly Foster, Friedenson, Hopwood, Jackson and Senior. T. Cross, in comparing Newlyn with St. Ives, argues that: 'As each centre became established, they developed different characteristics and attracted different personalities...but there were also many friendships and movement between them'. ²¹² The same applies to Staithes and Runswick Bay: there were many different characteristics, and each village attracted certain people, but there was a close relationship between them. As with Newlyn and St. Ives, there were some similarities, for example, many of the artists had trained in France and painted *en plein air*. T. Cross maintains that:

At about the same time that the artistic colony was established in Newlyn, another, and in many ways similar, group of artists came together in St. Ives. They too had been trained in France, and had been converted to *plein-airism*. ²¹³

The villages were two distinct painting venues on the Yorkshire coast, but some writers who have no detailed knowledge of the area have lumped the villages together. Newton and Phillips are typical of this approach, and an example can be seen in a Phillip's exhibition catalogue, where two paintings are listed as *Above Runswick Bay* and *A Runswick Garden*. ²¹⁴ Commenting on these works by Foster, it is stated: 'His paintings usually reflected the atmosphere and scenery of Staithes and the two in the exhibition are typical'. ²¹⁵ As can be seen from the titles, the works were produced in Runswick Bay, a distinctly different place from

²¹¹ W.G., 12.8.04, 2

²¹² T. Cross, 85.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Cookham, Phillip's Gallery, *Arthur Friedenson and the Staithes Group*, ex. cat., P. Phillips, 1976, 10, nos. 55 and 56.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

Staithes, which inspired most of Foster's work.

There were distinct differences between the villages that other writers have not discussed previously. Staithes inspired more gritty paintings of fisherfolk because of the dangerous sea conditions, while Runswick attracted artists who painted the village and its inhabitants. Here in the 1900s they adopted a brighter palette and painted visitors at leisure. More foreign artists worked at Runswick, including the Canadians, Brymner and Harris, and the Australian Burgess. Compared with Staithes, more mature, successful artists such as Foster, Friedenson, Jackson and Hopwood worked in Runswick Bay. It was also quieter and less crowded than Staithes, which could sometimes be rough and noisy.²¹⁶ There was not the shadow of death hanging over the village as in Staithes. In this smaller community the artists could have more of a presence; it was more relaxed and more 'Bohemian'. There was also a difference in the light and atmosphere because of the large bay. Artists were attracted by the better quality accommodation and it was also not so affected by the unpleasant smells from sewage, fish and cod liver oil production as Staithes. The attractions for artists and photographers were described in a Newcastle-upon-Tyne newspaper: 'Runswick Bay has long been a resort for the knights of the easel and camera'.²¹⁷

Blackburn, writing of Pont-Aven and Douarnenez, outlines some of their attractions: 'Nowhere in France, perhaps in Europe, are there finer peasantry; nowhere do we see more dignity of aspect in field labour'.²¹⁸ He is describing the peasantry but fisherfolk could be seen in the same way. As in Pont-Aven, models were available and people still wore traditional costumes.²¹⁹ Along with Staithes, Runswick was one of the few places left on the north Yorkshire coast in which artists could see fisherfolk at work:

These [Staithes and Runswick Bay] and say, Robin Hood's Bay and Flamborough are the only places left on the Yorkshire coast where the native fisherfolk may be seen in serious and earnest pursuit of their calling.²²⁰

The village's quaint appearance is described in 1882 when more artists were visiting.²²¹ As

²¹⁶ *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, 23.6.1900, 7: 'If Runswick has no great sights to offer the visitor, it has at least that of which he is perhaps most in need - it has restfulness. All that will induce serenity of mind he will find there, and the only sounds that he will hear as he reclines on the cliff tops will be the cries of the sea birds, the hum of the voices of the children in the bay, and the feeble lullaby of the distant sea'.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*

²¹⁸ H. Blackburn, 'Pont-Aven and Douarnenez; Sketches in Lower Brittany', *The Magazine of Art*, vol. II, 1879, 6.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 8: 'Pont-Aven has one advantage over other places in Brittany, its inhabitants in their picturesque costume (which remains unaltered) have learned that to sit as a "model" is a pleasant and lucrative profession, and they do this for a small fee without hesitation or *mauvaise honte*'.

²²⁰ *W.G.*, 28. 8. 1903, 3.

²²¹ Roberts, *The Topography and Natural History of Lofthouse and its Neighbourhood*, 358-9: 'The fishing village of Runswick is a singular rookery of cottages, built with only walking space between them, one above another, in the cliff-side. The fishermen "cling to the face of the treacherous cliff like a colony of martins".'

early as 1846 Runswick, with a population of 383, was described as: ‘...entirely inhabited by fishermen who lived in huts’.²²² Its setting was a particular attraction, as was the range of motifs, which included the whitewashed cottages with their thatched roofs and cottage gardens (figs. 49, 50, 51, 52). The local people also provided many subjects for their paintings.²²³ There were differences from Staithes in local costume; for example, the women's bonnets and there was a special pattern for the guernseys produced in the village.²²⁴

Evidence obtained from artists' writings, auction records, exhibition records and newspaper articles shows the distinct differences between the two villages. *The Times* describes how:

So little commerce is there between Staithes and the inhabitants of the neighbouring fishing village, perched on the cliff side in Runswick Bay, some two miles to the southward, that the dialects spoken in the two places are so markedly distinct one from the other that even a stranger can distinguish by his tongue a Runswicker from a native of Staithes. Marriages do at some time take place between the dwellers in either village but in such cases the wife is known ever after as so-and-so from the other village whichever it may be.²²⁵

Earlier, in 1865, the writer Arthur Munby observed a row between the inhabitants of the two villages: ‘Once Runswick and Staithes women “scratted” [fought] each other on the scars and the justices divided them’.²²⁶ The ‘scratting’ was about collecting bait for fishing, which was becoming scarcer, and shows that each village clearly had different territories for obtaining this.

New evidence, mainly from the *Whitby Gazette*, reveals that the artists' colony at Runswick Bay, in the 1880s, was larger than its counterpart in Staithes. This is to be compared with modern writers' interpretations of what they think happened. The artists' colony was centred on those who lived there permanently or for a substantial part of the year. Friedenson, a Leeds artist who trained at the Académie Julian, lived there for many years. A letter from his son, T. S. Friedenson, describes how: ‘Runswick Bay, Yorkshire was a place he frequently visited. I believe there was a colony of artists who went there every summer...’²²⁷ Hill, who lived all year in or near Runswick, observed that:

Jackson, Hopwood, Senior and myself used to do a great deal of work in the winter months. Our 6 feet canvases would be tethered by large stones and we would sit painting away in a cold wind, with as many clothes on as it

²²² Ord, *The History and Antiquities of Cleveland*, 3.

²²³ *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle* 23.6.1900, 7: ‘But this higgledy-piggledy arrangement results in the village presenting a very picturesque appearance from points a short distance away, and artists fully appreciate the combination of boats and fishermen on the shore with red-tiled dwellings ornamented with quaint gardens and the frowning cliffs above’.

²²⁴ See D. Cleverley, ‘Staithes Bonnets’, *The Dalesman*, vol. XII, 1950-1, 401-2.

²²⁵ *The Times*, 7.9. 1885, 8.

²²⁶ Munby Diary, 7.3. 1865, (Munby 33), Trinity College, University of Cambridge.

²²⁷ Letter to M. Chamot [Tate Gallery], 13.12. 1959, Tate Archives.

was possible to wear.²²⁸

Hill's remark about artists working in the winter months shows that it was not just a summer colony.

During the first phase of the artists' colony, between 1880 and 1892, many painters stayed there. For more information see **Appendix 4**. A key person in the development of the artists' colony was Jackson, who encouraged others to work there. Another early visitor was R. Hedley - who according to Millard:

...did not paint often at Cullercoats. On a walking tour in the 1880s, he discovered a fishing village of his own, Runswick Bay on the North Yorkshire coast. Runswick Bay became a favourite destination for holidays with the family, and several of Hedley's paintings are set there.²²⁹

His first recorded painting in Runswick was in 1883. Hedley's approach to painting can be seen in a Newcastle newspaper report in 1889, which states that:

He thinks that there are plenty of good subjects to be found in the North, and that it is unnecessary to go further afield. Moreover he contends that an artist should give special study to events of our own day in preference to those which took place say a couple of centuries ago.²³⁰

The artists Inchbold, Jelley and Tollemache were also staying there at this time.²³¹ Tollemache also met Brymner during his stay in the village.²³²

In 1884 there was a gathering of artists, most of whom had studied in France and Belgium, in artists' colonies at Newlyn, Runswick Bay and Walberswick. Stanhope Forbes describes how:

What lodestone of artistic metal the place contains I know not, but its effects were strongly felt, in the studios of Paris and Antwerp particularly, by a number of young English painters studying there, who just about then, by some common impulse, seemed drawn towards this corner of their native land.²³³

The correspondence between Brymner and his father has revealed new information on the village's importance as an artists' colony. Jackson met Brymner and J. Kerr Lawson at the Académie Julian and invited them to paint in Runswick Bay. Brymner stayed there from June to December 1884 and a letter to Brymner from his father in October 1884, confirms that M. B. Foster visited the artist.²³⁴

²²⁸ *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 30. 8. 1939, 7.

²²⁹ Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Laing Art Gallery, *Ralph Hedley*, ex. cat. J. Millard, 1990, 54.

²³⁰ Quoted in J. Treuherz, *Hard Times* (London 1987), 118.

²³¹ W.G., See the accommodation supplements from 7.7 to 29.9. 1883, Tollemache was staying at the Sheffield Hotel. J.V. Jelley was at Mrs. Wallers from 21.7 to 25. 8. 1883.

²³² Brymner, 324.

²³³ S. Forbes, 'A Newlyn Retrospect', 81.

²³⁴ Letter from D. Brymner to W. Brymner, 17.10.1884, McCord Museum, McGill University, Montreal, Canada.

Foster also worked in the village on other occasions.²³⁵ T. M. M. Hemy exhibited *Runswick, Yorkshire* at the R. A. in 1884.

In 1887, the large number of artists staying in the village was commented upon by the local newspaper, which attributed this to paintings that had been previously exhibited and had inspired others to visit. This increased pressure on accommodation and there was concern that the character of the village could be destroyed by new buildings:

Indeed, prior to 6 or 8 years ago, visitors were unknown in this hidden-from-the-world place, but now after the exhibition of several excellent pictures of the spot by rising artists, the village has been literally attacked by wielders of the brush, and every available accommodation has been occupied, the Bohemian instinct of the “brush-men” not even ignoring the cramped and back-bending attic. We may here be allowed parenthetically to hope that the time may be at very many strokes before the delightful character of the village will be disfigured by “modernizations”.²³⁶

The village and its appeal to artists is described in an article entitled, ‘Pictures of a Rock Bound Coast, xlv Romantic Runswick’:

This beautiful little place has from time to time been graphically described - hence advertised - by our roving community...Southern art galleries have had oil and water-colour delineations of it oftener than once...What Clovelly is to the south, Runswick is to the north...Runswick is so small...that it has no more than 21 fishermen, and 13 of these supply the lifeboat crew of 13 souls...A week spent at the village in the cliff would be sufficient time for an exceedingly industrious man to crowd his portfolio with sketches and cram his notebook with anecdotes, historical gleanings and original impressions...²³⁷

The comment: ‘What Clovelly is to the south, Runswick is to the north’ is significant. Clovelly was regarded as an important artists’ colony and its comparison with Runswick shows that contemporary observers thought that the village was an important place for artists.

Many paintings of Runswick Bay were shown at the R. A. summer exhibitions. The *W. G.* describes those exhibited in 1888: Foster, 261) *Helpmate*; 490) *The Grey of the Morning*;²³⁸ 666) *Our Skipper's Cottage*; 476) Jackson, *A Yorkshire Beach* ²³⁹ (**fig. 53**); 748) *The Haven under the Hill* and 301) and C. H. M. Kerr, *The End of the Day*.²⁴⁰ The newspaper fails to mention others such as W. Llewellyn’s, *Boiling Tan for Fishing Nets-Runswick*. Llewellyn also painted *The Goose Girl* at Runswick in the previous year. This was dedicated to Short.²⁴¹ In 1889, Llewellyn exhibited *Runswick* at the Spring Exhibition at the Leeds City Art Gallery,

²³⁵ Exhibited at the R. I.: Summer Exhibition, 1890 *Runswick, Yorkshire*. Also at the Winter Exhibitions: *Runswick*, 1887/8, *A Fisherman's Garden, Runswick*, 1891/2 and *Runswick*, 1894/5.

²³⁶ *W. G.*, 3. 9. 1887, 4.

²³⁷ *W. G.*, 28. 9. 1894, 4.

²³⁸ Featured in *Academy Notes* (London 1888).

²³⁹ There is mistake in the original text: it should read, *A Yorkshire Beck*.

²⁴⁰ *W. G.*, 19. 5. 1888, 4.

²⁴¹ Sotheby's, London, sales cat. *Modern British and Irish Paintings, Drawings and Sculpture*, 8. 11. 1989, lot 8.

priced at £30.²⁴² Except for **fig. 53**, all the above are untraced.

On the basis of new evidence, it can be proved for the first time that there was a Birmingham presence at Runswick Bay. This is a distinct difference with Staithes, as Birmingham artists generally did not paint there. The Birmingham artist and teacher, E. R. Taylor, was working on the north Yorkshire coast from 1881 when he exhibited *Half Tide, Whitby* (1881 untraced) at the R. A. Other paintings he exhibited at the R. A. were: 154) *Runswick* (1892 untraced) and 35) *On the Lookout for his Boat* (1893 untraced). His student and later colleague, E. S. Harper, worked there and exhibited the following at the R. A.: *The Missing Boat in Sight* (1893 untraced) and *In Time of Trouble at Runswick Bay* (**fig. 87**). He recalled that:

In play he [Edward R. Taylor] was just as enthusiastic, and one or two of us who were privileged to share several holidays with him, at Runswick in Yorkshire, will never forget his delightful companionship and his almost boyish exuberance of spirits.²⁴³

Jelley was also a student and later a colleague of Taylor's and exhibited two paintings at the R. A. which were produced in the area around Runswick: 1155) *A Corner of Old Whitby* (1887 untraced) and 1052) *Kettleness Point* (1889 untraced). Taylor, Harper and Jelley were influential figures in the Birmingham art world and were associated with the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists. Taylor became a member in 1879, Harper in 1888 and Jelley in 1891.

In 1890, T. Williams exhibited two paintings set in the village at the R. A. 476) *A Quiet Morning, Runswick Bay* (untraced) and 553) *The Fisherman's Family* (untraced). The previous year he was painting in Holland and exhibited 525) *Return of the Herring Boats, Katwijk, Holland* (1889 untraced).

The second phase of the artists' colony was from 1893 to 1907. In 1894, an article which referred to 'Local Artists at the Royal Academy' said: 'On a hurried glance through the exhibition of the Royal Academy of this year, we will find several of our resident artists are particularly well treated by the hanging committee'.²⁴⁴ This shows how contemporary observers saw the village; Staithes is not mentioned. The following year there is also a reference to paintings by local artists exhibited at the R. A. including one work by Hopwood:

The picture, which is in watercolour, is entitled 'Motherless' and was painted at Runswick...Mr. A. A. Friedenson, who stayed for 2 or 3 years at Runswick has an oil landscape on the line; and Mr. Gilbert Foster

²⁴² Leeds City Art Gallery, Spring Exhibition, ex. cat., 1889, Leeds Reference Library.

²⁴³ Quoted in J. Hill and W. Midgley, *Royal Birmingham Society of Artists* (Birmingham 1928), 57.

²⁴⁴ *W.G.*, 4. 5. 1894, 3.

shows three pictures.²⁴⁵

All three painters were associated with Runswick Bay.

From around 1893, both artists' colonies were popular, but more painters worked at Staithes but, from around 1900, there was a discernible trend for artists to move to Runswick. The movement from one artists' colony to another is a phenomenon which Lübbren argues was a common practice: 'The strategy of moving from one village that harboured an established artists' group to another, less frequented one in the vicinity, was also common among artists in rural colonies'.²⁴⁶ An example is the Knights who moved from Staithes to Runswick Bay for three months in 1907. They then moved to Newlyn and later to Lamorna. Before moving to Newlyn they had also worked in Laren. Hill described how artists such as Hedley helped him.²⁴⁷ After studying at the Herkomer School, Hill exhibited his first painting at the R. A. in 1899. He remained in Runswick and the surrounding area until his death in 1952. The London-based artist V. Yglesias, who was a regular visitor to the area, exhibited *Runswick* at the R. B. A. in 1897.

A review of the first S. A. C. exhibition of 1901 describes the difficulties of modernising the fishing villages.²⁴⁸ Any modernisation which occurred, was above the original fishing village at Bank Top.

Many well known artists such as Mr. F. Jackson, Mr. A. Rigg, Mr. E. Rigg, Mr. Ingall, Mr. Hopwood, Mr. M. Senior, Mr. G. Foster, Mr. R. H. Hill and Mr. J. Watson have bought or rented cottages in or near Runswick and spend many months a year in an arduous and as interesting as any work in the world.²⁴⁹

Artists, such as Jackson, Rigg, Hopwood, Ingall and Hill, were not spending 'many months' but lived permanently in or near the village. Senior and Foster divided their time between Leeds and Runswick Bay. In a newspaper article of 1905, there is an indication that Runswick was still perceived as an important centre for artists whereas Staithes' links with Captain Cook are described but there is no mention of artists. It says: 'Beyond Sandsend is the pretty bay of Runswick, the haunt of many artists and further afield but still within the Whitby

²⁴⁵ W.G., 3. 5. 1895, 3.

²⁴⁶ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 35.

²⁴⁷ Quoted in, A. Friedenson and the Staithes Group, ex. cat., Phillips, 5 : 'Many artists used to visit Runswick in those days, even as they do now, and it was my contact with them and in particular, the encouragement I received from one of them - A Mr. Alfred [Ralph] Hedley from Newcastle - that gave a fresh and stronger impulse to my interest in painting and virtually determined my career'.

²⁴⁸ W.G., 13.9.1901, 7: 'I have repeatedly said over the last fifteen years, that I think the time is coming...when Staithes and Runswick - especially Staithes - will be very formidable rivals of painting grounds in Newlyn and Clovelly, not alone because of their rival picturesqueness and the archaic ways of some of their people - but because they are so situated that it is next to impossible to modernize or over build them...and in Staithes especially, the dress of the fisherfolk is as quaint and paintable as it has ever been for many generations'.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

district, is old world Staithes where Captain Cook was apprenticed'.²⁵⁰

In the following year Foster died. His obituary confirms his important role in the artists' colony and in the local community, and also how the village inspired most of his work:

The deceased artist spent a great deal of his time at Runswick, where he had a commodious cottage, and more than anyone else, created the popularity of Runswick as a place for artists. Here, among the inhabitants, he was greatly liked and esteemed; and his genial presence was always welcome. Most of his best-known works were creations (nearly always in oils) from his notes, studies and observations made at this romantic fishing village. Nearly every year since 1874, he has had one or more pictures hung at the Royal Academy; and was a frequent contributor to the chief provincial exhibitions.²⁵¹

The third phase of the artists' colony was from 1908 to 1914. From 1880, Runswick Bay underwent many changes. The physical appearance of the village stayed much the same, but the local economy changed. Many who lived there were ironstone miners or ironworkers but they do not feature in any paintings. Ironstone mining was growing in importance and, according to Johnson, by 1914: 'Half the men folk made their living from the sea, while the others were miners working at the "Grinkel [sic] Iron stone mines" which were about four miles away in the Boulby Hills'.²⁵² Tourists also became more important to the local economy and were featured in paintings from the 1900s (**fig. 55**). Accommodation at Runswick Bay was no longer cheap for artists, as with more visitors prices began to rise.²⁵³ From around 1907 some properties were being acquired by visitors, which reduced the number available for rent.²⁵⁴ With more tourists in Runswick, some fishermen found it more profitable to go pleasure boating than fishing during the summer season.²⁵⁵ Artists such as Hopwood and Jackson acquired local properties and visiting artists may have stayed with them.

At this time, Runswick Bay still had painters living there or nearby. Jackson lived in Hinderwell until his death in 1918 and Senior continued to divide his time between Leeds and Runswick Bay, gradually spending more time in the village. J. Spence Ingall lived in Runswick Bay and Rowland Hill in Ellerby, a nearby village. E. Rigg worked there for periods from 1896 to 1911, sometimes his brother Arthur painted with him. Friedenson continued to visit Runswick Bay and A. G. Stevens, L. T. Crawshaw and J. Terry sometimes painted in both villages. Artists such as Yglesias, who exhibited *Runswick* at the R. A. in 1911, still continued to visit. After 1918, artists continued to work in the area, notably L.

²⁵⁰ W. G., 23. 6. 1905, 7.

²⁵¹ W. G., 6. 7. 1906, 4.

²⁵² Johnson, *The Nagars of Runswick Bay*, 5.

²⁵³ W.G., 7.9.1906, 7: 'There are fewer artists than usual at Runswick Bay owing it is said to the "terms" demanded by the natives'.

²⁵⁴ Johnson, *The Nagars of Runswick Bay*, 4: 'Even in these early days before the 1914 war people from the West Riding and other places owned cottages in the village where they came to spend their summer holidays'.

²⁵⁵ See Franks, *Yorkshire Fisherfolk*, 37.

Colbourn in Staithes. E. Blackadder (**fig. 17**) and D. Curtis (**figs. 20, 104**) have painted in both villages.

In analysing the structure of the artists' colony the following points will now be examined: sub-groups, leadership, group dynamics and the relationship between experienced painters and young painters, those who worked in other artists' colonies, the relationship with the community, accommodation and their leisure activities.

Foster was considered the elder statesman and leader and was respected both by artists and the local community. He chaired meetings and helped to arrange social events. Hopwood and Jackson were also key figures and after Foster's death, Jackson became the leader of the remaining artists. As with Staithes, there were various sub-groups based on geographical origin. Artists from Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester worked mainly in Runswick Bay, those from Nottingham worked mainly in Staithes and the artists from Newcastle were divided between the two villages.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne artists worked there and a local newspaper observed: '...many of the painting fraternity from Tyneside have visited Runswick in search of subjects: they have never been disappointed, and they return again and again'.²⁵⁶ Hedley produced many paintings inspired by the village, one example is: *Roses for the Invalid* (1894 Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne), J. Watson, an art teacher, was also there, as was I. and R. Jobling. W. H. Charlton worked in Runswick and later in Staithes. There was also a Scottish influence from Mackie and E. A. Taylor.

Runswick Bay was popular with artists who had attended the Académie Julian. These include:²⁵⁷ C. H. M. Kerr (1875), J. S. Ingall (c.1875), F. W. Jackson (1880-5 in Paris (J. 1884), D. Tollemache (1882), W. Brymner (1883-5), J. Kerr Lawson (1884), W. H. Charlton (c.1885), T. Williams (1886), W. Llewellyn (1888), H. S. Hopwood (1888 and 1891-2),²⁵⁸ Friedenson (J. c.1890), E. Rigg (J. c.1889), J. Terry (c.1893), P.M. Teasdale (c.1895), R. Fedden (1896). Some students worked at several academies, for example, Jackson was also at the École des Beaux-Arts.²⁵⁹ Hopwood, T. Williams and Friedenson also studied in Antwerp.

²⁵⁶ *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, 23.6.1900, 7.

²⁵⁷ The date of attendance at Julians is in parentheses.

²⁵⁸ Paris was his address when he first stayed at Runswick.

²⁵⁹ See E. Morris and A. Mackay, 'British Art Students in Paris', 84.

Another important influence was the Herkomer School.²⁶⁰ Former students included P. M. Teasdale (1891), S. Inchbold (1891), and E. R. Crosse (1893), who were from Leeds. Inchbold was in Runswick Bay in the summers of 1883 and 1884 and E. R. Crosse in 1890. He led a performance of the 'Bushey Anthem' at a concert while staying there.²⁶¹ H. Gibbs Massey was at Herkomers in 1895, and earlier had painted *A Pensive Moment* (1888 Private Collection) in Runswick. He established a reputation as an etcher and a watercolourist. R. H. Hill was at Herkomers in 1895, as was T.W. Holgate, who exhibited *Runswick Bay* (1904 Untraced) at the R. B. A. Fedden studied at the school in 1896 and in 1899 worked with Hopwood in Runswick Bay.

As in Staithes, help for young painters was available from older, more experienced artists such as Foster. Haworth states: 'Painting at Staithes was pioneered by Gilbert Foster who, along with Fred Jackson and Mark Senior, had been working in the area from around 1880'.²⁶² Foster, as is argued throughout this work, was strongly associated with Runswick Bay where he always stayed and later owned a cottage. An obituary states that he: 'May be said to have practically made the reputation of Runswick as a visitors', especially artists', resort'.²⁶³ This highlights his role and also confirms that Runswick was an artists' colony. Another newspaper obituary describes Foster's links with Runswick Bay.²⁶⁴

Unlike others, Foster did not train in Paris; he adopted a more traditional approach and did not paint *en plein air*. He did not join the S. A. C. and the explanation could be that he spent most of his time in Runswick Bay rather than Staithes and was an established, successful artist who may have not thought it necessary to exhibit there. Foster was a gifted teacher and some of his ideas are outlined in a pamphlet.²⁶⁵ This was possibly published posthumously as a tribute to Foster following his death in 1906.

Of Foster's students, both Friedenson and Senior were there for many years from the early 1890s. Bowen spent some time in the village but, from 1898 to 1908, rented a cottage at Robin Hood's Bay. Another influential teacher was E. M. Bancroft, who taught Jackson, J.W. Booth and A. G. Stevens at the Manchester School of Art. As early as 1881, Bancroft had visited Whitby and encouraged Jackson to paint there. Jackson and Hopwood both settled in

²⁶⁰ See Hill, 'The Herkomer School, Bushey: Memories of an Old Student', *West Hertfordshire and Watford Observer*, 24.3.1939, 5 and 31.3.1939, 6.

²⁶¹ *W.G.*, 19. 8. 1890, 3.

²⁶² Haworth, *Artists of the Staithes Group*, 8.

²⁶³ *Yorkshire Post*, 5. 7. 1906, 8.

²⁶⁴ *Yorkshire Weekly Chronicle*, 5.7.1906, page: He '...discovered Runswick from an artist's point of view, and painted numerous pictures of it...'

²⁶⁵ W. G. Foster, *A Painter's Ideals and a Letter to a Pupil* (Leeds 1906).

Hinderwell, about a mile from the village.²⁶⁶

A S. A. C. exhibition review in 1903 shows Jackson's close links with the area: 'F. W. Jackson who has shown annually in England's premier picture place, some bit or other of the Runswick district for these teens of years'.²⁶⁷ Before his first visit to Whitby, he had worked in North Wales with members of the Manchester School. From around 1880 to 1885, he studied in Paris and exhibited works at the Salon.²⁶⁸ A business directory for 1890 lists him as an artist living in Hinderwell.²⁶⁹ He was a teacher and also helped many younger artists.²⁷⁰

From around 1892, Hopwood was painting in the area. He helped the Knights by introducing them to patrons and also invited them to Holland in 1904, which had a profound effect on their work. Dade may have introduced Llewellyn to Runswick Bay in the late 1880s. The Scottish artist E. A. Taylor, a friend of Hopwood and Jackson, also lived in Hinderwell.²⁷¹ C. Oppenheimer, the Manchester artist, lived and worked in the village, probably because of his links with Jackson.

The Bradford artist, E. H. Rigg, an associate of La Thangue, mainly painted in Runswick Bay and lived there and in Hinderwell for periods from 1896 to 1911.²⁷² Ingall, who was originally from Barnsley, lived at Bank Top in Runswick Bay, and divided his time between the village and his house in Tangiers. Artists such as Jackson probably stayed there when visiting the area. Brymner produced several paintings in Runswick in 1884 including *The Wreath of Flowers*, one of the first works to be acquired by the National Gallery of Canada (**fig. 57**). He stayed at the Sheffield Hotel and there is no evidence of him painting in Staithes:

We are at the Sheffield Arms [Hotel] at Runswick, in Yorkshire. We, means Jackson [F. W.] Lawson [J. Kerr] and I. Jackson brought us here; he knew the place and said there were plenty of painting subjects to be found; but he has now left us to our own devices for a time, and we feel stranded, and as if we had got into the most foreign country we had ever been in.²⁷³

²⁶⁶ See Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 133-134.

²⁶⁷ W. G., 14. 8. 1903, 4.

²⁶⁸ F. G. Dumas, *Catalogue Illustré du Salon* (Paris 1884, 1885) Jackson exhibited the following works at the Paris Salon in 1884, 1256) *Au Bord de la Mer*, 1257) *Pêcherie Anglaise* and in 1885 1311) *Sous Bois* 1312) *La Seine à Bois le Roi*.

²⁶⁹ *Bulmer's North Yorkshire Trade Directory* (Preston 1890).

²⁷⁰ W.G., 1.3.1918, 4: His obituary includes the following: 'Who was better known and who has helped his fellow artists more unselfishly with kindly criticism and generous help'.

²⁷¹ Letters from H.S. Hopwood to E.A. Taylor, Glasgow University Library, Special Collections, MS Gen 1654/100-103.

²⁷² W.G. 29.9.1911, 11: 'Ernest Rigg of Hinderwell has two paintings hung at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool'. [They are untraced].

²⁷³ Brymner, 320.

Brymner was impressed with the village and its people.²⁷⁴ In late 1884, he visited Manchester with Jackson, but found it difficult to work there and returned to France. Jackson loaned him some money and he worked around Fontainebleau on a painting he hoped to submit to the Salon.

Some who worked in Runswick Bay also had links with other artists' colonies. This is an area largely ignored by earlier writers, particularly the links between Yorkshire artists' colonies and Newlyn.²⁷⁵ Some Runswick painters were in Newlyn, but they were on the fringe of this group. Tollemache, who worked in Runswick Bay in 1883 and 1884, also worked in Newlyn and in St. Ives in 1885. Jackson painted in the Conway Valley with members of the Manchester School.²⁷⁶ In 1912 he was working in St. Ives.

Both Friedenson and Hopwood had links with artists' colonies in Fifehire.²⁷⁷ Foster also painted in Clovelly, as did Barrett and E. R. Taylor. While Cullercoats' artists painted in Runswick Bay, there is no evidence of Runswick painters working in Cullercoats. Some artists associated with Runswick Bay worked in Kirkudbright including Mackie, Jackson, Taylor and Oppenheimer. Others worked in Walberswick in the 1880s including N. E. A. C. members, Aumonier, E. Dade and Llewellyn.²⁷⁸ M. B. Foster also worked there and showed his work at the R. W. S. in 1894, 1895 and 1896. Senior painted there around 1906 with P. W. Steer. Scott states that Steer was teaching at the Slade School of Art where he met Senior who was an occasional student.²⁷⁹ There is no evidence to support the assertion that Senior was an occasional student at the Slade.²⁸⁰

Some Newlyn painters worked in Brittany before living in Cornwall and artists associated with Runswick Bay also worked in France. Jackson was in Fontainebleau during his stay in Paris, possibly with Brymner.²⁸¹ He later worked in Concarneau and *La Fête Dieu*,

²⁷⁴ Brymner, 321: 'Runswick is built on three storeys, with paths and stairs from one storey to the other...One thing that makes the difference between a village...in England or...in Europe and one...in Canada, is the atmosphere'.

²⁷⁵ There is no comparison of the artists' colonies in Jacobs or the Phillips and Haworth catalogues. Newton in *Cullercoats*, ex. cat. does compare artists' colonies particularly, Cullercoats and Staithes.

²⁷⁶ F. Spalding, *Changing Nature: British Landscape Painting, 1850-1950*, Arts Council (London 1983), 46: 'The Manchester School was under the leadership of Joshua Anderson Hague. The artists were influenced by Barbizon and the later work of F. W. Jackson and J. Charles showed the impact of Impressionism...The school did much of its work in North Wales: even when it did tackle local subjects, any hint of the presence of heavy industry was avoided'.

²⁷⁷ W.G., 2.10.1914, 2, Obituary of Hopwood: 'He had his first impulses from the Scots School working in Fifehire a quarter of a century ago'.

²⁷⁸ See R. Scott, *The Walberswick Enigma*.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 69.

²⁸⁰ University College, London : Record's Office, Slade School of Fine Art, Records of Attendance.

²⁸¹ See Butterworth obituary of F.W. Jackson Memorial Exhibition, ex. cat. 1918.

Concarneau was shown at the 1902 S. A. C. exhibition.²⁸² Jackson also worked in Pont-Aven and other parts of Brittany and Normandy. Hopwood painted in the same areas and this work was exhibited at the F. A. S. in 1897.²⁸³ Mackie painted in Brittany in the 1890s and three paintings of Brittany by Hill were also exhibited at the S. A. C in 1904.²⁸⁴ Many artists also worked in Montreuil-sur-Mer, including Jackson in 1896²⁸⁵ and Hopwood in 1897.²⁸⁶ Mayor and his wife lived there from 1902 and this provided a base for visiting artists.

The Runswick artists built a close relationship with local people, which was closer than in Staithes and Newlyn. They organised social events for the villagers:

On Saturday last the village of Runswick was veritably *en fête*; for the villagers, with but very few exceptions, were all on the sands keeping holiday. The occasion was promoted by the visitors [artists] to this romantic spot, who had subscribed about £11 for the amusement and benefit of the inhabitants. The sports were held on the sea and the sea-shore, and tea was also provided on the sands.²⁸⁷

Hill describes how:

Artists were taken for granted round here, they got on well with the community, and each side respected the other. In fine weather you could find artists' tackle and equipment - umbrella, pole-easel, paint-box, brushes, paints - lying about, for we didn't bother packing our traps at night. An artist's equipment was immune from depredation... We and the fishermen worked very well together.²⁸⁸

They contributed to the building of the Village Institute in Runswick Bay which opened in 1890.²⁸⁹ Many fishermen spent their leisure time there or when they could not go to sea.²⁹⁰

A range of accommodation was available in Runswick Bay, for example, The Sheffield Hotel; The Royal Hotel; Mrs. Pattons, Shop Cottage; Mrs. Sanders, Cliff Cottage. In a trade directory of 1890 G. Woodwark, J. Walker and R. Sayer are listed as offering lodgings (**fig. 11**).²⁹¹ Many artists stayed at Mrs. Sayer's Prospect House. Others stayed with local families, which allowed access to models and a closer association with the fisherfolk. In Hinderwell, accommodation was available with, for example, Mrs. Hodgson, Mrs. Harrison and in local public houses. One difference between the two villages was that the accommodation in Staithes was more basic and may have appealed to younger people and those with little money.

²⁸² See S. A. C. ex. cat., 1902.

²⁸³ London, F. A. S., Hopwood exhibition, 1897.

²⁸⁴ S. A. C. ex. cat., 1904.

²⁸⁵ F. W. Jackson, *Geese in a Lane, near Montreuil-sur-Mer* (1896 Manchester, Whitworth Gallery).

²⁸⁶ F. A. S., Hopwood exhibition, 1897.

²⁸⁷ W. G., 23.8. 1889,3.

²⁸⁸ Quoted in Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, 12-13.

²⁸⁹ *Fishermen's Club* appears in *Charcoal Drawings*, ex .cat., F. A. S., London 1902.

²⁹⁰ See J. Johnson, *The Nagars of Runswick Bay*, 101-105.

²⁹¹ *Bulmer's North Yorkshire Trade Directory*.

As in Staithes, the artists' leisure activities show how they worked as a group and how they interacted with the local community. Hill describes how the artists enjoyed themselves and some of the 'bohemian' entertainments they organised.²⁹² As early as May 1896, Jackson and Friedenson played regularly for the Hinderwell cricket team.²⁹³ Friedenson also played in this team in the summers of 1903 to 1905.²⁹⁴ In letters to her future husband, O. Sheppard, R. Good writes of: 'Harold [Knight] playing in a cricket match at Hinderwell'.²⁹⁵

Another example of how the artists organised social events for local people can be seen in the following:

The homeliness, the good feeling, and the honesty which characterised the sports made them most enjoyable and the large number of visitors, including the major part of the fifty artists staying in or near the village, dressed in becoming costumes (for the weather was magnificent) and the flags flying and brass band playing, made up such a pretty sight as is seldom to be seen...The sports lasted from about three o' clock to dusk. Mr. Hedley acted efficiently as a starter. The judges were messrs. Gilbert Foster and Bosbreitz [sic] Umpires, W. H. Charlton and F. W. Jackson...had running races, sack race, tug of war, coble race...The proceedings terminated with the distribution of prizes, value of £8 15s. by Mr. F. W. Jackson of Hinderwell, after a substantial *al fresco* repast.²⁹⁶

The article describes 'fifty artists staying in or near the village' and shows how they engaged with the local community and helped and entertained them. It also confirms that they did not only use Runswick as a sketching ground. Of those mentioned, Jackson and Foster worked in the village, while W. H. Charlton and Hedley were from Newcastle-upon-Tyne and regularly painted in Runswick Bay. The artists at their own expense had arranged games, prizes and refreshments for the local community. This article gives a flavour of the bohemian atmosphere in the village because of their presence. Some who stayed in Runswick also gave concerts in Staithes.²⁹⁷ As in Staithes, the artists' leisure activities show the interaction between the artists and the community.

How did tourism affect the village? In 1900 a Newcastle-upon-Tyne newspaper observed: 'But the artist now shares his little kingdom with the casual seaside visitor, whom the villager makes every endeavour to please'.²⁹⁸ From the 1860s, Runswick Bay was developing tourist

²⁹² *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 30.8.1939, 7: 'I'm afraid we were a somewhat hilarious and sociable group, prone to fits of exuberance. But there was never any hooliganism, and we were never alienated from the sympathies of the local people. Staithes and Runswick fisherfolk were rather strict and narrow by our standards, and great observers of the Sabbath. They were great days - when we said jump and everybody jumped. We were always organising concerts and tableaux, and we always had extremely picturesque settings for them, although the dresses and scenery would be made from all sorts of bits of odd material. As further relaxation we organised the first sports ever held at Runswick, and we had some grand racing on the sands'.

²⁹³ *W.G.*, 29.5.1896, 3.

²⁹⁴ *W.G.*, 12.9.1902, 7.

²⁹⁵ Sheppard Papers, National College of Art and Design, Dublin, R. Good Letters, 27.1.1899.

²⁹⁶ *W.G.*, 23.8.1889, 3.

²⁹⁷ *W.G.*, 19.8.1890, 3: 'A most successful concert was given at Staithes on Saturday night by artists from Runswick. The programme...comprised vocal and instrumental music solo and concerted and concluded with a comic sketch. The proceeds are devoted to Staithes and Runswick Institutes'.

²⁹⁸ *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, 23.6.1900, 7.

facilities. The Sheffield Hotel was opened in 1866, with a commanding view of the bay from its cliff top position and many artists stayed there. In contrast, the first hotel in Staithes was not opened until 1883. By 1896 *A Souvenir of Runswick* was on sale for visitors; there was no similar publication for Staithes.²⁹⁹

Of the two villages Runswick Bay was more affected by tourism, as can be seen in the following:

Time was when Runswick and its bonnie bay were far beyond the track of the tourist and when only a few artists were the strangers permitted within the gate. The hardy fisherfolk were very exclusive; they objected to the presence of people whom they did not know, and extended to them neither welcome nor hospitality. But all is changed since the railway line was laid along the coast, and the villagers now greet newcomers with smiles and treat them with courtesy...But these good folks have not in other respects appreciably changed; they adhere to many of their old customs and retain many of their superstitions. Folk-lorists find at Runswick and thereabouts a rare field for investigation...³⁰⁰

Both villages had beaches, but the one at Runswick Bay was better, and when seaside holidays became popular it attracted more people (**fig. 45**). It was thought that: ‘There are good, but not extensive sands at Runswick, where children can romp all day’.³⁰¹ As the fishing industry declined, local people promoted tourism by providing food and accommodation and advertising in local newspapers and guides (**fig. 11**). From 1880 to 1914 more tourists came and postcards were on sale from around 1900 (**figs. 8, 9**). Tourists do not appear in paintings until the 1900s. Senior painted many beach scenes with tourists from around 1910 including *On the Beach, Runswick* painted in 1913 (**fig. 55**). Lübbren contends:

Modernisation left its mark on all geographical locations. This had direct economic consequences for fishing villages, as traditional fishing was replaced by new industries, such as mining (as at Staithes) by modern fishing practices (as at Newlyn) or by tourist-related enterprise (as at St. Ives). It was the latter transformation that played itself out in the paintings of fisherfolk.³⁰²

Some visitors stayed in Whitby and travelled to Runswick Bay for a day's excursion.³⁰³ While tourism in Staithes declined, in Runswick it flourished. By August 1912, only 3 visitors were listed as staying at Staithes but the number in Runswick Bay had increased to 50.³⁰⁴ More tourists, including amateur painters, led to an increase in prices, which may have discouraged some artists from staying there.

By 1901, there was concern about Runswick being spoilt but the lack of space for expansion ruled this out:

It is true that Runswick shows signs of trying to live up to the ideal or more or less fashionable watering place, but fortunately any effort of this kind is not likely to succeed very much. There isn't room for it - no foothold for

²⁹⁹ R. B. Holt, *A Souvenir of Runswick Bay* (Whitby 1896).

³⁰⁰ Newcastle Weekly Chronicle, 23. 6. 1900, 7.

³⁰¹ Ibid., 23. 6. 1900, 7.

³⁰² Lübbren, *Toilers of the Sea*, 52.

³⁰³ See *Horne's Guide to Whitby*, 125-133.

³⁰⁴ W.G., 16.8.1912, Visitors' Supplement.

the jerry builders or the promoters of big hotels.³⁰⁵

But by 1914, the increasing number of tourists may have resulted in Runswick Bay losing some of its appeal.

How was Runswick Bay viewed by guidebooks and other contemporary literature? In *Seaside Watering Places* the village was described as: ‘...a most charming little spot, and specially suitable for artists, geologists and those wishing for a quiet rest...lodgings can be obtained cheaply’.³⁰⁶ It is significant that Runswick is described as ‘suitable for artists’ but Staithes is a ‘curious old fashioned village’. An article about the opening of the railway in 1883 describes Runswick as follows:

The beautiful bay of Runswick presently breaks on the travellers's view, past more rocks and cliffs to the village of Runswick, where the houses are studded all over the cliff-side, looking in fact, as if they had slipped from the cliff above them, and stuck in every possible place.³⁰⁷

A guidebook in 1904 described the village:

This is probably one of the most extraordinarily arranged fishing places to be found anywhere around the British Isles...From a distance the houses seem to be perched one above another. It is really built in the side of a steep cliff which in a measure shelters the hamlet from the fierce north winds...³⁰⁸

It also describes local people as ‘hardy, honest and agreeable’,³⁰⁹ and states that many painters worked in the village:

Runswick is a favourite resort of the artists, who here finds inexpressible delights. Pictures have been painted of Whitby, Robin Hood’s Bay and Runswick by some of the cleverest of modern painters, and scarcely a year passes without subjects from one or other of those places being visible on the walls at Burlington House.³¹⁰

Staithes is not mentioned as an attraction for artists in the same guide.

On the basis of all this new evidence, much of which is based on contemporary accounts rather than the observations of modern writers, there is a strong case for recognising that there was a separate artists' colony in Runswick Bay. There were close links between Staithes and Runswick Bay. Runswick Bay, as an artists’ colony, has been overlooked, but many artists painted there, the most popular times were from 1880 to 1892 and from 1908 to 1914. Many artists, who were formerly overlooked in discussions relating to the Staithes Group, for example Brymner and Birmingham artists such as Taylor, Harper and Jelley, only painted in Runswick Bay. There were strong links with Herkomer’s and Julian’s. Runswick Bay played an important role in the local and national art world, but has been largely forgotten.

³⁰⁵ W.G., 13.9.1901,7.

³⁰⁶ *Seaside Watering Places* (London 1885), 21-22.

³⁰⁷ *The Graphic*, September 1884, 246 and 253.

³⁰⁸ *Horne’s Guide to Whitby*, 126-129.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 129-133.

Part D Comparisons with Other English Artists' Colonies.

Part D looks at comparisons with other English artists' colonies, mainly Newlyn and Cullercoats. There were common factors between these and Staithes and Runswick Bay as well as other European artists' colonies. There were different phases of development of the English artists' colonies. This section also examines the artists' approach to painting and the role of women artists in these colonies.

Many factors distinguished Staithes and Runswick Bay from Newlyn. Artists were painting fishermen in boats powered by sail and oar, but in Newlyn these were quickly replaced by steam-powered vessels which could use the newly constructed harbour facilities. There were no harbours at Staithes and Runswick Bay and boats were launched from the beach, an activity recorded by the artists (**fig. 7**). Another signifier of location was that fishermen caught other kinds of fish using different methods. For example, pilchards were not caught off Staithes and Runswick Bay, but in Newlyn were caught in nets held between several boats. This is depicted in P. Craft's painting *Tucking a School of Pilchards on the Cornish Coast* (**fig. 22**).³¹¹ In Staithes and Runswick Bay, the harsh conditions resulted in more deaths than in Newlyn and, consequently, artists depicted more hazardous scenes (**figs. 81, 83, 84, 85, 86**).

There was site specificity in terms of the topography: the villages can be recognised from certain viewpoints adopted by the artists. There are specific prominent features of each village, for example, the bridge in Staithes and Lady Palmer's Cottage in Runswick Bay. Artists were dedicated to painting pre-modern images, which appealed to patrons.³¹² Compared with Newlyn, the climate was harsher and the fishing villages were closer to the sea; here life in general was much harder.³¹³ The artists in Staithes and Runswick Bay forged a close bond with the local community. In contrast, S. Forbes showed his dislike of certain aspects of life in Newlyn stating: 'I am in a hotbed of narrow-minded bigotry and bigotry of the worst kind...'³¹⁴ He was also concerned about local people wearing the latest fashions and also opposed new buildings in the community. A common factor between Cullercoats,

³¹¹ Cross, 122: 'It has an extra importance as a record of a fast disappearing activity, for soon, the huge shoals of pilchards disappeared from the Cornish coast'.

³¹² Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 38.

³¹³ Nottingham, Castle Art Gallery, *British Impressionism*, ex. cat., 1989, 12: 'Newlynians may well have congratulated themselves on their dedication and simplicity; there is no doubt, however, that their adopted home often appears in the paintings of its devotees as a place where peace, comfort and even plenty accompanied the hard work of the native inhabitants. Staithes, on the north Yorkshire coast, near Whitby, was altogether more harsh, demanding and difficult. Here, indeed, the life of a painter was anything but soft'.

³¹⁴ Letter from S. Forbes to his mother, February 1894, Mrs. M. Anthony collection, Newlyn Orion Gallery.

Newlyn, Staithes and Runswick Bay was an involvement with Primitive Methodism.

Painters in the artists' colonies shared similar values and ideals, as Garstin describes:

[They found] friendship and the camaraderie of the ateliers of Paris and Antwerp, a sympathy with each other's intentions, a mild climate suitable for out-of-door work, a grey-roofed village overhanging a lovely bay - these were the determining causes that led the young artists setting up their easels hard by the Cornish sea.³¹⁵

Forbes, Tuke and Gotch in 1886 were founding members of the N. E. A. C. Jackson was the only person from Staithes and Runswick Bay who was a founding member, although Dade joined in 1887; no Cullercoats artists were involved. Their success encouraged others to work in coastal communities. Langley was the first to settle in Newlyn in 1882, followed in 1884 by S. Forbes. By this time 27 artists were living there, although C. Gotch was not included in this number.³¹⁶ In the summer of 1884 artists met in Runswick Bay; another group also met in Walberswick. At the annual R. A. Summer Exhibitions, paintings such as *A Fish Sale on a Cornish Beach* (1885) by S. Forbes (**fig. 14**) *A Hopeless Dawn* (1888) by Bramley (**fig. 15**) and *Men Must Work and Women Must Weep* (1882) by Langley (**fig. 16**) were exhibited.

The Newlyn painters were restricted in their choice of subjects by the impact of modernity.³¹⁷ As Forbes painted *A Fish Sale on a Cornish Beach*, many changes were occurring around him in Newlyn, including the construction of a new harbour. Jacobs argues that Forbes mediated the scene, excluding any aspect of modernity.³¹⁸ Lübbren describes how Forbes excluded tourists: '*Fish Sale*, by contrast, lives off the play of reflections on the wet sand and the grey-in-grey tonality of figures, sand, fish, water and sky. Not one leisure seeker is in sight'.³¹⁹ The painting was successful and attracted a great deal of publicity, which focused attention on Newlyn.³²⁰ Bendiner argues that this work is significant because it:

'Brings forth such issues as England's dependence on French realism in the 1880s, antagonism towards the aesthetic movement, the new unsentimentality of genre painting, the nationalistic and primitive overtones of humble maritime subjects, and the social implications of the growth of artists' colonies in the late nineteenth century'.³²¹

Staithes and Runswick Bay artists exhibited many works at the R. A. These did not receive the national attention that Newlyn obtained and did not capture the public imagination as did,

³¹⁵ N. Garstin, 'The Work of Stanhope Forbes', *The Studio*, vol. XXIII, 1901, 88.

³¹⁶ *The Cornishman*, 4. 9. 1884, 5.

³¹⁷ Mrs. L. Birch cited in P. Dodd, 'Gender and Cornwall: Charles Kingsley to Daphne Du Maurier' in K. D. M. Snell, ed., *The Regional Novel*, 126: '...These painters [the Newlyn School] had begun to mourn the disappearance of painterly subjects as the traditional attire of the fishermen, "was passing away and the quaint old houses were replaced by cottages that ape the pretentiousness of modern villadom".

³¹⁸ See Jacobs, 148.

³¹⁹ Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 45.

³²⁰ L. Herrmann, *Nineteenth-Century British Painting* (London 2000), 376: 'Its success at the R. A. put Newlyn on the artistic map, and established Forbes as the colony's leader'.

³²¹ Bendiner, 4.

for example, *A Fish Sale on a Cornish Beach*. Some Cullercoats artists exhibited at the R. A., particularly in the early 1870s. Articles in art magazines, particularly by Meynell, raised public awareness of Newlyn.³²² An article by S. Forbes also described the attractions of the village.³²³ In September 1894, an exhibition, 'Cornish Painters of Newlyn, St. Ives and Falmouth', was held at the Castle Museum and Art Gallery, Nottingham, and this exposed their work to a wider audience. 223 works by fifty artists were on display, including some by S. Forbes and Bramley. L. Knight visited the exhibition and was very impressed.³²⁴ Seeing this gave her knowledge of the range of subjects and styles and could have inspired her to go to Staithes the following year.

By the late 1880s, painters in Newlyn were referred to as the Newlyn School.³²⁵ According to Meynell, artists were attracted by the mild weather and 'grey climate'.³²⁶ The R. A., which was criticised by some Newlyn artists, was also responsible for making the reputations of artists such as S. Forbes, who later became A. R. A. and R. A. In 1895, a local exhibiting venue became available when Passmore Edwards constructed the Newlyn Art Gallery. No similar gallery was constructed in Staithes or Runswick Bay, and a public art gallery was not opened in Whitby until the late 1920s. This is another distinct difference between the artists' colonies.

Following their success, the Newlyn painters built modern glass studios in the 'meadow', land donated by the artist A. Bateman. By doing this they contributed to the modernisation of Newlyn. Many moved there, which made them more detached from the community. As Cherry contends: 'The painters assisted in Newlyn's transformation, taking an interventionist role in the local economy; they rented rooms, commissioned houses and purchased the studios erected by speculative builders'.³²⁷

Cullercoats was also an artists' colony on the east coast of England.³²⁸ Some artists built a

³²² A. Meynell, *The Art Journal*, 1889, 137: 'Other painters may be more conspicuous individually; the "Newlynians" are the most significant body of painters now in England'.

³²³ S. Forbes, 'A Newlyn Retrospect', *The Cornish Magazine*, vol. 1, 1898, 81: 'What lodestone of artistic metal the place contains I know not, but its effects were strongly felt, in the studios of Paris and Antwerp particularly, by a number of young English painters studying there, who just about then, by some common impulse, seemed drawn towards this corner of their native land'.

³²⁴ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 65.

³²⁵ S. A. Forbes, 'A Newlyn Retrospect', 92: '...the applause has not been stinted and the Newlyn School can surely not complain of recognition'.

³²⁶ Meynell, 98: 'But it is not the subject - human or scenic - which brings painters to Cornwall. The possibility of painting out of doors all the year round is what principally has made this part of Cornwall famous and originate the "Newlyn brotherhood"; this and an equable grey climate...'

³²⁷ Cherry, 183.

³²⁸ For more information see J. Millard, *North East Artists on the Coast*, W. W. Tomlinson, *Historical Notes on Cullercoats, Whitley and Monkseaton*, (London 1893); L. Wasserman, 57- 60; W. G. Larkins, 'Reminiscences of Artistic Cullercoats', *Tyneside*, vol. 1, no. 2, Jan., 1895.

close relationship with the local community, for example, H. H. Emmerson, who lived there for many years until his death in 1895.³²⁹ By 1882, North Shields, which was close to Cullercoats, had developed into one of the largest fishing ports in the country for steam trawlers. In the same year the railway reached Cullercoats, thus enabling easy access from Newcastle-upon-Tyne and other parts of the country. The village was now changed forever.

Aspects of modernity, such as steam trawlers and the railway, made the village less attractive to some artists. Newton does not describe in depth the wide-ranging changes in Cullercoats around 1882.³³⁰ Some of these changes are outlined in a contemporary magazine article.³³¹ In contrast, Millard states how: ‘The 1880s brought changes to the fishing community which the artists went to Cullercoats to paint, and its way of life was under threat’.³³² When the railway opened in 1882, one contemporary observer stated Cullercoats would now be ‘...a seaside suburb of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and other Tyneside towns’.³³³ In contrast, Newton argues that: ‘On Tyneside, the coastal region around Cullercoats had effectively become a suburb of Newcastle by 1914’.³³⁴ Millard also contends that: ‘Artists began to worry that the village was no longer as Wasserman describes “primitive and picturesque” ’.³³⁵ A contemporary source, Wasserman, describes how in Cullercoats ‘...an avalanche of bricks and mortar has descended upon it, and has blotted out the old features of the place with startling rapidity’.³³⁶ Steam trawlers led to the overfishing of herrings and many fisherfolk were forced to seek other work. Millard refers to a poem by A. Watson, whose opening line is: ‘The herring’s gone for good, my lads’.³³⁷

In 1889, R. Jobling’s paintings of fisherfolk were criticised for using the same theme and a local reviewer asked: ‘I would like to know if Mr. Jobling is not tired of trotting out the same wearisome sketches of fisher life’.³³⁸ Another review in *The Art Journal* described the 1889 Bewick Club exhibition as: ‘...comparatively poor in quality and anything but representative’, and quoted Sir Frederic Leighton as saying: ‘Newcastle has done nothing for art’.³³⁹ By 1890, there was concern that visitors were having an adverse effect on the community: ‘Mr. Jobling has made Cullercoats famous by his canvases and by-the-by he will be the means of over-

³²⁹ Newton, *Cullercoats*, ex. cat., 17.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, 12.

³³¹ A. Watson, ‘After the Herring, 1 and 2’, *The Magazine of Art*, vol. V, 1882, 405-411 and 454-460.

³³² Millard, 34.

³³³ Larkins, ‘Reminiscences of Old Cullercoats’, 36.

³³⁴ Newton thesis, ‘The Cullercoats Artists’ Colony’, 235.

³³⁵ Wasserman, ‘Some Fisherfolk’, 57, cited in Millard, 34.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 57.

³³⁷ Millard, 34.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*

³³⁹ Quoted in Millard, 35.

running the village with tourists'.³⁴⁰

By 1893, W.W. Tomlinson described how Cullercoats had changed drastically:

Since this time many changes and improvements have taken place in the village: old houses have been pulled down, new ones erected, a green field has given place to modern terraces, the twin breakwaters have been finished, the old Huddleston Hotel has been renovated and enlarged, its name being changed to the Cullercoats Bay Hotel, and now in the summer of 1893, the quaint little village of the past is almost unrecognisable.³⁴¹

These changes may have deterred many artists and so in 1894 the Joblings preferred to work in Staithes. Before her marriage Isa Thompson was there in 1892. Cullercoats was an artists' colony between 1870 and c.1895 but it then declined until 1914. It does not share the degree of French influence and artists were not getting back to nature, as the large industrial city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne was a short train ride away. Modernity had also affected the physical appearance of the village. Steam trawlers and the railway also drastically affected local people's lives and contributed to the decline of fishing by sail and oar. There were few young artists and there was not the feeling of alienation from those who had trained in Paris and Antwerp when they returned to Britain.

There are strong similarities between Cullercoats, Staithes and Runswick Bay. The fishermen caught similar kinds of fish on the North Sea using cobbles. In terms of customs and superstitions, funerals and occupational dialect there are also many similarities. There were some differences, for example, young women in Cullercoats did not wear bonnets, whereas in Staithes and Runswick Bay all the women wore them.³⁴² The fishermen's guernseys also had a different pattern. In Staithes and Runswick Bay cobbles were dragged to and from the water and launched from the beach, whereas in Cullercoats they were launched from wheeled carriers. In Staithes and Runswick Bay women carried fish and other goods on their heads, but in Cullercoats they carried creels on their backs.

There was a similar approach to painting in the artists' colonies.³⁴³ French influence was a major factor and Corbett, Holt and Russell argue that:

...there were continual attempts to integrate English painting into developments in Europe, particularly in France. French painting had been an important model for modern English artists from the foundation of the New English Art Club in 1886, associated first with the assimilation of Rustic Naturalism and latterly with Impressionism to the Post-Impressionism exhibitions organised in 1910 and 1912 by Roger Fry.³⁴⁴

³⁴⁰ Newcastle Daily Journal, 7. 5. 1890, 5.

³⁴¹ W.W. Tomlinson, *Historical Notes on Cullercoats*, 28.

³⁴² L. Hamer, *The Cullercoats Fishwife* (Newcastle 1984), 28.

³⁴³ Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 35: '...commonality of choice of motif, of composition, treatment of figures, preference for grey-brown colour schemes, of choice of model (rustic fishing types) and poses taken from academic modelling practice (note the women leaning on their hands in Thaddeus' and Forbes' paintings)'.

³⁴⁴ Corbett, Holt and Russell, eds., *The Geographies of Englishness*, xi.

One common factor in the early period was that artists worked *en plein air*. Meynell observed that Newlyn artists: ‘...work with sincerity and directness, that they have devoted themselves to the obvious study of colour, and that they have a style but not a manner’.³⁴⁵ Lübbren argues that in painting *en plein air*: ‘Far from being retrograde or pursuing their own eccentric insular course, English fisherfolk paintings of the late nineteenth century were part of an international trend in artistic plein-air practice’.³⁴⁶ This was not confined to artists’ colonies, but was adopted mainly by those who had studied in France. Referring to the Newlyn artists and their *plein air* painting, in a review of the R. A. summer exhibition, *The Spectator* observed:

One should remember that the particular school is merely a small section in the large army, carrying on the movement of reaction against treating effects purely with a studio light and shade, in favour of open-air treatment, who have somewhat arrogantly assumed that they alone paint effects as they really are; an intention announced long ago in France by Courbet and the naturalists, carried on by Bastien-Lepage and Dagnan-Bouveret...³⁴⁷

Besides Newlyn artists, the main exponents of *plein air* painting were Clausen, La Thangue, Stott of Oldham, Lavery and the Glasgow School. In 1889 *The Spectator* observed that:

The student...comes back [from Paris] if landscape and out-of-door subjects be his aim, everything, must firstly, be grey, because grey is the prevailing tone in French landscape; secondly, the whole picture must be painted at out-of-door strength at any cost, without the conventional light and shade to be obtained by a north light in a studio.³⁴⁸

Plein air painting gave freshness and immediacy, an approach influenced by Bastien-Lepage.³⁴⁹ McConkey contends that: ‘Forbes’ early work was concerned with factual accuracy, he preferred to work on grey days when tonal relationships could be observed with greater clarity’.³⁵⁰ Besides the difficulties with the weather and his models, he experienced problems with the changing light and dust in his eyes and paints. In the early part of the period, many artists adopted a similar approach in painting in a naturalist style.³⁵¹ The north Yorkshire artists had the same aim: they wanted to paint the fishing villages and inhabitants of Staithes and Runswick Bay in an honest and realistic way.³⁵² As Lübbren contends, in terms of iconography there were also similarities: ‘Paintings of fisherfolk produced in England share

³⁴⁵ Meynell, ‘Newlyn’, *The Art Journal*, 1889, 97.

³⁴⁶ Lübbren, ‘Toilers of the Sea’, 35-36.

³⁴⁷ *The Spectator*, 11.5.1889, 644.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ C. Fox, *Painting in Newlyn, 1900-1930* (Newlyn 1985), 9: ‘The artists shared a set of ideals. Most of them were admirers of the French realist painter Bastien-Lepage, and they followed him in depicting everyday scenes of village life with absolute fidelity to nature, painted where possible on the spot or ‘en plein air’. Their style was distinctive; the colours muted and the tones subtle; the use of square-ended brushes gave their paint surfaces a robust and textured effect and blurred the outlines of the images’.

³⁵⁰ McConkey, Phillip’s, Sale Catalogue, 6.6.2000, *Twentieth-Century British and Irish Art*, Lot 114.

³⁵¹ McConkey, *Memory and Desire*, 10: ‘In the late nineteenth century the belief that the secrets of nature would be revealed by patient empirical notation underpinned naturalism in art and literature’.

³⁵² Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, 11: ‘The common factor which dominated their work, and unified the group, was their dedication to unembellished painting of contemporary life. These aims were in direct contrast to the rigid, disciplined style of painting encouraged by the establishment’.

basic formal and iconographic characteristics with their counterparts in continental Europe'.³⁵³ Similar subjects were painted, for example, a range of fishing activities, boats setting to sea, women waiting for fishermen to return and the work undertaken by women.³⁵⁴

Over time there was a move from naturalism to impressionism. Lübbren contrasts the way artists moved from painting fisherfolk to leisure scenes: 'Every aspect - plein-air naturalism as opposed to sketchy execution, overcast skies as opposed to sunny weather, rugged salts as opposed to metropolitan vacationers - contributes to the construction of difference'.³⁵⁵ In Staithes and Runswick Bay this change occurred in the 1900s, and was especially evident in Runswick Bay, which attracted more tourists.

The Newlyn artists had an important influence on the development of British art and they were seen as the vanguard of foreign influence. They not only pioneered *plein air* painting but also the use of the square brush technique which had been used at first by La Thangue. The main features of Newlyn paintings were a muted palette, a grey atmosphere and an interest in both natural and artificial light effects. By 1894, Forbes and other artists were painting:

Not only the fishing village itself and the life of the fisher folk, but the country round Newlyn, the moorlands, the little valleys or coombes, the Cornish farms and the agricultural life of the country would occupy many painters.³⁵⁶

In the 1890s, some artists left, but S. and E. Forbes were still resident in 1899 and established an art school. After 1900, there was a new generation of artists who worked there. By 1909, Garstin, an artist and writer, described how modernity had affected the village.³⁵⁷ Some including the Knights moved from Newlyn to Lamorna, which was relatively unspoiled. In the wider context of British art at this time, where do these paintings fit? The output of fisherfolk paintings from the artists' colonies was part of the art produced in the country. *Plein air* painting and French influence made the work distinctive. The gritty, realistic portrayals of working life were in stark contrast to more traditional scenes and could easily be recognised. They were hung side by side with other paintings at such venues as the R. A. An indication of the range of works in each exhibition can be found in publications such as the *Royal Academy Pictures*.³⁵⁸ In the 1880s and 1890s, the dominant genres were landscape,

³⁵³ Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 34.

³⁵⁴ This is explored in Chapter 3.

³⁵⁵ Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 45.

³⁵⁶ Quoted in Fox, *Painting in Newlyn, 1900-1930*, 14.

³⁵⁷ N. Garstin, 'West Cornwall as a Sketching Ground', *The Studio*, vol. XLVII, 1909, 114: 'But the Newlyn of to-day and that of the first artist settlers twenty-five years ago are two quite different places. When Mr. Stanhope Forbes painted his fish sale there was no harbour; to-day there is a spacious one, which, large as it is, is crowded with fishing boats, steamers, sailing vessels and craft of all descriptions. All this has brought a life and animation that no one would have dreamt of a quarter of a century ago'.

³⁵⁸ This was published annually between 1888 and 1915.

portraiture and marine painting. Artists also painted oriental scenes, fairy paintings, and classical and historical scenes.

Little has been written on the role women played in the artists' colonies except for some discussion by Lübbren.³⁵⁹ Newlyn is also referred to in Cherry's *Painting Women*.³⁶⁰ Painters there were seen as 'a brotherhood of the palette'.³⁶¹ There is also some information on Cullercoats by Millard and a brief reference by Newton.³⁶² There has previously been no discussion on women artists at Staithes and Runswick Bay. Until recently, women painters in artists' colonies were marginalised, but Knight, in Staithes, and Forbes, in Newlyn, did play an important role.

In recent years, women's place in art has been re-evaluated by art historians.³⁶³ For centuries women's role in art was generally subordinate to that of men. L. Nochlin contends that a woman artist must:

...have a good strong streak of rebellion in her to make her way in the world of art at all, rather than submitting to the socially approved role of wife and mother, the only role to which every social institution consigns her automatically.³⁶⁴

Cherry argues that they were disadvantaged by: '...the unevenly weighted structures in which art by women was produced and consumed'.³⁶⁵ Women could exhibit at the R. A. and R. B. A. and further opportunities arose through the N. E. A. C., the Grosvenor Gallery and the Allied Artists' Association.

Many women artists had poor self-esteem and lacked confidence because of their treatment. Their paintings generally sold for lower prices than men's. They mainly painted domestic scenes, children and flowers, because that was what society expected of them. When painting out of doors, women artists experienced problems, and Cherry describes how Gotch and Armstrong in Newlyn:

...encountered tensions between their social roles as women and their activities as artists. As painters they negotiated the contradictions between the protocols of respectable femininity and the colony's definitions of modernity as outdoor painting on the beach, quayside and streets.³⁶⁶

³⁵⁹ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 2,8,165,178, notes 2 and 3.

³⁶⁰ See Cherry, 183-6.

³⁶¹ Birch, *Stanhope A. Forbes R.A. and Elizabeth A. Forbes A.R.W.S.*, 27.

³⁶² See Millard, 26-28; Newton, *Cullercoats*, ex. cat, 18.

³⁶³ See, for example, S. P. Casteras, *The Substance or the Shadow: Images of Victorian Womanhood* (New Haven and London, 1982) and *Images of Victorian Womanhood in English Art* (London 1987) also P. Gillett, *Worlds of Art* (New Brunswick 1990).

³⁶⁴ L. Nochlin, 'Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?' in L. Nochlin, *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays* (Boulder, Colorado, 1988), 170.

³⁶⁵ Cherry, 72.

³⁶⁶ Cherry, 184.

E. Armstrong [later E. Forbes] was the most significant woman painter at Newlyn and is an example of the poor treatment women received. She stayed in Newlyn from 1883 and only lived there full time when she married. Armstrong was developing a career as an etcher and became R. E. in 1885, but she gave up etching when she married. Before her marriage she worked with Sickert and Whistler, but her husband was unhappy with this association and this arrangement ceased. Marriage affected her career as some saw her as S. Forbes's wife rather than as an artist in her own right.³⁶⁷ Cherry argues that Simpson:

Engaged in a special pleading on the grounds that Elizabeth Forbes's achievement, had been neglected by persistent reference to her husband, and by the "false chivalry" and "official courtesy" usually accorded to women.³⁶⁸

Simpson also contended that:

The artist's work needs no apology to be advanced for the sex of the artist. It is strong, wholesome art, able to hold its own, and deserves the honour of being considered quite apart from its signature.³⁶⁹

She received good reviews for her work, *The Studio* states:

Indeed so excellent was her record at the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers, the R. A. and N. E. A. C. and other galleries, that she was rightly looked upon as one who was not to be considered merely a woman with a fine future before her, but, waiving all question of sex, as one of the most promising of the younger painters.³⁷⁰

She participated in exhibitions specialising in domestic scenes, as did L. Knight during her time in Staithes. Forbes is best known for her portrayal of children and had two exhibitions in London, 'Children and Childlore' at the F. A. S. in 1900 and 'Model Children and Other People' at the Leicester Galleries in 1904. As with L. Knight in Staithes, she established a good relationship with local people and when she died in 1912 she was referred to as the 'queen of Newlyn'.³⁷¹

I. Thompson was the most significant woman artist at Cullercoats. She also had to overcome many obstacles to become a successful artist. Millard observes that:

Isa Thompson and Robert Jobling were following similar paths, but the opportunities available to each of them were very different. It is impossible to escape the conclusion that Isa Thompson, a single woman with little access to power and influence, struggled to advance her work. Robert Jobling, a married man with five children and vice president of the Bewick Club, found doors open for him and fitted into networks of male contacts.³⁷²

L. Knight faced many obstacles in becoming an artist and records that, at the Nottingham School of Art, women were treated differently from men. She describes how she was disadvantaged by having to study plaster figures rather than life models which male students

³⁶⁷ Penzance, Penlee House Gallery, *Singing from the Walls: The Life and Art of E. A. Forbes*, J. Cook, M. Hardie and C. Payne, 2000, 22: '...a somewhat prosaic male artist with a brilliant wife'.

³⁶⁸ Cherry, 71.

³⁶⁹ E. Blantyre Simpson, 'The Paintings and Etchings of Elizabeth Forbes', *The Studio*, 1894, vol. IV, 192.

³⁷⁰ Ibid., 186.

³⁷¹ *Pall Mall Gazette*, 18. 3.1912, 2.

³⁷² Millard, 28.

could do.³⁷³

L. Knight's studio was used as a base for women artists in Staithes. E. K. Burgess, an art student from the Lambeth School of Art, also stayed there and some of her work produced in the village is featured in *The Studio*.³⁷⁴ Women played a part in the S.A.C., with L. Knight and H. Hoyland becoming members in 1901. The following year Isa Jobling joined, but, from this time there were no other women members. There were more women artists at Staithes and L. Knight played a prominent role. There was no dominant woman artist in Runswick and this is a distinct difference between the two artists' colonies.

Part D has looked at comparisons with other English artists' colonies. Newlyn had a significant influence on the other colonies and was seen as the vanguard of French influence. All villages where the artists' colonies were based were closely involved with the fishing industry. There were many factors which linked the artists' colonies. Artists sought primitive sites, which were cheap and accessible, with 'unmodernised labour'. Cullercoats was less attractive to artists after c.1893 because of many modern developments. Fisherfolk were popular subjects at this time and many motifs were similar. There were more paintings depicting hazardous scenes in Staithes. The Newlyn artists received considerable publicity, as did Cullercoats, but those in Staithes and Runswick Bay very little. The difficult experiences of women artists were discussed, in particular, E. Forbes in Newlyn and L. Knight in Staithes. All the above factors provided a stimulus for the production of more fisherfolk paintings in artists' colonies, particularly between 1880 and 1900.³⁷⁵

This chapter has examined the artists' colonies in terms of the definition outlined earlier: '...groups of artists working in these locations over a period of time who drew their inspiration from the local environment and the local community. Artists adopted a similar approach to style and iconography'. General factors discussed have been: the influences on the artists' colonies, access and proximity to a town, the impact of tourism, and French and Dutch influences. A comparison of Cullercoats, Newlyn, Staithes and Runswick Bay as artists' colonies was undertaken. At Staithes and Runswick Bay, the artists who worked there, the structure of the artists' colony, membership, sub-groups and artistic leadership were examined. Also discussed was the role of women artists and how tourism affected the community.

³⁷³ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 47.

³⁷⁴ *The Studio*, vol. XX, 1900, 190-195.

³⁷⁵ Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 29: 'In terms of sheer numerical presence, fisherfolk were, next to peasants, the single most popular genre subject in the Royal Academy annual exhibitions between 1880 and 1900'.

Staithes and Runswick Bay as distinctive artists' colonies were examined and information is presented on who worked there. The case for there being two distinct artists' colonies is argued by presenting evidence, based mainly on previously unexplored primary sources. These artists' colonies, unlike Cullercoats and Newlyn, were slower to change and this is why they were attractive to the painters. Staithes and Runswick Bay shared many common factors with Cullercoats and Newlyn and with their European counterparts.

By 1914, Staithes and Runswick Bay had changed from being primarily fishing villages to places where ironstone miners and ironworkers lived, and the character of the villages changed. By around 1907, the number of artists visiting the fishing villages was declining as *plein air* painting and the portrayal of fisherfolk were of less interest to artists and patrons. There is little evidence that any rivalry and tensions in the artists' colonies led to their decline, as happened elsewhere.³⁷⁶ By 1914 tourism had developed in the area, particularly at Runswick Bay, where the beach changed from being a place of work to a place of leisure. Chapter 3 discusses the paintings produced in the artists' colonies.

³⁷⁶ See Jacobs, 15.

CHAPTER THREE THE IMAGES OF THE VILLAGES AND THEIR INHABITANTS

'One might fill in a book with the details of this place. Compared with Runswick I do not think it [Staithes] is so picturesque and romantic; but if you wish for real life among the toilers of the deep, you can have it unadulterated; the inhabitants are a fine, honest lot of true Britons, such as you seldom see elsewhere. I rather think this must be the eldorado of the painters as they almost jostle one another in the streets, and some of the work done by these gentlemen and ladies is more than good, it is simply superb'.¹

This chapter examines the range of images of the villages and fisherfolk, concentrating in particular on their work practices. The essence of Staithes and Runswick Bay for artists was the fishing industry and the environment in which fisherfolk lived. Artists came to the villages mainly to paint these motifs. Besides these images, other paintings were produced in the local area featuring a range of subjects. Most were painted in the area from Staithes to Runswick Bay along the coast and inland to where the A174 Whitby to Saltburn road is now situated. Subjects such as haymaking, farm animals, flowers and the seasons were painted. Artists also painted scenes in local towns and villages including Whitby, (how Whitby was depicted is discussed in Chapter 2) Hinderwell, Port Mulgrave, Robin Hood's Bay Scarborough and the Yorkshire Moors. After c.1907 there were more paintings of leisure subjects, for example, Mark Senior's *On the Beach, Runswick* 1913 (**fig. 55**).

The paintings communicate the universal themes of love, courage, death and family. The message about fisherfolk was communicated through different forms of visual imagery: paintings, drawings, photographs, illustrations, cartoons and advertisements. The main focus is on painting and there is some discussion on photography. Through contextual analysis and discourses on the production of the artworks, it is hoped that more will be revealed about the artists' colonies.

The lack of documentation on the paintings is problematic. As most of these painters are viewed as 'minor artists', little has survived on them and their work. No artists' diaries are available and information on the paintings has been pieced together from letters, exhibition

¹ H. S. Forman, *A Holiday Tour in and Around Whitby* (London 1896), 35.

catalogues, artists' writings and newspaper reviews. There is no single large collection of these works; but instead they are scattered throughout Britain and the world and many are in private collections. The paintings produced did not arise out of a cultural vacuum; they were a part of the national identity, which the artists were involved in creating. For the size of the communities, Staithes and Runswick Bay were probably some of the most painted places in Britain.

Most painters used oils but Hopwood and Jackson, for example, were also skilled watercolour painters. Hopwood gained a reputation for his watercolours but he also used charcoal and an exhibition of his charcoal drawings, mainly of motifs in Staithes and Runswick Bay, was held at the F. A. S. in 1902. One point of difference with other artists' colonies is that the villages were centres for etching. Barrett was interested in etching and regularly exhibited at the R. E. in London. Later Short, one of the leading engravers of the day, also worked in Staithes and Whitby. Based on new evidence, it can now be shown that one sculpture was produced at Staithes, *A Staithes Fishergirl*, c.1900 (**fig. 18**) by the Irish sculptor, O. Sheppard. Little is known about this work or its whereabouts. The bonnet worn by the fishergirl is that typically worn in the village. Sheppard, who was engaged to R. Good, visited her at Staithes and this work was produced during this time.²

In this chapter: Part A examines why paintings of fisherfolk were popular, Part B the depiction of fisherfolk, Part C examines the depiction of hazardous scenes and Part D how the topography of Staithes and Runswick Bay was interpreted. Part E examines paintings of interiors, Part F Photography in the Area.

² Sheppard file: National College of Art and Design, Dublin.

Part A The Popularity of Paintings of Fisherfolk.

During this period fisherfolk were national symbols. Detailed readings of the paintings are required in order to explain why this occurred and to show the society they reflected. The content and meaning of the works are looked at in order to discover more about this relationship. The following are examined: the interest in fisherfolk by artists and wider society and the trend to preserve the past. Fisherfolk as heroes, as symbols of self-help, of the nation and Yorkshire are also examined. Whether these images were myth or reality will be discussed, as are idealised types. The interest in fisherfolk not only occurred in Britain but also in other parts of Europe: ‘...the fishermen genre enjoyed tremendous popularity in Germany, particularly from the 1870s onward’.³

Despite the large number of paintings produced between 1880 and 1914 depicting fisherfolk and their communities, little work has been undertaken on this subject. One exception is an essay by Lübbren. She also examines some coastal artists’ colonies in Europe between 1870 and 1914, including Staithes, Newlyn and St. Ives.⁴ There are some points of difference between her approach and the one adopted here. The main difference is that she has adopted a general approach to discussing fisherfolk throughout Europe while this study is confined to fisherfolk in two small villages on the north Yorkshire coast. While Lübbren discusses Staithes, there is no mention of Runswick Bay and its importance as a centre for art production. She places a strong emphasis on how some fishing villages became tourist centres, ‘...of those cultural practices and habits of looking associated with modern tourism’.⁵ As will be shown, Staithes and Runswick Bay were less affected by tourism than other communities.

Lübbren argues that: ‘Images of coastal villages did not reflect or illustrate the reality of life in those villages’.⁶ But she does not take into account the high casualty rate in Staithes which is reflected in the grim realism of artists such as H. Knight. There is also an emphasis on offshore fishing when most activity in Staithes and Runswick Bay was inshore fishing, which markedly alters the range of images available.⁷ Lübbren also argues that by the late 1890s ‘...pictures of “toiling” fisherfolk had largely given way to more peaceful representations of

³ R. de Leeuw, Sillevis, Dumas, 120.

⁴ See Lübbren, ‘Toilers of the Sea’, 29-63; Lübbren, *Rural Artists Colonies*.

⁵ Lübbren, ‘Toilers of the Sea’, 29.

⁶ Ibid., 30.

⁷ Ibid., 38.

coastal life'.⁸ In Staithes and Runswick Bay the production of 'pictures of "toiling" fisherfolk' continued later to around 1907. The important role of women, other than in tragic circumstances in the fishing villages, and how they were represented, is only briefly discussed.⁹ In Staithes and Runswick Bay women played a crucial role in the fishing industry. Lübbren also does not discuss how photographers portrayed fisherfolk, an important element in visual imagery in Staithes and Runswick Bay, mainly due to the presence of F. M. Sutcliffe in Whitby.

In contrast to the dearth of studies of fisherfolk, there are several of how agricultural labourers were represented in British art, including those by Barrell, Bermingham and Payne.¹⁰ Barrell examines the depiction of the rural poor, particularly in terms of social relations, in English painting between 1740 and 1830. Bermingham looks at landscape paintings between 1740 and 1860 and how they reflected the existing culture. She also discusses the representation and the actual reality of the countryside in paintings.

Payne examines images of the agricultural landscape in England between 1780 and 1890. She also analyses the social, political and economic factors, which affected agricultural life. Barrell, Bermingham and Payne all look at the complexities of these paintings. They analyse the paintings for their meanings, in particular what was represented and what was reality.¹¹

From around 1880, partly due to French influence, there was an increased interest in fisherfolk and agricultural workers. Snell contends:

There was an interest in working lives and technologies of industry and rural workers. Also an eagerness to view, or represent, other people in communion with their places of work, even if this relationship was often infused with romantic and pastoral colour at some remove from local working communities.¹²

Some artists saw the agricultural workers as 'peasants' as Corbett, Holt and Russell argue:

Gradually, through specific aesthetic and cultural tendencies, the "peasant" became idealised as a "type", as the nostalgic embodiment of noble, Anglo-Saxon virtues and an exemplary figure in an authentic and stable golden age entirely unaffected by change. This idealisation could only be achieved through a process of sanitisation, or purification, by ignoring actual circumstances in effect.¹³

⁸ Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 31.

⁹ Ibid., 34-35, 37, 41.

¹⁰ J. Barrell, *The Dark Side of the Landscape* (Cambridge 1980); A. Bermingham, *Landscape and Ideology* (London 1986) and C. Payne, *Toil and Plenty* (London 1993).

¹¹ See Payne, 2-4.

¹² Snell, ed., *The Regional Novel*, 10.

¹³ Corbett, Holt and Russell, eds., *The Geographies of Englishness*, xiii.

This view of rural workers can be extended to fisherfolk who were projected as different ideal types who embodied much of what was seen as good and timeless during a period of rapid change. Lübbren points out that:

Herbert argued that the sheer number of peasant paintings in this period articulates artists' nostalgic evocation of a way of life in the face of the steadily spreading effects of the urban-industrial revolution and the actual depopulation of rural areas.¹⁴

The interest in fisherfolk not only occurred in Britain, but also in other parts of Europe:

Corbett, Holt and Russell argue:

...that the interest in fisherfolk forms part of a wider European interest in marginal and pre-modern lives. Like other primitive Europeans, English fisherfolk are perceived as even more heroic than the land-locked peasant. They embody perfect patriarchal and domestic relationships in sites far removed from metropolitan centres and the signs of contemporary turmoil.¹⁵

The articles which appeared in art magazines about fishing villages and their inhabitants from 1880 onwards may have inspired others to paint fisherfolk. Could artists really know about their lives or were they painting a romantic notion, a stereotype? An article of 1887 gives a contemporary view of why artists found fisherfolk interesting. It describes how the romantic side of fishing was highlighted and the hard work was overlooked:

Many people think their occupation is quite an easy way of earning a livelihood. Poets and artists are fond of dealing with it in a fanciful manner, calculated to mislead. The pretty harbour, the shimmering sea, the boats sailing out at eventide to cast their nets and wait for the silvery shoals. It sounds simple and idyllic, but the reality is no pleasant idyll...Net mending, baiting the lines for white fish, overhauling the cobbles, painting and tarring them, patching sails, making crab and lobster pots, and a hundred other items do not count in ideal representations of fisher life'.¹⁶

Women undertook most of the work before and after fishing.

The paintings of Staithes and Runswick Bay were set against a backdrop of drama and tension. Paintings of hazardous scenes, such as *The Last Coble* 1900 (**fig. 81**) which is discussed in Part C, is one of the works that differentiate what was produced from other artists' colonies. Fisherfolk were some of the last hunter-gatherers in Britain and the dangers and risks they faced were of more interest to artists compared with agricultural labourers, who led a quieter, less exciting life tied to the soil. Charleton comments on this in an 1886 article about Cullercoats:

Much has been said and written...concerning the picturesqueness and the pathos to be found in the lives and employment of the tillers of the soil...Yet, take it at its noblest and best, it lacks the fascination which the element of danger adds to the calling of the toilers of the sea. The faith and trust shown in the one is great, but in the other it is greater still, for those who seek their living in the sea, without sowing go forth to reap their harvest; and then, not in peaceful fields where safety dwells, but in the deep waters where death is ever lurking to find them unprepared. It is this tragic element, underlying their life, which adds an interest to all its phases,

¹⁴ Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 31.

¹⁵ Corbett, Holt and Russell, eds., *The Geographies of Englishness*, xiii.

¹⁶ L. Wasserman, 'Some Fisherfolk', *The Art Journal*, 1887, 58.

deeper and more enthralling the more you know of it.¹⁷

Paintings depicting fisherfolk were exhibited throughout the nineteenth century, but from 1880 they were some of the most popular subjects displayed at the R. A. and the R. B. A. In Staithes and Runswick Bay, there were three main forms of work: fishing, mining and agricultural work. The artists mainly painted fisherfolk; some paintings of agricultural labourers were produced, but none of the miners.

Fisherfolk were seen as a part of the soul and spirit of the nation. One example of the strong interest in them is shown in an article in 1879 on J. C. Hook. This argued that he understood fisherfolk because:

...of the "humanity" that he put into his vivid presentation of the rough and honest folk who live and breathe upon his canvas. "Hearts of Oak" depicted everything the viewing public wanted to see. It depicted a picturesque family, a heroically stalwart fisherman, whilst at the same time it loosely implied the fisherman's poverty and suggested the fisherfolk's closeness to nature.¹⁸

In *Hearts of Oak* (1875 Castle Museum and Art Gallery, Nottingham) Hook emphasised the picturesque and romantic aspects of fisherfolk and suggested they were 'rough and honest' but also had heroic qualities.

The International Fisheries Exhibition, held in London in 1883, is another indication of the wide interest in fisherfolk and their significance in society and the economy at this time. The exhibition heightened awareness of the industry and its purpose was:

To illustrate all the modes by which the marine and freshwater animals of economic value are captured and utilised together with the commercial, scientific, social, historic and legislative aspects of such fisheries.¹⁹

Besides the general public, fisherfolk from many parts of Britain visited the exhibition, including a group from Staithes.²⁰ The wider interest in these workers contributed to the artists' colonies being established as sites of art production. The paintings produced found a ready market from the burgeoning middle-classes who wanted pre-modern images of labour.²¹

Another factor, which contributed to the popularity of paintings of fisherfolk, was the increasing labour unrest from around 1880 of other groups of workers such as miners and

¹⁷ R. J. Charleton, 'Cullercoats', *The Magazine of Art*, vol. IX, 1886, 460-1.

¹⁸ W. Fenn, 'Our Living Artists: J. C. Hook', *The Magazine of Art*, vol. II, 1879, 10.

¹⁹ *The Times*, 19. 3. 1883, 3.

²⁰ *W. G.*, 26. 5. 1883, 4.

²¹ Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 31: 'Peasant paintings have this in common with fisherfolk paintings; both conjure up an alternative world to that of their urban-bourgeois audiences, a place that was geographically somewhat distant from the urban and semi-urban spaces of modernisation'.

agricultural labourers. This action made these groups unattractive and they were seen as a threat to the urban bourgeoisie who bought the paintings. Agricultural labourers were struggling to establish trade unions, and their relationship with farmers deteriorated. The agricultural sector contracted during the depression of the 1880s and 1890s, and the harmony that for many years had existed in the countryside broke down. The unrest and the wide-ranging changes do not feature in the paintings as Corbett, Holt and Russell argue:

Economic depression, rural depopulation and progressive mechanisation are on the whole not registered in these paintings and the countryside remains impervious to the vicissitudes of modern culture.²²

1880 to 1914 was a time of rapid expansion in manufacturing industry and the service sector. Aspects of modern life, such as workers in factories steel works and coal mines, were generally not portrayed. It was also a period of social progress, with the development of political parties and increasing enfranchisement. Imperialism was an important feature of society for all classes and came to the fore in the celebrations of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887 and her Diamond Jubilee in 1897. During the Boer War, between 1899 and 1902, there was an outpouring of imperialist sentiment. The empire was a diversion from the internal problems faced by the country. For many it was also a source of pride and gave a feeling of superiority, particularly among the working class. McConkey argues that: 'Imperialism, as Edward Said has shown, was a clear set of mental attitudes in British culture in the late nineteenth century'.²³ The celebration of the empire resonated with the images of fisherfolk who were seen as brave, steadfast and strong.

The paintings linked to wider ideas of imperialism. From 1880 to 1914 the British Empire was at its zenith and 'Britannia ruled the waves'. The Royal Navy protected the country and the wider shores of the empire. McConkey contends that: 'The expansion of marine and coastal genre painting from the 1870s occurred at the height of Britain's maritime supremacy'.²⁴ Britain's wealth was made possible by commerce on the high seas and ships, sailors and the maritime tradition were of great significance and the focus of attention. Paintings of fisherfolk and villages such as Staithes and Runswick Bay were a part of this tradition. As McConkey maintains:

Nationalist glorification was nevertheless an important aspect of the marine and coastal genre painting which emerged. The growth of genre painting in places like Staithes, Cullercoats, Newlyn, St. Ives and Walberswick underscored primitive community values while it graphically addressed the lives of the fishing communities.²⁵

²² Corbett, Holt and Russell, eds., *The Geographies of Englishness*, xii.

²³ McConkey, *Memory and Desire*, 110.

²⁴ Ibid., 113.

²⁵ Ibid., 117.

A deeper reading of how fisherfolk were portrayed shows nationalistic overtones as they were seen as idealised English types and potent symbols of the country. McConkey in analysing *The Seine Boat* by S. Forbes argues:

In their *Seine Boat*, [they] have been transformed into resplendent archetypes. Their “rugged honed faces” convey the national, rather than regional characteristics of fortitude, team working and bravery in the face of the elements, the quintessential values of the age of Empire.²⁶

Team spirit was highly valued in society and inculcated in public schools through games such as rugby. McConkey also contends that: [the sea] ‘...was thus an appropriate backdrop upon which social, political and human values were projected...’²⁷ Staithes and Runswick Bay, Newlyn and Cullercoats were also stages on which these values ‘were projected’.

Society was controlled by etiquette and strict codes of conduct. There was a more rigid class system and people were perceived according to their place in this hierarchy. H. Perkin has identified the period from 1880 as a time when:

...segregation by income, status, appearance, physical health, speech, education and opportunities in life as well as by work and residential area was...at its highest point of development.²⁸

To understand these paintings it is important to relate them to the power structures in society. The nation became more conscious of its close relationship with the sea in the arms race between Britain and Germany from around 1900 to 1914. The expansion of the Royal Navy was featured widely in newspapers and magazines. The Dreadnoughts built from 1905 were the most heavily armed ships ever constructed. These were symbols of modernity, being the first warships powered by steam turbines, and could reach speeds of 21 knots. With 12-inch guns and crews of 800 they were symbols of military might and national pride.

From around 1900 the threat of invasion, particularly from Germany, led to greater feelings of fear and insecurity. This resulted in the publication of articles and books belonging to a genre known as ‘invasion literature’. Between 1871 and 1914 around 400 books on this theme were written.²⁹ This feeling of being under threat contributed to an even greater outpouring of patriotic fervour. Besides the external threat, there were also many internal threats. Many of

²⁶ McConkey comments, Phillips, London, ‘Twentieth-Century British and Irish Art’, 6.6.2000, sales catalogue, Lot 114.

²⁷ McConkey, *Memory and Desire*, 109.

²⁸ H. Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880* (London 1989), 27.

²⁹ Some examples are G. T. Chesney, *The Battle of Dorking* (London 1871), E. Childers, *The Riddles of the Sands* (London 1903), W. Le Queux, *The Great War in England 1897* (London 1894).

the checks and balances in society had broken down and there was increasing tension as different interests struggled against each other. The British economy was under threat from foreign competition, and a failure to invest in new machinery resulted in falling productivity. Other pressures from women's suffrage, Irish nationalism and the labour movement resulted in a period of social turmoil up to 1914. Labour unrest was a feature of life, especially in the mining industry, and disillusionment with these workers increased. In contrast, fisherfolk commanded respect as healthy, racially pure and hard working models of virtue.

Paintings of fisherfolk in Staithes and Runswick Bay and other artists' colonies can be seen as a part of the trend in Britain to record and preserve the past. Photographers such as F. M. Sutcliffe were also depicting workers including fisherfolk in Whitby, Staithes and Runswick Bay (**figs. 30, 78, 96**). Many writers also described the lives of agricultural labourers.³⁰ As people's attention was focused on the empire, others were turning to look within 'deepest Britain'. This led to an increasing awareness of the environment, an interest in historic buildings and folk culture.

This interest manifested itself in the establishment of several organisations. The Royal Forestry Society was founded in 1882, and the Environmental Health Officers' Association in 1883. The National Trust was set up in 1895 and both the National Society for Clean Air and the Town and Country Planning Association in 1899. This move to preserve the traditional way of life not only occurred in Britain but also in other European countries such as Germany. West argues that: 'Significantly, the society *Bund Heimatschutz* (Society for the Protection of the Homeland) aimed to safeguard not just the physical appearance, but its character and inner essence as well'.³¹

Fisherfolk were a part of the 'character and inner essence' of the country. The yearning from the urban bourgeoisie to protect what was disappearing also manifested itself in an increased interest in aspects of rural life such as folk songs. Vaughan Williams collected these, particularly in eastern England. C. Sharp also collected folk songs and published compilations of these in *Songs from Somerset* in 1904, *English Folk Songs: Some Conclusions* in 1907 and *The Morris Book* between 1907 and 1913.³²

³⁰ See W. J. Keith, 'The Land in Victorian Literature', 143-146, in G. E. Mingay, ed., *The Victorian Countryside*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (London 1981).

³¹ West, 42.

³² Sharp, *Songs from Somerset* (London 1904); *English Folk Songs: Some Conclusions* (London 1907); and *The Morris Book* (London 1907-13).

This nostalgia made paintings of fisherfolk popular and brought the tang of salt air to the stuffy rooms of the urban middle-class. Referring to Staithes and Runswick and the surrounding area, a guide book to Whitby states:

Without doubt to the average Englishman, who is anxious to escape from the humdrum conventionalities of modern life this is the most interesting part of England.³³

The fishing villages were seen as a counterpoint to the corrupt cities. As Robins maintains:

By the 1880s, the English middle-class associated filth, poverty and deviant sexuality with the cities from which they wanted to escape.³⁴

The moral climate in the 1890s was viewed by some as one of degeneration and decadence. In contrast, fisherfolk were seen as models of virtue. There was an interest in physiognomy and a person's character was assessed by the way they looked. God and work were the catchwords of the age, and the values of hard work, discipline and thrift were inculcated in school, in the family, in church and chapel, in the workplace and in wider society. Patrons bought paintings, which were suffused with contemporary values. Employers saw fishermen as role models, as workers who represented hard work, endurance, determination and courage; they were an image of man battling against the elements. (figs. 81, 85, 86, 87).

Briggs contends: 'Every society has propagandists who try to persuade their fellow-citizens to develop a special kind of social character which will best serve the needs of the day'.³⁵ Smiles was a propagandist of enormous influence and outlined his philosophy in *Self-Help*.³⁶ His views were an important influence on society, and fisherfolk were seen as models of self-help. He thought that:

As steady application to work is the healthiest training for every individual, so is it the best discipline of a state. Honourable industry travels the same road with duty; and Providence has closely linked both with happiness. The gods, says the poet, have placed labour and toil on the way leading to the Elysian fields.³⁷

There was a belief in self-help and many thought that material progress came with hard work, which was seen as countering many of society's ills. So deeply entrenched was the belief in self-improvement, that poverty was thought to be the result of bad character and laziness. There was a considerable emphasis on sobriety as can be seen in the strength of the Temperance movement. Stress was also placed on diligence and good time keeping. In *Self-Help* Smiles wanted to:

³³ *Horne's Guide to Whitby*, 133.

³⁴ Robins, 'Living the Simple Life', 22.

³⁵ Briggs, *Victorian People* (London 1954), 124.

³⁶ Smiles, *Self-Help* (London 1859).

³⁷ Quoted in Briggs, *Victorian People*, 124.

Re-inculcate those old-fashioned but wholesome lessons - which cannot perhaps be too often urged - that youth must work in order to enjoy - that nothing creditable can be accomplished without application and diligence - that the student must not be deterred by difficulties, but conquer them by patience and perseverance, and that, above all, he must seek elevation of character without which capacity is worthless and worldly success is nought.³⁸

Perceptions of work had changed over time and Huneault argues that:

One reason for this lies in the development of the historical meanings of work within Britain. Historian Patrick Joyce calls attention to a long-term shift in the language of labour from “words investing work” [with] connotations of pain and degradation to words denoting dignity and the transformation of nature and man’s being.³⁹

From around 1850, Carlyle and Smiles influenced how work was perceived.⁴⁰ Other factors were the growth of trade unionism, the emergence of a political party for working men and the extension of the franchise. Huneault argues that: ‘...workers were more and more frequently ennobled and celebrated, in word if not deed, as the backbone of the nation, stanchions of the economic might that had led Britain to her imperial prominence’.⁴¹

Fisherfolk were seen as the personification of the dignity of labour. With this changing perception of work, fishermen were seen in a different way, as heroic figures, not only risking their lives to obtain their daily bread, but also to save their fellow human beings.⁴² This heroic figure features, for example, in paintings where the lifeboat was launched to rescue those in danger. This was one of the images through which Britain presented itself to the outside world, for example, *In Time of Trouble at Runswick Bay* (**fig. 87**).⁴³ Fishermen were potent symbols of British manhood to a maritime nation, which had conquered and now administered vast tracts of land across the globe. H. L. Gee contends that: ‘The greatest romance of the Yorkshire coast is to be found in the struggle between man and the sea, and that struggle has given rise to some of the noblest heroism, most daring adventure, and splendid acts of sacrifice that men have ever witnessed or God recorded’.⁴⁴

Many paintings of the fisherfolk were images of Yorkshire and were bought and sold in the county’s art market. These paintings reflected how many Yorkshire people saw themselves.

³⁸ Briggs, 124.

³⁹ K. Huneault, *Difficult Subjects: Working Women and Visual Culture, 1880-1914* (Aldershot 2003), 6.

⁴⁰ See P. Joyce, *The Historical Meanings of Work* (Cambridge 1987), 2.

⁴¹ Huneault, 7.

⁴² See Charleton, ‘Cullercoats’, 462.

⁴³ Louisville, Kentucky, The J. B. Speed Art Museum, *Virtue Rewarded: Morality and Faith in Victorian Paintings. An Exhibition of the Forbes Magazine Collection*, ex. cat., S. P. Casteras, 1988, 3: ‘Virtue, on both a public and private scale, and the intertwined gospels of morality and faith were cornerstones of Victorian society and belief in England...Civic duty and patriotism...loyalty to country and family as well as self-sacrifice were all expected from the highest to the lowest citizens’.

⁴⁴ Gee, *The Romance of the Yorkshire Coast*, 140.

The industrialists and other middle-class patrons were thrifty, determined, hard working, careful people who were competitive and wanted to win. One example is S. Wilson (**fig. 98**), a patron of Senior. He believed fisherfolk possessed qualities such as piety, industry, shrewdness and courage, which Yorkshire people admired. Other workers in Yorkshire such as miners, steel and textile workers rarely feature in paintings, although they were making a strong contribution to the economy. The smoke and grime many patrons had helped to create, surrounded them and they saw the paintings of fisherfolk as inspirational images of a pre-industrial age. They were heroes, especially as the crews of lifeboats, and widely respected for this. They were seen as role models, hard working, God fearing, determined and honest. The paintings of fisherfolk can be seen as part of a trend to record and preserve aspects of rural life.

Part B The Depiction of Fisherfolk.

In this part the different roles of fishermen and fisherwomen are examined and how they were portrayed. This will concentrate on: i) Fishermen as workers and heroic figures and ii) Fisherwomen as wives, mothers and workers. The sea has deep significance in British visual imagery because Britain is an island. The sea could not be modernised, there were no property rights and it was controlled by nature not man. There was no 'specific spatial domain' as in agriculture. The Rev. W. Lach-Szyrma, Vicar of Newlyn, stated in 1888: 'No man claims an acre of ocean as his own'.⁴⁵ Man's presence and the changes made could be seen on the landscape. Agricultural labourers could see the results of their work in farm buildings, ploughed fields and hedgerows. In contrast, no trace is left of the labour of fisherfolk, nets and hooks are placed in the sea and, after retrieving these, all evidence of their work disappears.

Herbert argues that Millet's work was inspired by many influences:

We shall find that far from being a simple transcription of what lay around him, Millet's rural naturalism was a compound of literary predilection, nostalgia for the past, an instinctive humanitarianism and a profound pessimism. It was a compound also of religious and mythological themes transposed into secular actuality.⁴⁶

In the same way artists in Staithes and Runswick Bay were also affected by many influences. In the paintings of coastal communities and their inhabitants, different strands of meaning came together including the mystic nature of the sea and man's struggle against it. When artists came to the villages, what determined the subjects they painted? Before their arrival, they had absorbed images of fisherfolk in the wider culture from paintings, photographs and illustrations. This exposure to many different images may have pre-determined which subjects they chose. Most were directed by other artists to see scenes in a certain way and to paint the stock motifs available. As Lübbren argues, there was a '...highly mediated way in which artists produced "reality" in their representations'.⁴⁷

The anti-machine, anti-urban views of the painters in artists' colonies were reflected in their portrayal of fisherfolk. Artists may have found the villages attractive as some activities there could be depicted as pre-modern, for example, mending nets, or fishing from cobbles. In decoding these paintings it is necessary to ask certain questions: Why were they painted? For whom were they painted? How were they painted? What were they trying to convey to the

⁴⁵ Quoted in Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 38.

⁴⁶ Herbert, *City vs. Country*, 48.

⁴⁷ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 47.

viewer? This section looks at the iconography of fisherfolk in the two villages during this period.

1) Fishermen

The main discussion here focuses on fishermen as workers, as symbols of national character and as heroes. The depiction of fishermen is complex and as Quilley argues: ‘...cultural representation of the sailor was informed and mediated by a wide range of political, social and aesthetic discourses throughout the eighteenth century’.⁴⁸ Similarly the representation of fishermen in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was also informed and mediated by a range of discourses.

Some artists wanted to depict fisherfolk in a new way and French influence led to a fresh approach. McConkey in discussing Brangwyn’s *Fowey Harbour, Cornwall* states:

The themes associated with the lives of mariners and fishermen were recast by a new generation of painters anxious to break with the conventional scenography of painters like J. C. Hook. Even the anxieties of fisher families portrayed in the dark interiors of Frank Holl were to be re-examined. The visual culture in which these young painters emerged was sharpened and modernised by the new reportage methods, which came with hand-held photography. French training, infinitely preferable to that of the London art schools, laid greater strictures on accurate observation. Summers spent in Fontainebleau and Brittany led many young British painters to reject London and seek rural or coastal retreats in fishing villages on the north east coast and in the west country. People wanted to be a part of this new movement.⁴⁹

McConkey also asserts that there were similar themes between artists’ colonies and motifs were sometimes re-used. This exchange of ideas came from painters moving from one artists’ colony to another throughout Europe and in some there was a fluid membership. Artists also experienced new ideas through the treatment of subjects at exhibitions and through art magazines. McConkey argues:

In its claim to reject the artifice of the metropolitan studio, this generation set great store by documentary accuracy. Its themes were restricted and, despite local variations in dispersed colonies, remained similar. The departure and return of the fishing fleet, sales of the catch, mending the nets, boat building, for instance are subjects found in the work of Fred Jackson at Staithes, Robert Jobling at Cullercoats and Thomas Cooper Gotch, Walter Langley and Stanhope Forbes at Newlyn. Subjects were circulated from one artist to another.⁵⁰

Whereas earlier in the century fisherfolk were a part of a painting, now they were the main focus and manual labour became a subject in its own right. The Staithes and Runswick Bay artists were capturing on canvas a disappearing way of life and their paintings link with the

⁴⁸ See G. Quilley, ‘The Image of the Ordinary Seaman in the Eighteenth Century’, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, Essays, vol.1 no.2, 2000,1.

⁴⁹ McConkey comments, Christie’s, London, Brangwyn, *Fowey Harbour, Cornwall*, ‘Important British Art’, sales catalogue, 27.11. 2002, Lot 27.

⁵⁰ McConkey, *Memory and Desire*, 117.

plein air realist paintings produced in Newlyn and other artists' colonies from Brittany to Russia. These link into the European tradition of peasant genre painting between 1880 and 1914.

The Newlyn artists influenced how fisherfolk were represented as was shown in a R. A. review of 1890: '...the Newlyn School, a band of painters who apply to the old popular and homely incident an accomplished modern technique'.⁵¹ The painters were influenced by French painting and chose as their subjects working people.⁵²

T. Cross argues that: 'Their paintings were tonal and silvery, combining accuracy of detail with story painting always so dear to British hearts'.⁵³ When painting fisherfolk, artists were generally not interested in showing the effects of poverty. One exception is the Newlyn painter Langley, whose choice of subjects was ideological as well as artistic. He was a friend of the socialist, C. Bradlaugh, and was concerned about the persistent hardship faced by the poor. Most painters were not revolutionaries creating political propaganda but wanted to be successful and to sell their work. They saw fisherfolk as components of the local scene, adopting a neutral stance rather than a sentimental one. The artists were not involved in setting up idealistic, anti-materialistic communities such as the arts and craft colony set up by C. R. Ashbee in Chipping Campden.⁵⁴

Most artists in Staithes and Runswick Bay did not want to see any material improvement for the inhabitants. They preferred to see local people in their traditional costumes and for them to live in quaint cottages which, though picturesque, offered poor living conditions. They also wanted them to continue to go to sea in boats powered with sail and oar. Steam-powered vessels are rarely featured, as the artists despised any aspect of modernity (**fig. 91**). If coastal villages like Staithes and Runswick Bay can be included as part of the rural scene, then the paintings reflected a recurring theme in Victorian art and literature, which was the opposition of the country and the city.⁵⁵

⁵¹ *The Spectator*, 10.5.1890, 658.

⁵² Grimes, 29.

⁵³ Cross, 'Newlyn school (act. 1882-c.1900)'.

⁵⁴ A. Crawford, *C.R. Ashbee: Architect, Designer and Romantic Socialist* (New Haven and London 1985).

⁵⁵ These issues are explored in R. Williams, *The Country and the City* (London 1972).

In 1858 W. White described the scene which artists experienced in Staithes [little had changed by 1880]

Men wearing thick blue Guernsey frocks and sou'westers come slouching along, burdened with nets or lobster pots or other fishing gear; women and girls, short skirted and some bare footed, go to and from the beach with 'skeels' of water on their heads, one or two carrying a large washing tub, yet talking as they go as if the weight were nothing...⁵⁶

Fisherfolk wore the same costume in both villages, with some slight differences; for example, Guernseys had a pattern unique to each community.⁵⁷ Their trousers, which were often patched, were made of blue pilot cloth, and they wore leather seaboots.⁵⁸ The women wore aprons and bonnets, which were also unique to the local area.⁵⁹ These clothes can be seen in a Sutcliffe photograph (**fig. 30**). Local people retained their traditional costumes rather than wearing the latest fashions, compared with Newlyn where traditional dress disappeared rapidly, much to the disgust of the artists working there. S. Forbes complained of '...fringes, pigtails, crinolettes and other freaks of fashion', compared with models in Brittany.⁶⁰ By the late 1890s, Newlyn artists had to resort to asking models to dress up in traditional costume. In contrast, models could easily be found in Staithes and Runswick Bay for a small sum of money, a drink or some tobacco. As Home described in 1898: 'Who would not be mercenary when besought at all hours of the day to stand before a camera or canvas?'⁶¹

Honesty is a word that is frequently used in contemporary descriptions of local fisherfolk. For example, a guidebook of 1904 describes them as: '[a] most exemplary one as regards hard work and honesty'.⁶² In the portrayal of fisherfolk in, for example, *The Last Coble*, honesty comes across; these people appear as strong, dependable and can be relied on especially in times of danger (**fig. 81**).

Racial purity is another aspect of the depiction of fishermen. Some artists were searching for racially pure English types on the fringe of society who were a contrast to the degenerate inhabitants of cities.⁶³ Local fisherfolk were considered to be a pure racial type who could

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⁵⁶ White, *A Month in Yorkshire* (London 1858), 155.

⁵⁷ See Thompson, *Patterns for Guernseys, Jerseys and Arans: Fishermen's Sweaters from the British Isles* (London 1971), 5-6, 55-65; D. Cleverley, 'Fishermen's Ganseys', *Dalesman*, 1949, 143-4.

⁵⁸ See Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 81-82, for more information on fishermen's dress.

⁵⁹ See D. Cleverley, *The Dalesman*, vol. XII, 1950-1, 401-402.

⁶⁰ S. Forbes, letter to his father, 17.3. 1884, Newlyn Oriel Gallery, Newlyn.

⁶¹ Home, *Yorkshire* (London 1898), 40-41.

⁶² *Home's Guide to Whitby*, 129-133.

⁶³ See G. Allen, 'On and Off Shore', *The Art Journal*, 1883, 285.

trace their ancestry back to the Vikings. They settled in the area centuries ago, as can be seen from the place names: for example, Whitby and Danby, since 'by' is Danish for town.⁶⁴

Du Maurier also used the terms 'Vikings and Viqueens' to describe the Whitby fisherfolk in his *Punch* cartoons.⁶⁵ Meynell also refers to 'the English colouring':

Whether on the East coast of the North Sea or the South West Lizard, sea wind has the best effect upon the English colouring. The hair, lightened by passages, plays into darker tones of the skin with harmony and variety and in the eyes the white is touched with blue, the iris is clear and the pupil wholesomely contracted with fullness of daylight'.⁶⁶

Fishermen were also portrayed as examples of the Victorian cult of manliness, embodying what were thought to be some of the finest characteristics of English manhood. Paintings and photographs captured their physical strength, which was admired in society and nowhere is weakness to be seen.⁶⁷ S. Forbes describes the Newlyn fishermen in the following terms as 'Our rustics are not Greek gods but their healthy sunburnt faces are often handsome'.⁶⁸

In Staithes and Runswick Bay both men and women were portrayed as strong people. They were regarded as heroes which in this period was perceived as fortitude with ease. In a contemporary account their strength is commented on:

Living on the seashore and mostly in healthy districts the fisherfolk ought to be healthy and strong, and so they are to some extent, though their life is worried by constant anxiety and peril.⁶⁹

Most fishermen in Staithes and Runswick Bay were not strictly working class as they worked for themselves and were not employees. In their depiction, there is no distinction between differing degrees of wealth and a person's place in the social hierarchy. Many fishermen owned or had a share in capital equipment, usually with other family members. They were part owners of boats such as yawls, others owned cobs and some worked as labourers for a wage instead of a share of the profits. Cobs, which in 1900 could be bought for £20, made them their own masters. One main difference between fisherfolk and agricultural labourers is in terms of social stratification. Agricultural labourers, although arguably possessing greater

⁶⁴ See Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 94.

⁶⁵ See G. Du Maurier, 'A Viking on Modern Fashion', *Punch*, 17.9.1887, 126.

⁶⁶ Meynell, 'Newlyn', *The Art Journal*, 1889, 98.

⁶⁷ See J. A. Kestner, *Masculinities in Victorian Painting* (Aldershot 1995), 146-148.

⁶⁸ S. Forbes, 'The Treatment of Modern Life in Art', in *Transactions of the National Association for the Advancement of Art*, 1891, 126.

⁶⁹ L. Levi, *The Economic Condition of Fishermen* (London 1883), 27.

freedom and better conditions than their counterparts in factories, are seen as low in the social hierarchy. In describing paintings of agricultural scenes Payne maintains: 'It is important to remember the background of poverty, distress, hard labour and class conflict that lay behind these apparently idyllic scenes'.⁷⁰

This gives a different perspective when viewing paintings of the two groups of workers. Fisherfolk were masters of their own destiny compared with the agricultural labourer who was a servant of his master, the farmer. In many cases they were provided with a tied cottage, which made them more subservient to their masters. The social stratification is reflected in the way these workers are depicted. Agricultural labourers are portrayed as deferential and submissive, while fisherfolk are seen as tough, brave and self-reliant. The portrayal of this group of workers is optimistic (**figs. 75, 81**): they are not downtrodden but proud compared with agricultural labourers. A. Symons in a book of 1908 argues:

You will find, often enough, that very English quality of vulgarity in the peasant who lives inland; only the sea seems to cleanse vulgarity out of the English peasant, and to brace him into a really simple and refined dignity.⁷¹

There are also religious overtones in how fisherfolk were portrayed. At this time Britain was a deeply religious country, most people attended church and chapel and religion underpinned society, permeating every aspect of life. The Bible and other religious tracts were read daily by many and had a great influence on their lives. There were many references in the Bible to fishermen and fishing: for example, Christ calmed a storm from a fishing boat (Matthew 8:23-26). He also spoke to the crowds while standing in a fishing boat (Matthew 13:1-58). Christ and his disciples were 'fishers of men' and many Sunday school portraits show Christ with his disciples by the Sea of Galilee with nets about to commence fishing. The disciples Peter, Andrew, John and James earned their living as fishermen.

These religious images portray fisherfolk obtaining a harvest from the sea as agricultural workers did from the land; moreover, catching fish was seen as God's bounty. The fish is a Christian symbol and fisherfolk can also be seen as Christian symbols. In Staithes most fisherfolk were either Wesleyan Methodists or Primitive Methodists.⁷² Families attended chapel several times on Sunday, the Bible was read regularly and in many cases their boats

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⁷⁰ Payne, *Toil and Plenty*, 2.

⁷¹ A. Symons, *London: A Book of Aspects* (London 1908), 76.

⁷² See Howard, *A History of Wesleyan Methodism in Staithes*

had biblical names. The Sankey hymns which were widely sung in the chapels also referred to fishermen, for example, ‘Will your anchor hold’, ‘Anchored in Jesus’, ‘Let your lower light be burning’, and ‘Jesus, at thy command we launch into the deep’.⁷³ The image of man on a stormy sea surviving and being delivered safely home is seen in many paintings, for example *Home* by Bagshawe (**fig. 83**). It reminded people of the power of God to look after the welfare of fishermen.

In contrast to the drama of storms, heavy seas and the launching of the lifeboat, much life on shore was routine and ordinary. Some paintings could be described as praising ordinariness. Repetitive, simple tasks are portrayed and the artists place everyday life on a higher plane, for example in *Industry* (**fig. 58**). There were the usual scenes of launching cobbles, hauling in cobbles after fishing, unloading the catch, and selling and packing fish. These simple tasks were captured by artists and according to Lübbren: ‘The function of providing reassuring images for the urban bourgeoisie was shared between paintings of fisherfolk and paintings of peasants’.⁷⁴ The ‘reassuring images’ showed the safe place of peasants and fisherfolk in society, there were few images of factory workers in the cities.

One portrayal of an ordinary task is Parkyn’s *Mending the Nets, Staithes*, (**fig. 61**). Many paintings of Staithes and Runswick Bay convey timelessness and this portrays work that fishermen have undertaken throughout the world for thousands of years. There are Biblical references to this activity, which has been depicted in many works of art. L. Knight thought this work was interesting to paint.⁷⁵ This scene was painted in many fishing villages, but here is differentiated by the Staithes bridge. A woman with a bundle of lines and a man carrying nets on his shoulder are walking over the bridge to the fishing boats. On the left an old fisherman is seen sitting by the side of the beck, repairing nets. By his side is a slim young woman who carries a small basket. She is looking to a coble where a boy stands alongside. On the bridge, fisherfolk are drying their nets; it is low tide and preparations are being made for their next fishing trip. The theme of the contrast of old age and youth was popular with patrons. The painting shows no aspect of modern life and conveys calm and patience in contrast to the frenetic life of the cities.

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page

⁷³ I. D. Sankey *Sacred Songs and Solos* (London 1873).

⁷⁴ Lübbren, ‘Toilers of the Sea,’ 31.

⁷⁵ See Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 106.

Fisherfolk, Staithes, c.1900 (**fig. 62**) by H. Knight shows fishermen in a coble in Roxby beck. This is probably the painting referred to in L. Knight's autobiography.⁷⁶ As with the previous painting, this might superficially seem to be set anywhere but decoding this work shows there are three signifiers of Staithes: the bridge, the coble and the dress of the fishermen. The bridge is seen at the top of the painting with the cottages of Cowbar on the left. The sea can be seen in the distance, with a coble setting off to the fishing grounds. In the foreground are two strong, powerful fishermen, who are prime examples of model workers and symbols of a maritime nation. They are the personification of the dignity of labour. Knight painted this from the side of Roxby beck.

Huneault argues that:

The insistent representational conjunction of labour, nobility, strength and masculinity has been skilfully delineated by Tim Barringer. It is visually apparent throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in artworks such as Ford Madox Brown's *Work* (1852-1863 Manchester City Art Galleries), William Bell Scott's *Iron and Coal* (Wallington Hall, Northumberland), Stanhope Forbes's *Forging the Anchor*, (1892, Ipswich Museums and Art Galleries) and Frank Brangwyn's murals for the Royal Exchange, London (1909).⁷⁷

It could be argued that this painting is another example of the representation of 'labour, nobility, strength and masculinity'.⁷⁸ Hopwood also featured different aspects of fishing in an exhibition of charcoal drawings: some examples are *Runswick Fishermen*, *Preparing Fishing Lines*, *Fisher Work* and *Mending Nets*⁷⁹ (all untraced).

An article describes the strength and nobility of the fisherfolk:

...the companionship of the sea and its perils gives a dignity to a character of those who keep it. It is an ever-present memento mori, which teaches at once restraint and resignation.⁸⁰

The Arts and Crafts movement influenced Jackson. He abhorred industrialisation and many aspects of modern life. He painted handloom weavers in his native Lancashire who - like fisherfolk - were a group of workers whose livelihood was threatened by new technology (**fig. 89**). In *A Welcome Visitor*, 1893 (**fig. 63**), an elderly fisherman is visited by his daughter and granddaughter. He is seated on his coble, which contains several lobster pots. This scene is painted on the beach at Runswick with the bay in the background. On the left is a white, thatched cottage, which belonged to Sir C. Palmer; this featured in many paintings and is a signifier of the village. The mother holds the child, who is dressed in similar clothes, towards the older man. Elderly fishermen were traditionally involved in catching crabs and lobsters, which were abundant on the rocky coast. Despite the fact that steam-powered boats were a

⁷⁶ See Knight, *The Magic of a Line*, 112.

⁷⁷ Huneault, 8.

⁷⁸ See T. Barringer, *Men at Work: Art and Labour in Victorian Britain* (New Haven and London 2005).

⁷⁹ London, F. A. S., *Charcoal Drawings*, ex. cat., H. S. Hopwood, 1902.

⁸⁰ Charleton, 462.

common sight and tourists used the beach, they do not appear in the painting. This scene featuring three generations of fisherfolk, with the sea in the background, was a popular subject with patrons. It was shown at the 1894 R. A. exhibition and a review states:

Amongst the oils in the room opposite the entrance, on the line, is hung Mr. Fred Jackson's picture of "A Welcome Visitor". It depicts an old fisherman seated on a coble, with outstretched arms, beckoning his little grandchild, which by the aid of its mother, is toddling over the uneven ground to be caressed. The foreground is made up of flowers and weeds, and a bit of the well known village of Runswick; the whole is bright and sunny.⁸¹

The Harvest of the Sea, 1885 (**fig. 64**), was exhibited at M. A. F. A. in March 1889 and a review states:

The place of honour in the first room was occupied by "Harvest of the Sea", a large canvas by Fred. W. Jackson of Middleton Junction. It is clever from end to end and shows full mastery of technical method.⁸²

It might be thought that, in choosing this subject, Jackson may have been influenced by S. Forbes's *A Fish Sale on a Cornish Beach*, but this is not a fish sale and is not on the scale of Forbe's painting.

Jackson portrays a scene when the cobbles have returned and the catch is being unloaded. This is a common theme in many coastal artists' colonies. As in *A Welcome Visitor*, the main focus is on an older fisherman who sits on a rock smoking a pipe. He looks weary and watches a younger woman who is selecting some fish from a pile on the beach. No aspect of modern life is shown. It is low tide, misty, and Kettleness Point can be seen in the distance. In the background are three cobbles, and on the left a man and two women who are carrying baskets of fish on their heads. This method of carrying fish is a signifier of the two villages. The scene conveys a sense of hard work completed, and now the main task is to get the fish ashore. There were no formal fish auctions here, so fishermen usually brought their catch to Staithes.

A Welcome Visitor and *The Harvest of the Sea* feature an elderly fisherman. Sutcliffe also photographed elderly people as he documented the lives of people in Whitby and surrounding villages (**fig. 96**). In an article on visual imagery on the coast with particular reference to ageing and heritage, Blaikie argues that:

The role of older people as inadvertent exemplars of all that was good about the nation's past is thrown into high relief when we consider representations of Britain's maritime heritage. Victorian pioneers of photography championed the custom, dress and extended family roles of elders in fishing villages because these displayed an

⁸¹ *Whitby Gazette*, 4. 5. 1894, 3.

⁸² *The Middleton Albion*, 2. 3. 1889.

older, moral world distinct from the sins of the city...older people and the morally and spiritually uplifting virtues of coastal communities.⁸³

Thus 'old salts' were depicted as a type, an 'exemplar of all that was good' in the English character. To viewers of the paintings elderly fishermen represented dependability, timelessness and honesty. They were also a fresh and wholesome contrast with the perceived immoral cities and their depraved inhabitants. Other paintings of elderly fishermen show different aspects of their lives. *Fisherman Mending a Crabpot*, 1896 (**fig. 65**) by Senior shows a fisherman seated and leaning against a wall. In this typical local scene he is wearing the traditional 'ganzi' and his sou'wester.

Lübbren argues that: 'In fact, pictures of fishermen at sea were very rare, partly for the practical reason that artists could not join them on their voyages'.⁸⁴ This is not the case in Staithes and Runswick Bay as most fishing was inshore. Most works were produced on land, but unusually compared with other artists' colonies some painted at sea. One example is Bagshawe and his obituary describes how he: '...boldly pushed off and made for the open sea. It was six miles from land that his brush most surely found its best inspiration ...'⁸⁵

Dade also painted on the yawls, which were at sea for weeks and travelled from Scotland to Yarmouth (**figs. 32-35**). In his obituary Anson states Dade:

Became a sailor...in the famous American yacht, the "Dauntless". [from 1892] Dade [and the artist C.W. Adderton] invested in a small Scottish fishing vessel, "North Star" which they converted into a yacht. They cruised around the coast together using her as a floating studio...Dade was gradually storing up a deep and intense knowledge of the sea in all its moods, based on constant observation and sketches, that was to bear fruit in the wonderful paintings, both in oil and watercolour.⁸⁶

All these artists had first-hand knowledge and a love of the sea as sailors or as yachtsmen, and this inspired their art.⁸⁷ There are few paintings of fisherfolk at sea by artists at Newlyn and Cullercoats.

⁸³ A. Blaikie, 'Beside the Sea, Visual Imagery, Ageing and Heritage', *Ageing and Society* (1997), vol. XVII, 629-648.

⁸⁴ Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 39.

⁸⁵ 'A Yorkshire Artist and his Work', *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, 30. 4. 1910, 15.

⁸⁶ *W.G.*, 27.12.1935, 2.

⁸⁷ See McConkey, *Memory and Desire*, 124-5 for further information on artists who worked at sea.

2) How Women Were Portrayed

Though many paintings depict the drama and tension of fishermen going to sea, the work of women was vital. In Staithes and Runswick Bay women had a reputation for being physically strong, and hard workers. Artists here and in Cullercoats recorded their important work but there are few paintings of women workers in Newlyn. In examining the paintings the following categories are used: young women, domestic scenes, women as workers, and widows and the elderly.⁸⁸ Most paintings produced were of women as workers, and this is the main focus of discussion.

The only life most women knew was that of their mothers and grandmothers before them, one of hard physical work with little leisure and privacy, looking after the house and bringing up a large family. Most experienced a short period of freedom between childhood and marriage. There are few paintings portraying women in courtship. One example is *Two's Company, Three's None*, 1894 (**fig. 67**) by Hopwood, which was exhibited at the R. A. This work shows a young girl, with dignity and concentration, mending a net. In the background, a young man looks wistfully at her. The humour of this work would have appealed to a wide audience. R. Jobling describes a local fisherlass:

She had the gentle characteristics of the best type of Yorkshire fisher lass. The pensive and sometimes wistful expression on her face, together with her lithesome and upright figure made her in request among some of the artists for a model.⁸⁹

These svelte young women may have encouraged artists to visit the fishing villages as they provided excellent models.

Between the boy and girl an elderly fisherman repairs a lobster pot. The two young people wish they were alone but the old man, possibly her father or grandfather, remains to chaperone her. He was also seen as racially pure, as his family had lived there for generations. This work is another example of the popular theme of youth and age. The pre-modern images of traditional costumes and the background of the sea would have made this painting acceptable to patrons. A review states:

Mr. Hopwood's other work is a sunny one, composed of three figures, a girl mending nets and an old fisherman busy amongst the lobster pots, whilst leaning over a fence is a youth evidently wishing the old man away.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ For more information on images of women in Victorian paintings see Casteras, *Substance and Shadow*.

⁸⁹ R. Jobling, 'Word Pictures', 79.

⁹⁰ *W.G.*, 4.5.1894, 3.

The ‘other work’ referred to is *Industry*, shown at the R. A. in 1894. *A Welcome Visitor* by Jackson was also shown at the same exhibition, which made three paintings inspired by Runswick Bay.

Another painting portraying courtship is *A Lover and His Lass*, c.1900 (**fig. 68**) by R. Jobling of whom a local newspaper stated: ‘...few living artists have more thoroughly studied the sea in all its moods’.⁹¹ While he studied the sea Millard maintains:

In Robert Jobling’s paintings, the beach and lanes of the fishing village are the setting of romantic idylls. He almost never shows the fishermen at work in the open sea, and he draws a misty veil over the hard work and danger of their lives.⁹²

A young couple sit on the cliff top at Staithes, in an area called High Barass, which has commanding views of the village and the sea. The sun is setting and fishing boats, their sails blowing in the wind, can be seen close to the village. The golden glow of the sun and the two lovers together give a sense of warmth and romance. Fishing was full of risk and there was always the danger that the fisherman would not return; this gives an added dimension to the paintings of local fisherfolk. The local women were seen as attractive and a local guidebook gives a contemporary view:

Here a passing tribute is due to the maidenly and becoming conduct of these girls at Staithes. Occupied as they are, one and all, in the fishing interest in some way or the other, they are rough, but rough gems; speaking generally of them they are a most obliging race and will help you anywhere and anyhow, providing that you are civil and respectful to them.⁹³

The Times in 1885 also observed that:

True it is, indeed, that the women, who have as a rule, delicate and finely cut features, lose their freshness and much of their beauty and become prematurely aged very shortly after marriage; but this may be attributed to two causes foreign to the question of consanguinity. First, to the fact of their marrying far too young, and then to the hard work on shore when preparing the boats and gear for the sea, in which their wives bear their full part.⁹⁴

In the paintings and in the descriptions above the young women are perceived as dignified, physically attractive and respectable.

Newton in a review of Lübbren’s book, *Rural Artists’ Colonies in Europe*, argues that she fails to perceive the erotic way in which some fisherwomen were portrayed:

...her contention that these images were largely unerotic is perhaps problematic, especially with regard to fisherfolk imagery where the picturing of fisherlasses was often sexually ambivalent to say the least.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Quoted in Millard, 31.

⁹² Millard, 31-2.

⁹³ Forman, *A Holiday Tour in and around Whitby*, 35.

⁹⁴ *The Times*, 7. 9. 1885, 8.

⁹⁵ Newton, Review of Lübbren, *Rural Artists’ Colonies in Europe, 1870-1910*, *Visual Culture in Britain*, vol. III, no. 1, 2002, 126.

This may have been the case in Cullercoats in, for example, W. Homer's paintings. In these women appear in short skirts and they do not wear bonnets. But this is generally not typical of other artists' colonies such as Newlyn, Staithes and Runswick Bay where bodies were not eroticised in the paintings produced. Here due to community pressures dress was more restrained. They dressed in a way regarded as respectable and they would incur the wrath of the community if they deviated from this. In an essay on Homer, McConkey suggests another reason why portrayals of fisherwomen were popular.⁹⁶ Wasserman in a contemporary article also remarks on the young women in Cullercoats:

...added to their fine, strong, robust looks, raises them far above any other section of the working class that I know. Their very walk has individuality in it. It is free, decided, unfettered. ...The women stoop as they grow older, from the presence of the creel; but the younger ones have generally fine upright figures and splendid heads of hair, which, save in very rough weather, they leave uncovered. Nothing could well be more becoming than their costume, the print bodice, with coloured neckerchief tucked inside, the blue flannel skirt, worn short and with a profusion of tucks (the more tucks a Cullercoats belle has the better style she is counted) and the home-knitted stockings.⁹⁷

Millard describes how:

The image of these women of Cullercoats tantalised the Victorian imagination. Their work was hard and often unpleasant, yet they were graceful and flirtatious in their 'short' skirts. A romanticised view of the Cullercoats fishwife was a potent figure in the pictures of both Isa Thompson and Robert Jobling. The Cullercoats women probably also represented freedom from Victorian conventions in Isa Thompson's pictures. Since the fishermen were often away at sea and the fishwives work of gutting and selling the fish gave them a degree of control over their money, they were unusually independent women.⁹⁸

Both the contemporary view of Wasserman and the modern view of Millard concur on the strength and 'graceful bearing' of the women as well as their flirtatiousness. Millard also refers to their independence compared with other women. This can be seen in the two images described above where the women are portrayed as demure and respectably dressed with arms covered and wearing bonnets.

Domestic scenes

Cherry has argued that in the paintings of H. Allingham women were '...codified as respectable, and ordered around cleanliness, domesticity and small families'.⁹⁹ A contemporary comment by Ruskin in his essay 'Of Queen's Gardens' published in *Sesame and Lillies* describes the home as: '...a sacred place, a vestal temple, a temple of the hearth watched over by household gods'.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ McConkey, *Winslow Homer at Cullercoats*, 234: 'However, recalling the Victorian middle-class male fascination for working women, there is the possibility of a wider context of interpretation for their dominant presence'.

⁹⁷ Wasserman, 'Some Fisherfolk', 58.

⁹⁸ Millard, 33.

⁹⁹ Cherry, 82.

¹⁰⁰ Ruskin, Essay, 'Of Queen's Garden' in *Sesame and Lillies* (London 1864-9).

Tennyson in his poem, 'The Princess' describes the roles of men and women.

'Man for the field and woman for the hearth,
Man for the sword, and for the needed she;
Man with the head, and woman with the heart;
Man to command and women to obey'.¹⁰¹

In a period of rapid change and uncertainty paintings of the family and the home provided security and continuity.¹⁰² The large families in small houses were not depicted. Women in domestic scenes are portrayed as other women of the period but in their depiction as workers they are markedly different. Here they show strength, determination and dignity. Interior scenes of mothers and children were a feature in both fishing villages particularly in Staithes. Men are absent from these paintings, out at sea or involved in other leisure activities. Lübbren argues that: '...the fleet's voyage out to sea was figured by the men's absence from the feminine domain of the fishing cottage'.¹⁰³ She also argues that Newlyn artists showed how men were absent in paintings by '...signifying the peculiarity of a fishing community...by a domestic arrangement in which the (young and middle aged) men were missing'.¹⁰⁴ The prolonged absence of men was true in other ports such as Newlyn but was less so in Staithes and Runswick Bay, which by 1900 were mainly concerned with inshore fishing.

In her time in Staithes, L. Knight produced many paintings of mothers and children.¹⁰⁵ These paintings give an insight into domestic life in the village.¹⁰⁶ Another example of a typical domestic scene is *Mother and Child* c.1900 (**fig. 69**) by L. Knight.¹⁰⁷ A child plays on the floor, a fire is glowing in 'the temple of the hearth' and a young woman is undertaking a domestic chore. Some light flows into the dark interior from a window on the left to illuminate the young woman. The study of natural light and artificial light from the fire shows influence from Newlyn artists. The painting also shows Dutch influence, but was produced before her visits to Holland.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰¹ Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *The Princess* (Cambridge 1884), Canto V.

¹⁰² For information on pictures of domestic scenes see Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 57, note 15.

¹⁰³ Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 37.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Grimes, 28.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 103.

¹⁰⁸ Grimes, 28.

The display of this painting at the R. A. was pivotal in drawing attention to L. Knight and its sale brought recognition and allowed her access to the London art market. Cherry contends that: 'Paintings of children were deemed appropriate for women artists'.¹⁰⁹ This was an accepted way of women displaying work at exhibitions. A review of the 1904 S. A. C. exhibition stated that: 'Mrs. Harold Knight has several charming pictures of child life among the Staithes folk, low in tone but very sincere and clever in workmanship, e.g. 9) Mother and Children priced £25'.¹¹⁰

Besides domestic interiors, Knight painted the topography of Staithes and fisherfolk. In contrast, Cherry points out that E. Forbes, in Newlyn, moved away from fisherfolk as subjects and concentrated on children and thus '...distanced herself from the fishing subjects with which Newlynners were generally identified'.¹¹¹ According to Forbes: 'I soon realised that I lacked the power to give expression to what moved me so greatly in its larger aspects, and I turned to the quaint child-life of the place which delighted me'.¹¹²

Women are also portrayed waiting for their husbands to return from fishing. This is a common iconographic theme in many paintings produced in artists' colonies. In R. Jobling's *Guiding Them In*, c.1905 (**fig. 70**), he conveys the tension as three women anxiously wait on shore. Two are standing, one carries a baby wrapped in a shawl and another woman is seated on the ground. The painting conveys the impression of a strong blustery wind and a severe storm in the making. The women are on a high point above Staithes, where lights were placed to guide the fishing boats in. They have sighted the men and are fearfully watching for them to return safely. Although the fishermen became experts in predicting weather conditions, everyone feared sudden squalls, which presented a great threat to life.

Dada's Comin' 1892 (**fig. 71**) by Senior is in contrast to *Guiding Them In*, as a boat is nearing the shore in calm weather. A woman and child are looking out from an elevated position in Runswick Bay, possibly near to The Royal Hotel. Below them can be seen the red tiled roofs of village houses and the rocky shore. They are waiting for a fisherman to return; the sail of the coble can clearly be seen in the distance. The woman and child are both wearing lilac bonnets and have their backs to the viewer. The anxious wait and the relief when the boat

¹⁰⁹ Cherry, 185.

¹¹⁰ W. G., 19.8.1904, 4.

¹¹¹ Cherry, 185.

¹¹² Birch, *Stanhope A. Forbes, R. A. and Elizabeth A. Forbes A. R. W. S.*, 63.

came into sight was a popular theme for painters. On the surface women appear to be dependent on men, but deeper readings show that they are both parts of a team relying on each other.

Senior's *Returning Home* c.1900 (**fig. 66**) shows a scene on the beach at Runswick Bay. Here two women are depicted wearing traditional dress; the one seated wears a lilac bonnet and the other a black bonnet, and they are waiting for a fishing boat. No aspect of modern life is shown and the coble with its red sail is in sight. Both women have their baskets ready to carry the fish away. This scene of women waiting on the shore was painted in other artists' colonies in the rest of Britain and Europe. Senior in terms of stylistic development has progressed from naturalism in the 1880s to a more impressionistic style.

In *The Skipper's Wife*, 1902 (**fig. 72**) by Foster the woman featured is not waiting by the sea. She is carrying a basket up some steps to her cottage, which is shown on the right, while the sea can be seen on the left. By the time this work was completed most fishing was now inshore and cobbles only put to sea for a matter of hours or days. The dark colours and the general atmosphere of stormy weather create a feeling of isolation. No aspects of modern life such as steam-powered boats or tourists are seen. According to *The Studio*, the work is: '...the result of an experiment made by Mr. Gilbert Foster in the combination of charcoal and water-colour'.¹¹³

Women as Workers

Despite the many paintings of fisherwomen, relatively little work has been undertaken on how they were portrayed as workers. According to Huneault:

...there are other areas of women's rural work that have remained entirely untouched by histories of visual culture. Of particular interest are images of coastal fishing industries, especially in Cornwall, Scotland and Wales.¹¹⁴

It is not true that this area has been 'entirely untouched', as some work has been undertaken generally by Lübbren and specifically by Newton on Cullercoats and Cherry on Newlyn.

In discussing paintings produced in Newlyn, Cherry states:

¹¹³ *The Studio*, vol. XXX, 1904, 15.

¹¹⁴ Huneault, 20.

This representation was underwritten by a rigorous ordering of sexual difference in the paintings and the arrangements of the artistic colony. In their exhibition pictures male artists heroised masculinity as seafaring fishermen or shore-based craftsmen while depicting women in cottages at the quayside waiting or hopelessly sorrowing.¹¹⁵

Compared with other artists' colonies there are fewer paintings of women as workers in Newlyn. While men in Staithes and Runswick Bay appeared in paintings of hazardous scenes, women were depicted outdoors waiting for the return of the men and not inside as Cherry describes. In Staithes there were some paintings of 'hopelessly sorrowing' women such as *Grief*, where the woman is outside, but most portray women as strong, key workers rather than as helpers. They are imbued with a moral earnestness, sincerity, seriousness, industriousness, solemnity and gravity.

Most workers were seen as masculine, and according to Huneault: '...women workers ...were outside mainstream conceptions of labour'.¹¹⁶ Men were the main providers and women were perceived as submissive and marginal. This was clearly not true in the portrayal of women in Staithes and Runswick Bay. Cherry contends that for many Victorians:

Working women signified social disorder: "filth, destitution and disease, improvidence, intemperance, crime and delinquency..."¹¹⁷

Women agricultural field workers were portrayed as abnormal and immoral.¹¹⁸ One painting, Clausen's *Winter Work*, depicts the grimness of agricultural labour.¹¹⁹

If the representation of seamstresses and fisherwomen is compared:

The seamstress was persistently imaged as young, pale, haggard and gaunt. She worked long hours with few breaks for rest or meals in a crowded workroom or miserable attic. She was physically ill and mentally exhausted.¹²⁰

In contrast fisherwomen were depicted as healthy and wholesome. They worked outside, they were their own bosses, could work at their own pace and use their own discretion. But Frank argues that despite the healthy, open air life:

¹¹⁵ Cherry, 183.

¹¹⁶ Huneault, 8.

¹¹⁷ Cherry, 143.

¹¹⁸ See Robins, 'Living the Simple Life', 18-24.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 18.

¹²⁰ Cherry, 153-4.

The enormous burden of hard physical work and child bearing led to early deaths. The cumulative effects of the hard life lived by the fisherwomen was frequently ill-health and premature death. For on top of the irregular hours, exposure to bitter weather, the standing, lifting and carrying of heavy burdens, there was the grind of housework and all the dangers attached to frequent pregnancies: all took their toll on the woman's constitution.¹²¹

Launching the boats and hauling them ashore were some of the arduous tasks women undertook. *Hauling in the Cobles* (**fig. 73**), by R. Jobling depicts a group of women hauling a coble ashore. At the stern of the vessel, two fishermen are pushing. This is a traditional scene in a village which did not have a harbour. There were no winches and it was not practicable to use horses, so they had to rely on their own strength. In Cullercoats wheeled trailers were used and this is depicted in Jobling's paintings executed there. *Hauling in the Cobles* shows a woman carrying a greased oar, which was placed under the coble as a 'runner'. Hauling the cobles, which weighed several tons, was hard work and there were cases of people collapsing and dying. This painting shows that women were not just 'household gods' and did not simply wait for their husbands to return from the sea, but workers who used their physical strength in tasks such as these.

Women undertook the time consuming, repetitive tasks of baiting lines, carrying nets to and from boats and repairing nets. Hopwood shows a woman baiting the lines in *Industry* (**fig. 58**). The unglamorous tasks of gutting and smoking fish are not portrayed. In *Runswick Fisherwoman, Knitting* (**fig. 76**) Senior portrays a young woman knitting. This was an essential activity in providing 'guernseys' and socks for fishermen, and clothes for their children. It an activity usually undertaken after all the other chores were completed.

Women brought food to the men as they set sail. They also carried the fish from the boats after they returned, and packed and smoked the fish.¹²² *Lives O' Men* (**fig. 74**) by Bagshawe shows women meeting the boats and carrying the fish ashore. This was carried in baskets on their heads and is a signifier of Staithes. The figure in the foreground is a strong, svelte young woman, whose black bonnet identifies her as a widow. It is possible this is the same woman featured in H. Knight's *Grief*. She is portrayed as a monumental and dignified woman confronting the power of the sea. Her clear profile can be seen with other women behind her and in the background is Cowbar Rock.

¹²¹ Frank, 'Women's Work in the Yorkshire Inshore Fishing Industry', 70.

¹²² *Horne's Guide to Whitby*, 133: 'All the members of each family assist the father in his fishery duties. The picturesquely dressed fisher girls tramp many miles in search of "flithers" for bait and their tanned and sunburnt arms lend assistance to their brothers and other relatives in launching and hauling up the cobles'.

This work is painted in a muted brown grey tone. As in *The Fishing Fleet* by L. Knight and *The Last Coble* by H. Knight, there is occasional use of colour here seen in the red clothes worn by some of the women. The shining, silvery herrings are also a bright contrast to the darker tones. The title is taken from the poem, *Lives O' Men*, by W. Scott and there is deep significance in the herrings at her feet. In the poem Scott writes: 'It's no fish you're eating, its men's lives'. She looks out to sea as if she is considering whether it is worth risking lives to put fish on peoples' plates. Like *Grief* by H. Knight, this is a study in loss. It is also similar to W. Homer's *Fisher Girls on the Beach, Tynemouth* (1881 Brooklyn Museum,) with women waiting with baskets for the boats to return, but without the sense of loss that Bagshawe's painting evokes. It is a timeless image painted in many parts of the world.

Fisherwomen (fig. 75) by Erichsen shows two women, possibly a mother and daughter, in Staithes. They are portrayed as physically powerful, particularly the older woman, and the younger woman carries nets in one hand and some fish in the other. The older woman also has a 'skeel' on her head: these were half barrels usually made of oak with iron hoops, which held around four gallons. Carrying a 'skeel' was a difficult task and required strength. Their upright, graceful carriage added to the dignity of these women. They appear like classical figures; they are monumental and may be compared with the women portrayed in W. Homer's paintings.¹²³

Despite their strong standing in the villages, women were in a weaker position in wider society; they had no vote, few legal rights and were restricted in what they could do. Artists such as L. Knight were sympathetic to their heavy burden of looking after a home, a family and work associated with fishing. In wider society fishwives were thought of as coarse and unruly and the term is still used to describe shrill, fierce and formidable women. But these paintings depict women who are dignified, graceful, bold and assertive and making a real contribution to the local economy. Middle-class observers categorised women at a particular level of society according to their dress and demeanour. Cherry describes how domestic servants were portrayed:

All the visual signs of pose, dress, gesture, setting and activity codify these women as servants...Everything about the way the women dress to the places they work - the scullery or the back stairs - specifies their difference from the middle-class women who pictured them...Class differences were written on to the feminine body.¹²⁴

¹²³ For discussion on fisher women in Cullercoats, see H. Cooper, *Winslow Homer Watercolours* (New Haven and London 1996) and McConkey, 'Winslow Homer at Cullercoats', 223-240. See also Newton thesis, 'The Cullercoats Artists' Colony' and *Cullercoats*, ex. cat.

¹²⁴ Cherry, 148.

In her article Erichsen describes the local women and the role they played.¹²⁵ Another example of women carrying loads is J. Breton's *The End of the Working Day* (1886-7 Brooklyn Museum), which was derived from classical figures. Artists, such as R. Jobling, found this subject attractive, as in Cullercoats - where he also worked - they generally carried loads on their shoulders.

The Fishing Fleet (**fig. 79**) by L. Knight shows another important aspect of women's work. I. Thompson's *Fisher Folk* (**fig. 77**) possibly influenced this. Thompson was working in Staithes as early as 1892, three years before Knight. She was older and more experienced and had exhibited many works by this time. Knight must have been aware of her work as they exhibited together at the S. A. C., but she is not mentioned in her autobiographies.

The muted tones and limited use of colour are similar to *The Last Coble*.¹²⁶ This conveys a bleak, merciless environment and highlights the feeling of loneliness in the portrayal of the woman featured. This work was created when the fishing industry was in decline and artists were recording a passing way of life. All the images are pre-modern; the fisherfolk are in their traditional costumes and the boats are powered by sail and oar. The fishing fleet is leaving and many cobbles have their sails unfurled. There could be no greater contrast than the difference between these fisherfolk and workers being herded into factories at the command of their masters in the large northern industrial cities.

The woman featured in the foreground is walking away, as others are walking to the shore, and still other women are standing in a group talking. They usually took food and drink to the men as they set out for fishing, and also carried nets and lines to the boats. This is not an escapist scene but a gritty, realistic portrayal of working life.¹²⁷ It would have had a wide appeal to viewers and buyers.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Erichsen, 463: 'Streams of lasses carry off on their heads the lines of nets. The former to be rebaited and the latter to be spread out on the cliff top to dry. By this time other bands of sturdy girls may be seen, all through the winter, winding their way across the slippery rocks towards the town. They have been gathering limpets for bait, and perhaps have walked eight or ten miles along the coast for them'.

¹²⁶ Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, ex. cat., 21.

¹²⁷ C. Fox, *Laura Knight*, 18.

¹²⁸ Grimes, 23.

Widows

Women led hard lives and the paintings do not depict the harsher aspects of this, such as the cramped living conditions, the high infant mortality rate and the loss of a breadwinner. The high casualty rate for fishermen was due to the hazardous nature of the work and Staithes with its strong winds and currents was a particularly dangerous place. Many women became widows and with a large family to support, after a closely observed mourning period, many remarried. Similarly, a man who became a widower would find it difficult to continue working without assistance from his family. Widows wore black bonnets and are prominent in paintings depicting hazardous scenes such as *The Last Coble* and *On the Quay at Staithes*, where they are portrayed as full of foreboding.

Grief (fig. 80) by H. Knight portrays a young woman who has recently been bereaved. It was exhibited at the N. S. A. in 1901 (338) priced £10. In terms of iconography there are many paintings of this subject in British and European art.¹²⁹ This haunting portrayal shows the sorrow of the sea in her face. The body language conveys stillness and it is as if Knight has frozen aspects of the dynamism of life.

This work has a universal appeal and its heroine is an icon of despair and human loneliness. Although it is a study of individual loss, Knight may have been painting a scene which had deeper resonances. Queen Victoria died on 22. 1. 1901 and this figure mourning loss could for Knight have been symbolic of the nation mourning her. This is a pivotal picture at Staithes, which has a range of meanings. As N. Walker argues: 'Nowhere in Laura's extant works do we find the uncompromising portrayal of the realities of Staithes life as Harold presents in *Grief* and a companion piece *Staithes Fisherwoman*'.¹³⁰

This work is strongly influenced by his training at Nottingham School of Art and as Dunbar asserts:

The thing for an artist, as taught by the austere Wilson Foster and brilliantly carried off by young Harold, was the utmost attention to the model, and its rendering so as to capture all the nuances of its three-dimensional form and of the fall and the reflection of light and colour around it.¹³¹

Wilson Foster had studied in Paris and strongly influenced the work of the Knights. The

¹²⁹ For more information on the portrayal of anxious/bereaved women see Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 37 footnote 14 (57) and 41, footnote 30 (58).

¹³⁰ Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, ex. cat, 21.

¹³¹ Dunbar, 228-9.

grounding they received from the Nottingham School of Art contributed to their later success. *Grief* is similar to Mayor's *On the Quay*, which appeared in *The Artist* in 1899. It is possible that it was painted outside the same house. McConkey in viewing this painting believes there are similarities with the Belgian *arte social* painters, such as C. Meunier and possibly, Munch in the intensity of expression and deep anguish of the young woman.¹³²

It is possible that the woman portrayed is Margaret Verrill. In Sutcliffe's photograph (**fig. 55**) she is carrying bread from the communal bakehouse. She wears a black shawl, the sign of widowhood. Verrill was an adopted daughter and was to have married Billy Unthank, a fisherman, but on her wedding day he was drowned along with his father and brother. The woman may be the one described in L. Knight's book. She recounts how one body, which had been washed up on the shore, was carried through the village to the family house. The men carrying the body stopped outside the Unthank home. In the painting the widow is portrayed in front of a house with green shutters.¹³³ Knight gives further information on this painting in *The Magic of a Line*.¹³⁴ H. Knight's talent can be seen in this painting, and according to Walker: 'Harold's best works are charged with a psychological intensity largely absent from Laura's compositions'.¹³⁵

The painting shows a young woman in a deep emotional state, consumed with grief. The grieving woman was a type, which viewers of the painting could recognise. Although fisherfolk were dwarfed by nature, this woman is larger than life and is imbued with an elemental will to survive. The painting portrays her strong, simple heroism and unlike other depictions of grief it shows a full-face portrait. Most show those portrayed hiding their faces, for example *A Hopeless Dawn*. In Knight's painting her stance is confrontational and she looks the viewer straight in the eye with an intense gaze. This penetrating stare shows her strength of character and it is as if she wants to share her grief with the world.

It is painted outdoors as opposed to other scenes of grief, which are usually set in the intimacy of a room, as for example, in *A Hopeless Dawn* (**fig. 15**) where the younger woman has her

Footnotes continued on the next
page

¹³² I am grateful to Professor K. McConkey for these comments.

¹³³ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 111.

¹³⁴ Knight, *The Magic of a Line*, 112.

¹³⁵ Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, ex. cat. 20.

back to the viewer and is being comforted by the older woman. Bramley's painting does not show the sorrowing woman close up. This is another difference as usually in scenes of grief the woman is not alone but being comforted by others. The muted tones convey the melancholy, the sense of loss and the bleak environment in which she lived.

Fisherfolk were represented as people following traditional lives. The costumes worn, the boats used and the women carrying loads on their heads identify these scenes as distinctive images of Staithes and Runswick Bay. Most paintings depict work and show the hard toil and anxiety and also the differentiation of roles between men and women. They are depicted as proud, honest, strong and independent. The paintings were produced against a background of declining fortunes for the fisherfolk. The artists avoided any aspect of modernity and miners and tourists were also excluded. The fisherfolk were ordinary people, still clinging to their traditional way of life and following their everyday work. The artists found the area attractive because the villages and their people were slow to change.

Part C Hazardous Scenes.

This part examines paintings showing hazardous scenes, which were an important feature of work produced at Staithes and Runswick Bay. The pictures portray personal stories set against epic subjects such as man and the sea. Lübbren contends that:

Such narrative dramas of anxiety, action, grief and death seem to be England's particular contribution to the fisherfolk genre. Paintings referring to turbulent conditions at sea, produced on the Continent, tended to be more muted in tone, downplaying the actual violent event and focusing perhaps on the anxious looks of some women out to sea or on a grieving widow at a grave.¹³⁶

Paintings of hazardous scenes were also produced at Cullercoats and the resilient spirit of the fisherfolk there was described in the following terms:

It is the tragic element, underlying their life which adds an interest to all its phases, deeper and more enthralling the more you know of it...and still more striking even than this undercurrent of tragedy is the spirit of the people, which enables them to rise superior to its influence... We see the fishers go forth, and know not that they will ever return...And still more striking...is the spirit of the people, which enables them to rise superior to its influence. When the storm blows and the boats are out at night; when the sleepless women wander the banks in the darkness...¹³⁷

Lübbren argues that there was a low casualty rate at Newlyn compared with the North Sea.¹³⁸ She also argues that: 'The presence of a tragic aspect is distinctive for the painting of fisherfolk, as opposed to the paintings of peasants. Fisherfolk were associated with danger and death by drowning'.¹³⁹ The sea was a strong attraction for many artists who were spectators of the fisherfolk's constant struggle against it. The dangers they faced resulted in harsher depictions of their lives. Staithes, in particular, was not a soft, frivolous place for artists to work in, and many tragedies affected the community, L. Knight describes this in her autobiography.¹⁴⁰ She also describes the impact of tragedy and loss on individual women in the village.¹⁴¹

The fishermen respected the sea, as a contemporary article describes:

They appear to endow the sea with sentient power, with an intelligent and generally malignant will. It is ever ready to undo human labour and destroy human hope.¹⁴²

¹³⁶ Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 41.

¹³⁷ Charleton, 'Cullercoats', 462.

¹³⁸ Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 43.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 39.

¹⁴⁰ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 84.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 94.

¹⁴² Wasserman, 'Some Fisherfolk', 59.

Artists worked against a backdrop of tragedy and disaster, and the mood could change quickly, from one of calm and rest, to one of acute danger and frenzy. R. Jobling thought the chief characteristic of the life of fisherfolk was that of contrast:

Contrast from severe persistent labour to just as strongly marked ease and idleness. Contrast from severe stress and strain, to the extreme of contentment and irresponsibility.¹⁴³

Artists sought to capture the drama and tension in their work and they witnessed many tragedies.¹⁴⁴ L. Knight describes how the loss of fishermen was not understood by the wider public.¹⁴⁵ This ever-present danger from the sea resulted in a tough breed of people. As Gee describes:

There are innumerable dangers encompassing the fisherman. He knows it full well, yet he faces them bravely and cheerfully, even carelessly for the age-long enmity between the sea and his own kindred had bred in him a sturdy strength, a determined spirit and an unequalled courage.¹⁴⁶

It required considerable skill to navigate these waters and it was thought that if you could sail there, you could sail anywhere.¹⁴⁷ Artists painted the drama of leaden skies, heavy seas and waves pounding the quayside.

While in other artists' colonies Lübbren describes how the 'myth of agrarian romanticism' may have been apparent in the portrayal of peasants, the paintings of fisherfolk depicting hazardous scenes were direct, unflinching, honest, realistic portrayals.¹⁴⁸ The only way reality was distorted was in some aspects of modernity being excluded.

The Last Coble (**fig. 81**) by H. Knight is an example of a hazardous scene which shows people battling against the elements. This was shown at the R. A. in 1900 and at the N. S. A. in 1902 (189) priced at £60. It was purchased through the Holbrook Jackson Fund for the Castle Museum and Art Gallery, Nottingham, in 1902. The size of this painting is

¹⁴³ R. Jobling, 'Word Pictures', 77.

¹⁴⁴ School Logbooks bear witness to the number of tragedies. If a boat went missing or someone was drowned, children were kept from school and this is recorded.

¹⁴⁵ Knight, *The Magic of a Line*, 107.

¹⁴⁶ Gee, *The Romance of the Yorkshire Coast*, 140.

¹⁴⁷ J. Morris, *The Story of the Staithes and Runswick Lifeboats* (Coventry 1993), 1, describes how 'The approach to Staithes from the sea was and still is extremely tricky, being open to northerly or north easterly winds which turn it into a mass of broken white water'.

¹⁴⁸ See Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 38.

significant, 92.7 x 127.7 cms.; Knight was clearly making a statement about the importance of this scene to attract people's attention. Walker argues that:

It shows Harold's preoccupation at this time with the harsher realities of life in the fishing community at Staithes as the villagers anxiously await the return of the last coble in a storm.¹⁴⁹

N. Walker also contends that:

Although subjects which touched upon the less comfortable aspects of the fisherman's life were painted by artists of the Cornish art colonies, these are in the minority and, by comparison, Harold [Knight's] works are characterised by their sobriety and harder hitting realism.¹⁵⁰

This more gritty powerful realistic work was typical of paintings produced in the early 1900s and is a difference between Staithes and other artists' colonies. Some writers have argued that by this time leisure scenes were being painted in preference to these hazardous scenes, but this is clearly not the case in Staithes, as the example of Knight demonstrates. A deeper reading could argue that this is a metaphor for the fishing industry in Staithes, which was in decline by this date. It was also *fin de siècle*, a time for reflection: the Boer War was at its height and within a short time Queen Victoria's death would mark the end of an era.

The cobbles are being hauled on to the safety of the quay, Seaton Garth, in severe weather conditions. The fishermen used their physical strength to manhandle the boats but despite this they were powerless against the forces of nature. Many are viewing the events from the safety of the shore. The paintings by the Knights came from their real experience and the events were recorded in L. Knight's autobiography. They witnessed this scene and helped to pull the boats ashore. This was not an isolated incident but a regular occurrence.¹⁵¹ They were not just spectators, but concerned members of the community showing their solidarity with local people. This work shows the 'nobility and stoicism' of fisherfolk: they were pulling together not just for themselves, but also for the common good. It conveys the sense of community spirit where many, including artists, came to help to haul the cobbles ashore.

It is painted from the north looking to the beach below the Cod and Lobster public house. N. Walker maintains:

¹⁴⁹ Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, ex. cat., 21.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 77.

A dramatic suspense is created in the work by the diagonal lines of the composition which lead the eye out beyond the picture space, involving the onlooker in the vigil; the implied distance reinforces the feeling of impotence in the face of fate.¹⁵²

The tension is created by the fisherfolk in the foreground, who are looking anxiously out to sea. This group includes three generations: a widow wearing a black bonnet, a younger woman with a lilac bonnet and a small boy by her side. Next to them is an elderly fisherman, an 'old salt' with a white beard, wearing a smock, sea boots and a sou' wester. By his side is an elderly woman whose hands are clenched as if she is praying. She is similar to a person in H. Knight's *On the Quay at Staithes* (**fig. 84**)¹⁵³ The group of people may be close relatives of the men in the coble who are unaccounted for. It is possible this was painted at the same time as *The Last Coble*. This scene is also similar to *The Storm* by F. Mayor, which appeared in *The Artist*.¹⁵⁴ The onlookers are in contrast to the frenetic activity of the fishermen hauling their boats ashore before they are destroyed by the force of the sea.

Many cobbles are on the quayside, while below, others are being hauled ashore stern first. Foam from the waves can be seen on the left, and seagulls are being buffeted by the heavy winds. The painting conveys the stormy atmosphere and the drama and tension, which were present at times of crisis. Men and women are on the shore waiting for the coble to return, whereas in some paintings men are seen as heroic figures off to the rescue while women wait (**fig. 87**).

Neil Walker contends that:

The picture is painted in a predominantly brown palette, relieved only by the red and blue of the Staithes' cobbles. Harold's training to date at the Nottingham School of Art and the Académie Julian had placed great emphasis on correct draughtsmanship, and the early Staithes works display a symptomatic reticence in the use of colour.¹⁵⁵

The Knights had a close relationship with local people, which allowed them to witness these scenes. Newcomers may have been treated in a hostile fashion. This painting is quintessentially Staithes: there are no similar scenes at Runswick Bay because of the large bay, which gave shelter. The painting is similar to those of rescues at Cullercoats by W. Homer for example, *Perils of the Sea* (**fig. 82**).

¹⁵² Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, ex.cat., 21.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 19.

¹⁵⁴ *The Artist*, May/June, 1899, 92-95.

¹⁵⁵ Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, ex. cat., 21.

In terms of iconography, there are paintings which are similar in theme to *The Last Coble*. One example is M. Ancher's *Will She Clear the Point?* (1880 Royal Collection, Copenhagen). The painting has been described in the following manner:

...several fishermen stand on the shore, evidently watching a boat come in. The firmly handled composition focuses on a group of men (the boat itself is invisible); each figure is an individual portrait that captures a response to the moment. Ancher's skill at grouping large numbers of figures with heroic monumentality compensates for his lacklustre colour sense.¹⁵⁶

Ancher's wife, Ann, was born in Skagen, they were married in 1880 and were the only artists who settled there. Ancher depicted local scenes and the lives of fishermen.¹⁵⁷

Langley's *Disaster! Scene in a Cornish Fishing Village* (1889 Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery), a painting with a similar theme, is set in Newlyn. Lübbren contends that Langley used the technique of teichoscopy which was:

...used in the depiction of battle scenes in traditional theatre: on-stage spectators describe the action which takes place off-stage. We do not witness the drama of the boats at sea first-hand but must imagine it, prompted by the actions and emotions visible in the people on shore.¹⁵⁸

In this painting a wall hides the view of the sea, whereas in *The Last Coble* the onlookers are on the sea's edge. The use of teichoscopy contributes to the tension, which adds to the drama and success of the painting. As Knight in Staithes captured these emotional events on canvas. In Newlyn, according to T. Cross: 'Langley captured moments of personal crisis experienced by fishermen's families'.¹⁵⁹

The Last Coble shows the grit, determination, courage and the heroism of fisherfolk. L. Knight describes another aspect of life after the last coble was brought ashore and there was an argument followed by a fight, at which point she was taken away because of the bad language.¹⁶⁰ This is one of H. Knight's most important works and Walker maintains that:

His early paintings at Staithes belong essentially to the earliest Realist school in spirit, and the tempered Impressionistic technique and brighter colours that he was later to adopt were perhaps more indebted to the mediating influences of fellow Staithes artists like Fred Mayor and Fred Jackson than to a first-hand knowledge of French painting.¹⁶¹

H. Knight's *On the Quay at Staithes* (**fig. 84**), as in *The Last Coble*, is set on Seaton Garth (**Map 2**). It portrays the effects of stormy weather and The Cod and Lobster public house can

¹⁵⁶ J. P. Munk. "Ancher." *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online*.www.oxfordartonline.com, subscriber,article,groveart,T002548pg1 [accessed 23.12. 2006].

¹⁵⁷ See Jacobs, *The Good and Simple Life*, 96.

¹⁵⁸ Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 41.

¹⁵⁹ Cross, Newlyn school (act. 1882-c.1900)'. .

¹⁶⁰ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 77-79.

¹⁶¹ Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, ex. cat., 21.

barely be seen for the mountainous waves and accompanying spray. This public house is at the end of the quay and has been destroyed several times by the power of the sea. A small crowd is sheltering from the stormy blast and others are being soaked by the constant rain and spray. The fisherfolk wait anxiously for the return of cobs, which have been caught in a squall.

On the right a young woman looks fearfully out to sea, while in the foreground an elderly widow, wearing a black bonnet, looks towards the horizon with a resigned, strained expression. Her face is full of foreboding: is she being reminded of a storm, which killed her husband, or is her son still at sea? Paintings like this resonated with the audience and reminded them of the fishermen's courage and the risks they faced. A worker's life in a factory or in the fields was tame in comparison.

The drama and tension is created, as in *The Last Coble*, by the imagined struggle of the fishermen battling against the elements; only the spectators are shown. Again there are comparisons with Langley's *Disaster! Scene in a Cornish Fishing Village* particularly in how the man depicted is shouting out. The work is painted in muted tones, mainly brown and grey and the only colour derives from the red pantiles of a house in the background.

Another depiction of a hazardous scene was *Home* (fig. 83) by Bagshawe, which shows a solitary coble returning to Staithes in heavy seas. His obituary states:

In 'Home' we find depicted a typical rough sea on the Yorkshire Coast. It is Staithes, and doubtless many of the hardy fisher folk have sailed out in the morning on a calm and sunlit sea, little apprehending the sudden storm which is to drive them so hurriedly to seek shelter... There is the hazard of landing yet to be faced; and in such a sea as the one depicted, we may well surmise that until the boat's crew have come within sight of their own firesides they will scarcely realise the word "Home".¹⁶²

Archibald contends that:

Most of Bagshawe's work was marine, concentrating on coast scenes, fishermen, their boats and occupations. Though largely a watercolourist he also worked in oils, creating rather sombre but lively compositions. He had a life-long experience of small boats and drew them with great skill: his delineation of the Yorkshire coble, accounted a difficult subject, was particularly good.¹⁶³

Bagshawe's obituary also refers to the difficulties of painting cobs:

Whilst speaking of the drawings, I may mention the difficulties which numerous amateurs find in portraying an East Coast coble boat. Many a skilled visitor wends his way to our northern coasts, settling down to paint the beauties of Runswick and Whitby. All may go well until the boats require attention... His final success as a boat draughtsman (in its artistic sense) was fully assured before his death. Artists will readily admit that he was amongst the few who may be said to have really "conquered" the coble.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² 'A Yorkshire Artist and his Work', 15.

¹⁶³ E. H. H. Archibald, *Dictionary of Sea Painters* (Woodbridge 1982), 69.

¹⁶⁴ 'A Yorkshire Artist and his Work', 15.

A boat returning home from danger was a regular occurrence. The fishermen were expert in understanding the weather, but they could not predict squalls. The coble has reached home, and Bagshawe focuses on the boat, which fills the centre of the canvas, and not on a group on shore waiting for its return. As it approaches the coble's sail is being lowered and oars are being used to manoeuvre it into Roxby beck. In heavy seas this was extremely difficult, and required enormous strength and skill as, without an engine, the boat was at the mercy of the elements. In the background, on the right, the quay and the welcome sight of the village can be seen. The feeling of relief is palpable; the artist vividly captures the sense of deliverance from the hostile North Sea. This type of painting, the fisherman returning to his haven, was popular with patrons. It conveys the fragility of human existence, and the vulnerability of people battling against the power of the elements. The sea provided the setting for these heroic scenes. His obituary also refers to Dutch influence:

Bagshawes was an eminently work-a-day outlook, and I shall be inclined to class his paintings with those of Mesdag and the modern Dutch school in their general intention. That he had an almost passionate love for the sea is undeniable, and no one of the younger school of northern painters has better portrayed the hard labour of a fisherman's life. He never depicted idle boats' crew; all his figures are workers, almost amusing in their vigorous pulling and hauling.¹⁶⁵

Other paintings depicting hazardous scenes are those featuring lifeboats.¹⁶⁶ One difference between Staithes and Runswick Bay is that there are relatively few paintings of the Staithes lifeboat. This is surprising as the village had four times the population and the sea conditions there were more perilous. *Launching the Lifeboat (fig. 85)* by Jackson was sold for £40 at the 1890 Manchester Autumn exhibition.¹⁶⁷ It portrays a dramatic scene as the Runswick Bay lifeboat is launched in heavy seas. On the left a group have gathered outside the lifeboat station, which is not shown in the painting. They are helping to launch the lifeboat and one man can be seen in the water by the boat. Men are rowing vigorously but strong waves push the lifeboat back. Jackson painted this *en plein air* as this incident was happening and caught a cold.

A review of the Y. U. A. exhibition states:

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¹⁶⁵ 'A Yorkshire Artist and his Work', 15.

¹⁶⁶ See Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 41, on '...the role of the sea in Britain as a setting for heroism'.

¹⁶⁷ *Middleton Guardian*, 29.11 1890.

The glance is arrested by a picture, hung on the line, by Mr. F.W. Jackson, R.B.A. entitled 'Launching the Lifeboat, Runswick'. This represents the launch of the Runswick lifeboat...described...by Doctor Staniforth of Hinderwell. The artist...painted it on the spot...for...which he had to suffer many days confinement through a cold contracted from the exposure...The lifeboat is seen just plunging into the boiling surf with the village in the background...There is a quality, strength and tone about the picture which is wonderful...The sea is so realistically treated that you might feel a dread of it carrying one away.¹⁶⁸

The white foam from the waves contrasts with the dark, foreboding sky. The village is painted in muted tones, the only note of colour being from the red pantiles. In the background are several houses, including the distinctive whitewashed thatched cottage belonging to the Palmer family, a signifier of Runswick Bay. Seagulls fly above the surf and, in the distance the faint outline of a ship can be seen. This scene was popular with patrons and the public as it shows the courage and determination of those risking their lives to help strangers in danger at sea.¹⁶⁹

Another painting by Jackson, *The Wreck of 'The Curulla' off Runswick* (c.1903 untraced) was shown at the Shipping Exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery and the catalogue describes the painting.¹⁷⁰ It was not sold and was later shown at the S. A. C. exhibition in 1904 priced £200.¹⁷¹ The local newspaper described it as: '...most stirring...a very large work of magnificent technique'.¹⁷²

The Runswick Bay Lifeboat (**fig. 86**), by Mason depicts another hazardous scene. Jackson shows the lifeboat leaving the shore to the rescue, but in contrast, Mason shows it returning in strong seas with the survivors from a sinking ship. He shows the fierce dark skies and the strong breakers crashing around the lifeboat and the seagulls hovering. There is an overall sense of relief at the sailors' rescue and the safe passage of the lifeboat crew. They are heroes, returning to a warm welcome in their home village. This is one of the few works painted by Mason at Runswick Bay, as he mainly worked at Staithes. As a former sailor he knew the sea intimately and also painted at sea.

¹⁶⁸ 'Report on the Picture Exhibition at the Saloon', *W.G.*, 3.8.1894, 4.

¹⁶⁹ Charleton, 'Cullercoats', 462, 'When the men go forth in the lifeboat and, at the risk of death to themselves, attempt the rescue of shipwrecked strangers, whose only claim upon them is that they are in jeopardy, we recognise and admire the spirit of heroic self-sacrifice, which has been nourished amidst scenes of danger and in many a hand-to-hand encounter with the king of terrors'.

¹⁷⁰ London, Whitechapel Art Gallery, *Shipping Exhibition*, ex. cat., 1903: 'This picture tells its own story. There would be little hope for the poor souls on board the doomed ship between the cruel sharp rocks, and the waters seething like a boiling cauldron. Yet aid is reaching them in the lifeboat manned with sturdy fishermen.'

¹⁷¹ S.A.C., ex. cats., Bagshawe family archives.

¹⁷² *W. G.*, 12.8.04, 2.

In Time of Trouble at Runswick Bay (**fig. 87**), by the Birmingham artist, E. S. Harper, is an example of how fishermen were represented as heroic figures. A fisherman and his wife dominate the painting, as he is about to go to sea in the lifeboat. He is dressed in traditional fishing costume: around his chest is a lifebelt made of cork, and in his right hand, a coiled rope. He looks resolutely out to sea, a strong rugged figure; his wife clings to him, looking to his face with an expression that knows of the risks involved, and aware that this may be their last time together. There is a clear differentiation of the sexes, with women staying on shore and men going to sea for the rescue. In the background other crew members are preparing for the launch.

The painting captures the drama and tension of this scene. The fisherman is portrayed as the true British hero who is prepared to risk his life to save others. He is strong and unbowed against the elements and, in imperial tradition, is going into the unknown, without giving a thought for his own safety. Industrialisation and urbanisation created a divided society in which self-interest was prominent and many community ties had been destroyed. In this new society where many were seeking more money, lifeboatmen risking their lives to rescue their fellows were inspirational.

Most paintings feature men as heroes but the illustrations in a magazine article portray women as heroic figures.¹⁷³ In April 1901, the fishermen of Runswick Bay were at sea when a squall developed; most of the lifeboatmen were fishing, but a 'scratch' crew was found and women helped to launch the lifeboat. The men were rescued and this incident attracted considerable publicity. Here women were not onlookers but active participants in the rescue (**fig. 88**).

The local newspaper described the scene:

Runswick Bay was on Friday the scene of a novel exploit by the fishermen's wives. In the morning their husbands started, as usual, for the near fishing ground: but as soon as it was reached the storm burst. The women on the shore, who were all on the look-out for the return of the boats, became exceedingly anxious as they saw the frail craft making for the land and in danger of being engulfed every minute by the heavy seas. But the women were not to be daunted. They raised a scratch crew in the village, and with the assistance of the local coastguards; and with a venerable superannuated coxswain, George Fox, at the helm, the lifeboat was soon manned. When the improvised crew had taken their seats, the women dragged the lifeboat from its house to the beach, where they bravely waded out into deep water and successfully launched the boat from its carriage. Although they were soaking wet, as a result of their labours, the women did not leave the shore until their husbands were all brought safely to land, which was, happily accomplished about two o'clock.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ *The Graphic*, August 1901, 620-1.

¹⁷⁴ *W.G.* 17.4.1901, 2.

In discussing Forbes' *The Seine Boat* (1904 Private Collection), McConkey argues that by the early 1900s some painters perceived the sea as less perilous and it was increasingly seen as a site of leisure rather than work:

Earlier Newlyn painters like Langley and Bramley had frequently alluded to the perils of the sea with stern naturalist pictures, which are the British equivalents of works like Winslow Homer, *Undertow* 1886 (Sterling and Francine Clark Institute) and Alfred Guillaou, *Farewell* 1892 (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Quimper). We are in the era of the novels of Melville and Conrad when the sea, cruel and unpredictable, signified exoticism and adventure in the popular imagination. By the early years of the twentieth century, however, in the works of artists as diverse as Sorolla y Bastida, P. S. Kroyer and H. S. Tuke, it was noticeably less threatening.¹⁷⁵

Artists in Cullercoats, and to a lesser extent, Newlyn, also produced paintings depicting hazardous scenes. Fisherfolk were seen as heroes in contrast to miners and agricultural labourers. Paintings of lifeboats off to the rescue were also popular and captured the imagination of people in the country. Men usually undertook the rescue, but a rare image of women as rescuers at Runswick Bay has been discussed.

¹⁷⁵ McConkey comments, Phillip's, London, 'Twentieth-Century British and Irish Art', Lot 114.

Part D The Topography of Staithes and Runswick Bay.

Part D examines how the local topography was represented. Staithes, with its setting between two cliffs, contrasted with Runswick Bay with its sweep of sands and its wide bay. (figs. 1, 2, 3, 4, 44, 45). Many painted topographical scenes, but the most significant paintings produced were of fisherfolk and their relationship with the sea (Map 2). The issues explored are: The anticipated and actual images of places. Were the artists painting truth or myth? Are their works a true depiction? What image were they trying to project of the area? How was it seen from outside?

Cherry argues that artists were involved in the commodification of the countryside:

Landscape painting, tourism and travel literature created the countryside as a knowable, recognisable and distinct domain, fundamentally different to, and often contrasted with, urban life, society and work.¹⁷⁶

This packaging of the villages and their inhabitants can be extended to the paintings produced on the coast of fisherfolk and their communities. As stated in *Geographies of Englishness*: ‘Englishness is asserted through the fictive landscape of an art in which conflict and the environment of modernity is smoothed away’.¹⁷⁷ Staithes and Runswick Bay were two locations far removed from conflict and modernity.

It is also argued in *The Geographies of Englishness* that:

By the end of the nineteenth century the north was imagined as entirely overrun by industrialisation and consequently ceased to be available as a representative image at a time when England and therefore Englishness was popularly conceived as profoundly anti-industrial and anti-modern...The nation, redefined culturally and geographically, shrank to southern sites and to isolated, supposedly more authentic, locations like Cornwall.¹⁷⁸

The notion that the north was imagined to be ‘overrun by industrialisation’ shows that Staithes and Runswick Bay, which were villages in northern England, have been overlooked. In 1900 they were popular attractions for artists who wanted to paint fisherfolk and many paintings were produced which represented quintessential images of England.

Pollock and Orton argue that when artists visited Brittany there was:

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¹⁷⁶ Cherry, *Painting Women*, 166.

¹⁷⁷ Corbett, Holt and Russell, *The Geographies of Englishness*, xi.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

Ideological baggage carried by artistic tourists whose meaning has to be determined within historical conditions from and against which they were produced - conditions of change, relations of difference, and the social and cultural dominance of an urban bourgeoisie.¹⁷⁹

When artists visited Staithes and Runswick Bay they also carried this 'ideological baggage' and had a frame of reference which was determined by their past experience and their place in society. Lübbren also contends that foreign artists visiting Brittany: '...came with their own, divergent expectations of the place'.¹⁸⁰

1) Staithes

There was a long tradition of painting in Staithes and *Staithes, Yorkshire* (**fig. 19**) by F. Nicholson is the earliest topographical image of the village found.¹⁸¹ A more recent image is by L. Tabner, who lives in Boulby near Staithes and has been painting in and around the village for over 30 years. One of his works *Cowbar Breakwater Rising Tide, 9th June 1989 Sunrise Looking to Old Nab* (**fig. 20**), was painted from the Boulby side of Cowbar. Staithes and the surrounding coast and country continue to inspire Tabner.¹⁸² Staithes enthused L. Knight and she describes in her autobiography the range of subjects available to paint.¹⁸³

Artists were directed to certain patterns of working. Lübbren in examining Worpswede refers to:

The principal components of place-mythmaking can be found in all of the villages: the accumulation of a repertoire of stock motifs and atmospheric effects, the collective development of such a repertoire (through painting together in front of a motif, communal criticism or conversation)...and the dissemination of these images thus produced to a wider audience via exhibitions, postcards, reproductions, and textual elaboration in periodicals and books...¹⁸⁴

Examples in other artists' colonies are the bridge in Grez and the harbour and mills at Pont-Aven. For new artists, an infrastructure was in place and guidance on what, where, who and when to sketch. As in other artists' colonies there were stock scenes, which were painted. Without specific signifiers some works could have been painted anywhere; for example,

¹⁷⁹ Pollock and Orton, 330.

¹⁸⁰ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 139.

¹⁸¹ F. Nicholson (1753-1844) was born in Pickering and lived in Whitby from 1782 to 1792. He was a founder member of the Old Watercolour Society. I am grateful to P. Basner of the Department of Prints and Drawings, Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, Connecticut for his help in providing information on this work.

¹⁸² In the *Staithes Now*, ex. cat., held in Staithes in 1994, Tabner writes of his attraction for the village: 'I have painted in and around Staithes for well over 30 years...For me, part of its richness lies in its clutter and chaos. The result of real people, doing real things, often under arduous conditions... Staithes has confronted the sea bravely throughout its history, that principally is what excites me about the place'.

¹⁸³ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 74.

¹⁸⁴ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 126.

beach scenes, interior scenes and some aspects of the topography. Some younger artists were influenced in what to paint by more experienced painters such as Foster, Hopwood and Jackson. Artists were looking for success and what would sell, so they painted what they thought patrons would buy.

Artists depicted different areas of Staithes, such as, the quay. All the images are of the original fishing village. By 1900 the Lane End area was being developed, but there are no paintings of this (**Map 2**). Although it was the largest fishing village, it occupied a relatively small area compared with Runswick Bay. This can be seen in the aerial photograph of Staithes (**fig. 23**). Many paintings of the village were shown at the S. A. C. exhibitions.¹⁸⁵ The village also inspired other artists such as W. W. Ball, who held an exhibition at The Leicester Galleries, London, which included several paintings of Staithes.¹⁸⁶ Sir A. Curruthers Gould also exhibited paintings of the village at the R. B. A.¹⁸⁷

L. Knight's *Staithes, Yorkshire* (**fig. 24**) shows a different view from how other artists depicted the village. No aspect of modernity is evident. This work is unusual in that most of her work portrayed fisherfolk rather than landscapes. It was painted from the top of the village and shows a view of several cottages along Seaton Garth.¹⁸⁸ These nestle by the side of the cliff, one is painted white and all have red tiled roofs. The mood communicated is one of timelessness, peace and calm, a contrast from those works depicting hazardous scenes. On the left nets are drying on washing lines and nearby lies a small boat. This is one of the few early works by Knight, which have survived, as she destroyed many paintings of this period.

In *A North Sea Fishing Village* (**fig. 27**) Blandford Fletcher depicts another view of the village. Due to the title there is some confusion as to which village this is; consequently this has never before been discussed as a work produced in Staithes. It is painted from the Cowbar side of Roxby beck, which can be seen in the foreground and on the other side are fishing boats. Near to where this work was painted, there is a view of the railway viaduct in the distance, but he has been careful to avoid this aspect of modern life and to give an impression

¹⁸⁵ S.A.C. ex cats: Barrett, *A Bit of Staithes* (1902 untraced) and *The Ropery* (c.1902 Private Collection); H. Knight, *White House* (c.1903 Private Collection) and *Staithes* (1904 Private Collection); R. Jobling *Summertime, Staithes* (1905 Private Collection).

¹⁸⁶ London, The Leicester Galleries, *Paintings by W. W. Ball*, ex. cat., 1907. For example, *Staithes* (1907 V.A.M.); *Misty Morning, Staithes* and *Half Tide* (both untraced).

¹⁸⁷ R. B. A., ex. cats., 1905-7, for example, *Fishing Boats, Staithes* (c.1906 untraced).

¹⁸⁸ This is probably painted from the High Barass area of Staithes.

of a traditional village. This painting was exhibited at the Leeds City Art Gallery Spring exhibition in 1899 priced 15 gns.

The quay in Staithes, known as Seaton Garth, was a motif painted by many artists (**Map 2**). It was not a quay in the true sense, as boats were not moored there. In fine weather it was also a venue for social activities and like the bridge was a meeting place. At one end was The Cod and Lobster public house which does not appear in many paintings. Focusing on a public house would denigrate the image of fisherfolk as model workers in the eyes of patrons. Women also packed fish on the quay. This was the subject of some paintings and H. Mann exhibited *Packing Fish at Staithes* (1886 untraced) at the R. A. in 1886 and Hopwood, *Packing Fish, Staithes* (1902 untraced) at the F. A. S. in 1902.¹⁸⁹

Below the quay was a small beach, which was popular with local people and visitors. Runswick Bay had a long beach (**fig. 45**) which was more attractive to tourists. There are several paintings of the Staithes beach, including *Staithes Beach* by Bagshawe, shown at the 1902 S. A. C. exhibition. In the following year Friedenson showed *Staithes Beach* and L. Knight, *On the Beach*. L. Knight describes how in warmer weather she visited the beach and painted many subjects particularly children.¹⁹⁰ Later, when she moved to Newlyn she became well known for her beach paintings, for example, *The Beach*.

The Staithes Bridge

The bridge over Roxby beck was featured in many paintings and was an important signifier of the village. The Staithes trestle bridge connected both sides of the village and was a place where people interacted. Nets were dried here as well as clothes; fishermen also tied their cobbles to the supports of the bridge and this eventually led to its collapse. It was a central pre-modern image and when it was replaced with an iron girder bridge, the Knights saw this as symbolic as it was like the passing of the artists' colony.¹⁹¹ The bridge differentiated paintings

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¹⁸⁹ London, F. A. S., *Charcoal Drawings*, ex. cat., H. S. Hopwood, 1902.

¹⁹⁰ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 102-3.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 107.

from those produced in other fishing villages such as Newlyn.¹⁹² It was a familiar site to patrons who visited the village. L. and H. Knight, and their fellow Nottingham artist, J. Bowman, depicted the bridge. As did Hopwood, Parkyn, Sir A. Curruthers Gould and S. Lee; the latter is mentioned in Knight's autobiography.¹⁹³

The Trestle Bridge at Staithes (**fig. 28**) by L. Knight shows a bustling scene seen from the Cowbar side of Roxby beck (**Map 2**). On the right a woman with a lilac coloured bonnet stands looking across the beck; behind her are fisherfolk having a conversation. On the bridge women are carrying lines on their heads. On the left another signifier, a coble, is seen in the beck secured by ropes to the supports of the trestle bridge.

There is no artificiality in this scene with regard to the costumes and the boats. Models who donned worker's clothes were not used. In contrast, L. Knight describes how Volendam, where she worked around 1905 had changed.¹⁹⁴ As in Worpswede, artists mediated the scene, in Staithes the railway viaduct was not shown and miners, who lived in cottages up the hill from the bridge were not portrayed, neither were tourists.¹⁹⁵

The Bridge at Staithes (**fig. 29**) by Bowman is painted from the Cowbar side of Roxby beck. This shows some quaint aspects of the village such as nets drying on the bridge and a coble with two fishermen in their ordinary working clothes. Roxby beck is tidal and at low tide the cobbles rested on the bed of the beck and, at high tide, they could be moved out to sea. With the exception of the old bridge, the scene is much as it is today. Besides being a motif for artists, it was also photographed by F. M. Sutcliffe (**fig. 30**). In an article written by Erichsen, an illustration shows women crossing the bridge carrying 'skeels' on their heads (**fig. 31**).¹⁹⁶ Both the photograph and the illustration, as with the paintings, show no aspect of modernity.

2) Runswick Bay

The different physical environment of Runswick Bay inspired many paintings (**fig. 44, 45**). The trestle bridge and Seaton Garth were focal points in Staithes where people met. There was a similar place in Runswick Bay, the cockpit, but this was not featured. There are few

¹⁹² Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 107.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 152.

¹⁹⁵ Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 134: 'Worpswede was represented by the artists as a natural place, untouched by modern civilisation and untouched by prosperity'.

¹⁹⁶ Erichsen, 462-9.

paintings of the village as a whole; most focused on particular aspects such as a cottage or a garden. Some signifiers are the village painted from the beach with the cliffs in the background and the Palmer's thatched cottage.

The earliest topographical image found is from 1808 (**fig. 46**).¹⁹⁷ Another early image is an illustration of 1821, *Runswick* by S. Prout (**fig. 47**).¹⁹⁸ The village was an attractive location for artists, and when the sun was shining and the water in the bay was blue it appeared like a Mediterranean village transplanted to north Yorkshire. The houses were whitewashed, fishing nets hung on the walls and the paths were lined with flowers. Some artists painted the village from the hill above Runswick Bay. Others painted individual cottages, the bay and the view of the village looking back from the south side of the bay (**Map 3**).

The Goose Girl (**fig. 48**) by Sir W. Llewellyn was painted in a field above Runswick Bay. Before coming to Runswick Bay, Llewellyn was painting in Walberswick and it was previously thought that this work was produced there. However, the scene is clearly Runswick Bay and the sweep of the bay can be seen in the background. This viewpoint was not often portrayed and most paintings were of fisherfolk and the beach. It is painted in a naturalist style and was influenced by Bastien-Lepage. No aspect of modern life is evident. Fisherfolk had gardens above the village where they grew vegetables, kept geese and animals, and this is set there. On the right a young girl is resting against a tree with a stick in her hand. On the left are two cottages and the painting conveys a feeling of calm and tranquillity. Paintings of goose girls and geese were popular with patrons.

Llewellyn had a studio at Manresa Road, Chelsea, when Short, Brangwyn, Dade and Jacomb Hood were working there. McConkey describes how Brangwyn moved:

...into No. 4 Wentworth Studios, Chelsea in 1887. This group of crumbling habitations in Manresa Road was regarded as 'a revolutionary centre in art'. Brangwyn was now surrounded by young artists committed to a radical practice and a new society of Anglo-French painters also known as the N. E. A. C. Here he shared a studio with Ernest Dade, a sea painter from Scarborough.¹⁹⁹

The painting is dedicated to Short. Another painting by Llewellyn, *Boiling Tan for Fishing Nets-Runswick*, was exhibited at the R. A. in 1888. Many paintings of Runswick Bay were

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¹⁹⁷ Graves, *A History of Cleveland* (Carlisle 1808).

¹⁹⁸ Prout, *A Series of Views of Rural Cottages in the North of England* (London 1821).

¹⁹⁹ McConkey comments, London, Christie's, 27.11.2002, on Brangwyn, *Fowey Harbour, Cornwall*.

shown at the S. A. C. exhibitions.²⁰⁰ Others were shown at the R. A. and other venues such as Leeds and Manchester. W. W. Ball showed *Runswick* (1907 Private Collection) at the Leicester Galleries, London in 1907. Hopwood displayed several works at the R. W. S. including *Cottages*, *Runswick* and *Autumn Sunlight* (1902 both untraced) in summer 1902 and *A Sunny Corner*; *Runswick* (1904 untraced) at the winter exhibition in 1904. Cottage gardens were featured in some paintings. This is one of the distinct differences compared with Staithes where there was little space for gardens. *A Runswick Garden*, c.1902 (**fig. 49**) by Foster shows a young woman and child walking from a garden. A cottage with its red pantile roof can be seen in the background, and lobster pots on the right. H. Knight's *Mrs. Bulmer's Cottage, Runswick Bay*, 1905 (**fig. 50**) also features a garden. The Knights mostly worked in Staithes, but there are a few paintings of Runswick Bay produced when they stayed in the village at Ebor House in the summer of 1907. Their presence was recorded in the local newspaper.²⁰¹

The Cottage Garden, (**fig. 51**) by Jackson is similar to *Mrs. Bulmer's Cottage, Runswick Bay* (**fig. 50**) by H. Knight. This could have been painted while receiving tuition from Jackson. The work is influenced by Impressionism; Knight presents a traditional, peaceful scene, an English cottage garden on a sunny day. The cottage has a white fence by the side of the steps and a small balcony and is surrounded by roses and an abundance of foliage. In the centre Mrs. Bulmer, holding a basket, stands at the top of the steps to her cottage. This shows a slower and a calmer image of Runswick Bay compared with Staithes, which was busy and noisy. Today cottage gardens are still a prominent feature of Runswick Bay.

The cottage garden paintings are significant in that it was previously thought that H. Knight increased his use of colour after moving to Newlyn. McConkey contends that H. Knight brought to Newlyn his experience in Staithes of realist painting, his expertise

²⁰⁰ S. A. C. ex. cat., Bagshawe Family Archives. For example, 1902: Friedenson, *Moonlight in the Bay*, 1903: Jackson, *A Bit of Runswick* and Foster, *A Runswick Garden*; 1904: Hopwood, *A Corner in Runswick* and Jackson, *At Runswick*.

²⁰¹ W.G. 12.7.-4.10.1907.

in drawing and using muted colours.²⁰² Garstin also puts forward a similar argument.²⁰³ It is clear that in these paintings H. Knight was using brighter colours before he moved to Newlyn. It is possible that staying in Runswick Bay in the summer of 1907 inspired him.

In Runswick (**fig. 52**) by J. W. Booth, shows another typical local scene on a sunny day from the bank top. The Mediterranean blue of the sea can be seen and on the right is Kettleness Point, with a yacht sailing by. It is significant that Booth has featured a yacht instead of fishing boats, emphasising leisure rather than work.²⁰⁴ The painting shows a woman, with a child, in conversation with another woman in her cottage garden. The typical red tiled roofs of the cottages and abundant greenery can be seen in the clear light. The style used to portray this subject is more impressionistic and shows the move away from the naturalist paintings of the 1890s.

A Yorkshire Beck, 1888 (**fig. 53**) by Jackson, was exhibited at the R. A. The beck is the Runswick beck, whose source is in the uplands of the North Yorkshire Moors, and here is about to enter the sea. Jackson painted this scene with his back to the sea, and the view is much the same today. It presents a quaint image of the village; a cottage is located on the left and a boy can be seen sitting by the bridge. The beck tumbles down the hillside and under the small bridge. Many of the different colours of the vegetation are highlighted and in the foreground wild flowers can be seen. The overall impression from this painting is one of contentment, calm and continuity.

Other views of the village can be seen in *Coming Home*, c.1904 (**fig. 54**) by E. H. Rigg, which shows a weary fisherman walking home. Senior's *Dada's Comin'* (**fig. 71**), has a similar theme. In the background the bay can be seen with small waves breaking. As with *In Runswick* by Booth (**fig. 52**). The trees stand in a garden full of lush vegetation. The painting communicates that the fisherman's work is done and he is back on dry land with his family.

²⁰² See McConkey, *British Impressionism*, 7.

²⁰³ N. Garstin, 'The Art of Harold and Laura Knight', *The Studio*, vol. LVII, 1913, 183-195. 'The Newlyn Group has always had the reputation of seeing through the grey fog that legend attributes to Cornwall. Whether this is so or not, the effect upon the Knights has been the exact opposite for with their advent, there came over their work an utter change in both their outlook and method: they at once plunged into a riot of brilliant sunshine of opulent colour and of sensuous gaiety'.

²⁰⁴ For the significance of depictions of yachts in paintings at this time see McConkey, *Memory and Desire*, 127-130.

The theme of a worker at the end of the day is a common theme in, for example, Millet's work.

Senior is closely associated with Runswick Bay, which inspired much of his work. He is particularly well known for his beach scenes. Senior worked in the village from the early 1880s until his death in 1927: 'Together with Gilbert Foster (Head of the Leeds School of Art) Senior was one of the first artists to work at Runswick Bay'.²⁰⁵ He was part of a network of influential, wealthy people in Leeds. Runswick Bay was a popular place for the middle classes from the city, and many patrons knew the village well and possibly wanted souvenirs. An exhibition catalogue on Senior states: 'In Leeds he belonged to the Exchange Club, the Leeds Studio Club where he met people like F. Rutter...the Leeds Liberal Club, the Leeds Art Club of which he was a founder member and the Leeds Savage Club'.²⁰⁶ Senior divided his time between Leeds and Runswick Bay:

...he used to spend the months from Easter to October with his family at Runswick Bay on the north Yorkshire coast, where he and other painter friends, including Harold and Laura Knight, J. W. Booth, F.W. Jackson and Rowland H. Hill would meet. Here these members of the artists' colony painted directly from nature taking advantage of the brilliant light from the sea.²⁰⁷

An exhibition catalogue states that:

Looking at his work we can experience the character of each season at Runswick - the bitter cold and muted colour of winter; the fresh tingling vitality of spring; the hazy heat of summer which blurs sea and sky and the magnificent colours of autumn. It is the privileged insight of an intimate acquaintance.²⁰⁸

On the Beach, Runswick, 1913 (fig. 55), shows the long stretch of beach with the grey-blue water of the bay.²⁰⁹ This painting is significant as figures can be seen on the beach and tourists have replaced fisherfolk as subjects. It is a study of leisure rather than work and shows that the presence of tourists was now acceptable. Patrons, by this date, found these paintings attractive and paintings of fisherfolk were not so popular.

Friedenson was inspired by Runswick Bay and painted there from around 1892 until 1910. The Chantrey Bequest acquired *Runswick Bay* (1907 Tate Gallery) and a 1907 R. A. review states:

²⁰⁵ Wakefield, Elizabeth Exhibition Gallery, *Mark Senior*, ex. cat., 1983, 4.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, 3.

²⁰⁷ *Yorkshire Post*, 9.5.1983, 5.

²⁰⁸ Wakefield, *Mark Senior*, ex. cat., 1983, 3.

²⁰⁹ Senior painted a similar work, *On the Beach, Walberswick* in 1906 when he worked with P. W. Steer at Walberswick.

The picture is Runswick Bay (28) Runswick, one of the most striking positions on the coast that includes Whitby and Robin Hood's Bay, has not yet become a hackneyed subject like its neighbours. In fact, Mr. Friedenson almost deserves the credibility of discovering it. He has treated his discovery with proper appreciation.²¹⁰

He did not discover Runswick but was following in the footsteps of others. The review states: Runswick '...has not yet become a hackneyed subject like its neighbours'. By May 1907 it was still considered unspoilt and had a fresh appeal to artists. Runswick was different from Staithes with its open vistas and the sense of space. Artists like Friedenson tried to capture the atmospheric effects of the sun and the moon shining on the bay. Mackie's *Moonlight in the Bay* was shown at the 1902 S. A. C. exhibition. Ten years later Friedenson's *By the Glittering Sea*, 1912 (**fig. 56**) was exhibited at the R. A. No aspect of modernity is shown, such as steam-powered vessels and tourists. There is also no evidence of yachts, which were popular in the area. It is painted from the northern point of the bay, Cobble [sic] Dump. The overwhelming feeling is of light and on this warm summer's day, the sea shimmers and glistens. The colours of the sky are reflected in the sea, and they contrast with the colours of the vegetation on the land surrounding the bay.

Friedenson trained at the Académie Julian and painted *en plein air*. A friend, who is not named, described his painting method:

The day had been wet, but in the evening the sun broke through and the sky contained massive cumulus clouds. The lighting effect was brilliant and dramatic - this was what had brought Friedenson out. He was facing the sunset sky where a large cloud covered the sun. Friedenson took the brush and without any fluster he put stroke after stroke on that board until the complexity and subtlety and brilliance of the scene was recorded. Every stroke he put on the board was right first time in shape, tone and colour. He was never in doubt. He never hesitated. Every stroke was decisive and final. The light changed, the clouds reformed and he closed his paint box. I knew that I had seen a genius at work...²¹¹

Brymner produced several paintings during his six month stay in Runswick Bay in 1884. He stayed at the Sheffield Hotel, which has commanding views over the bay (**Map 3**). Brymner's paintings include, *Wallflowers; View of Hinderwell, Yorkshire from Newton; Village by the Sea* (1884 all untraced) and his best-known work, *A Wreath of Flowers*, 1884 (**fig. 57**). This is set in an orchard with a group of children making daisy chains. It was the largest work he had completed and his letters to his father describe the difficulties involved. In one letter he complains of the problems of painting small children, who found it difficult to 'keep a pose for more than two minutes'.²¹² This painting was to be exhibited at the R. A. but he decided to send it to Canada. It is now on display in Ottawa.

²¹⁰ *The Times*, 4.5.1907, 11.

²¹¹ Quoted in Marlow, Buckinghamshire, ex. cat., *A. Friedenson and the Staithes Group*, P. Phillips, 1976, 3.

²¹² Letter from W. Brymner to D. Brymner, 8.6.1884, McCord Museum, Montreal.

The paintings of the two villages show two distinct communities, which were situated miles apart. Runswick Bay had fewer inhabitants, but more space. The paintings show the distinct difference in topography as Runswick Bay is set in a large bay and Staithes between two cliffs. The cottage gardens are a particular feature of paintings in Runswick Bay, as are images to convey the atmospheric effects of the bay, for example, moonlight and sunlight on the sea. The paintings convey less tension than in Staithes. Many tourists visited the village, but they are not featured in paintings until the 1900s.

Part E Interiors.

In contrast to the drama and tension of paintings of stormy scenes, peaceful interior scenes were also produced. These appealed to patrons who saw in them bourgeois values, for example, the traditional family values of cleanliness and order. As Lübbren contends:

Paintings of the interiors of fishing cottages provided similar assurances of the alleged continuance of 'traditional' family and gender relations to urban middle-class audiences.²¹³

There are no interior scenes depicting women waiting for their husbands to return from the sea, fearing they had drowned, such as *A Hopeless Dawn* by Bramley (**fig. 15**). There were also no interior scenes similar to S. Forbes' works produced in Newlyn, such as *Village Philharmonic* (1888), *Health of the Bride* (1889), and *By Order of the Court* (1890).

McConkey argues that:

For all the rhetoric about light and open air many of the major Newlyn pictures were interiors, and as such they portrayed scenes, which might occur in any fishing village or coastal town.²¹⁴

The same is true of the works of Staithes and Runswick Bay except for certain signifiers such as costume, bonnets, and the layout of the cottages.

1) Staithes

The paintings of interiors by the Knights clearly show the influence of their three visits to Holland between 1904 and 1907. A particular influence was Vermeer, whose work they saw in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. This can be seen in their work where the light enters dark interiors and also in the focus on mundane tasks. One example is *The Girl and the Letter* (**fig. 43**) by H. Knight. Like Vermeer's work this is an ordinary domestic scene, a popular subject where someone receives a letter. Suspense is created by the use of shadow, tone and light. Other influences were Rembrandt and Hals, whose work they also saw on their visits. Rembrandt's influence can be seen particularly in the use of light. As Walker argues:

'Frequently the figures are posed in dramatic silhouette against the source of light which floods into the interior in a manner reminiscent of the work of Rembrandt'.²¹⁵ Their work also shows the influence of the Hague School. J. Israëls, the leader of this group, influenced many people working in English artists' colonies. Many of his paintings show the tragic aspects of

²¹³ Lübbren, 'Toilers of the Sea', 37.

²¹⁴ Mc Conkey, *Memory and Desire*, 120.

²¹⁵ Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, ex. cat., 25.

life. As early as 1870 Holl, in *No Tidings from the Sea* (Royal Collection 1870), had painted a dark cottage interior at Cullercoats, which shows the influence of Israëls.

The Knights often stayed at Laren where many British and American painters worked.²¹⁶ L. Knight describes how the American painter, W. M. Darling, gave them a guided tour of Laren and introduced them to local farmers.²¹⁷ As in Staithes, it was crucial to their work that they formed a good relationship with the local community and through this they could capture on canvas aspects of peoples' lives. Garstin refers to the Dutch influence on the Knights' work:

...the most obvious effect of the Dutch influence was in causing them to rely on a very reticent scheme of colour, discreet greys and rich mysterious shadows. A certain lowness of tone both in colour and also in sentiment marks this period.²¹⁸

As in Staithes, they were interested in traditional images, portraying ordinary people pursuing their everyday tasks. Many paintings produced in Holland were exhibited at the Leicester Galleries, London in 1906.²¹⁹

One of her most important interiors was *Dressing the Children*, 1906 (**fig. 41**) which was exhibited at the R. A. in 1906. It was painted after her second visit to Holland. The peaceful family scene depicted is in contrast to the observations in her autobiography.²²⁰ The painting shows a mother dressing her children in a typical Staithes cottage. Dutch influence is seen in the dark interior, which is illuminated on the left with sunlight shining through a window onto the back of the eldest child. The fire in the grate also provides some light. There is no hint of the poverty the family are suffering and the fact that the husband is a miner is also not alluded to, as this would deter patrons. The family did not have a cat but Knight added one hoping this would make it more attractive to buyers. Besides domestic scenes she also painted the topography and local fisherfolk. Like H. Knight she then turned to interiors, which were muted and focused on family life. Within a year or two she would be painting many outdoor scenes in Newlyn using vivid colour. A. Foster argues that for L. Knight: 'Staithes inspired muted realist works, but Cornwall shimmering landscapes of light'.²²¹

²¹⁶ See A. Stott, *American Painters who Worked in the Netherlands, 1880-1914*, unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Boston University, 1986.

²¹⁷ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 137.

²¹⁸ N. Garstin, 'The Art of Harold and Laura Knight', *The Studio*, vol. XVII, 57, 1912, 195.

²¹⁹ London, The Leicester Galleries, *The Paintings of Mr. and Mrs. H. Knight*, ex. cat., 1906.

²²⁰ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 145-147.

²²¹ A. Foster, *Women Artists* (London 2004), 127.

There are comparisons with Hopwood's *Industry* (fig. 58), a painting also inspired by the Hague School. Hopwood portrays the effects of natural light coming through a window on the left, and the artificial glow from the grate. Overall the tone is grey, but L. Knight in the use of colour with the red ribbon gives an effect similar to H. Knight's *The Last Coble* (fig. 81). This has a muted tone, but he uses a little colour in his portrayals of cobbles.

H. Knight also painted interiors showing a clear Dutch influence. One example is *A Cup of Tea*, 1905 (fig. 42), which shows a family domestic scene. Walker argues that:

His [Vermeer's] cool and restrained interiors were to exert a powerful and lasting influence on Harold's subsequent work and were surely instrumental in the shift of subject matter from his dramatic figure subjects in outdoor settings to the domestic interiors exhibited post-1905, such as *A Cup of Tea* (1905) and *The Girl and the Letter* (1906).²²²

Although it is set in Staithes, in *A Cup of Tea* there is no indication that fisherfolk were being portrayed and this could be a Dutch scene. The dark interior is illuminated by light from two windows on the left. The painting becomes darker on the right where a young woman, perhaps the mother of the children, is caught in silhouette pouring a cup of tea. This was a similar technique to that used by Rembrandt. Fox contends that:

The painting shows an interior with a poor family at table, almost undoubtedly the same as in *The Girl and the Letter*, exhibited the following year. Both these compositions of Harold's are simple and well organised, relying heavily on tonal values and silhouette.²²³

Two adults are seated at the kitchen table; one is holding a baby and an older child is standing nearby. On the right can be seen the dark outline of the cooker, which was prominent in all Staithes homes, but no light comes from this. This sombre picture has an almost religious quality with the shaft of light from the window in the background illuminating the scene. *A Cup of Tea* was exhibited at the R. A. in 1905 and was bought by F. Dicksee on behalf of the Queensland Art Gallery and was one of their earliest acquisitions. H. Knight received £100 at a time when the Knights had little money.²²⁴

Place argues that:

At that period [1905-6 following the sale of *A Cup of Tea*] already to a certain extent influenced by the Dutch masters, whom he was closely studying, he mostly painted interiors: a woman grinding the hourly coffee the

Footnotes continued on the next page

²²² Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, 23.

²²³ Fox, *Painting in Newlyn, 1900-1930*, 120.

²²⁴ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 132.

peasants drank, a group at the bare round table, men, caps in hand, saying Grace, or someone pumping water in the barn, as well as some individual portraits, [were] always one of his chief aims.²²⁵

At the 1906 R. A. exhibition, H. Knight showed another Staithes interior, *The Girl and the Letter*, 1906 (**fig. 43**). Dutch influence is seen in the depiction of a dark interior illuminated by light streaming in from a window on the right. On the left a young woman is silhouetted in the light coming from the window. She is reading a letter to a family group who are seated on a bench listening intently. The group includes an older woman, wearing a white bonnet, a younger man and a baby. The contrast of light and dark give a feeling of drama and tension and this work prompts many questions in the viewer. Does the letter contain good or bad news? What is the relationship of the people in the room? *A Cup of Tea* and *The Girl and the Letter* are similar and it is possible that the same models were used. Fox argues that:

The family pictured here is quite probably the one paid to model for the artists's wife, Laura at Staithes (see cat no. 70)[i.e. *Dressing the Children*.] The headdress and profile of the woman and the face of the child, are similar, and the bench appears in both paintings. The subject matter and dramatic use of light reiterates the interest of the earlier Newlyn artists, especially Stanhope Forbes. Knight was to paint a similar subject when in Newlyn in 1909, *The Letter*.²²⁶

H. Knight passed through many stages of artistic development. In 1900 he was painting fisherfolk particularly, hazardous scenes such as *The Last Coble* and studies of bereavement, for example, *Grief*. He concentrated on painting individuals and groups rather than landscapes. Then following visits to Holland he turned to interiors. Later he concentrated on portraits and most writers associate him with this.

2) Runswick Bay

There are fewer depictions of interiors at Runswick. A charcoal drawing by Hopwood, *Content*, 1902 (**fig. 59**), shows a dark cottage interior. A fisherman smoking a pipe is sitting on a chair in front of a fire, still in his fishing clothes including sou'wester. This conveys an impression of hard work done and now it is time to relax. Dutch influence can be seen in the light coming from the left, which illuminates the fisherman. More light comes from the fire in the grate and as in Newlyn artists found it challenging to depict this artificial light.²²⁷ Hopwood established his reputation as a watercolour painter, but shows his versatility here in using charcoal. This was exhibited at the F. A. S. in 1902. The exhibition was also featured in

²²⁵ G. M. Place, *The Artist*, Dec. 1949, 96.

²²⁶ Fox, *Painting in Newlyn, 1900-1930*, 122.

²²⁷ Bendiner, 2.

The Studio, which described the drawing:

...their rugged strength, and their expressed statement of effects of tone, made them most persuasive; and the knowledge displayed in them of the capabilities of the medium could not be questioned.²²⁸

Senior usually painted outdoor scenes in Runswick Bay. This interior painting, *Old Peggy* 1908 (**fig. 60**), shows Peggy Calvert sitting by the fire in her home, White Cottage. She was the grandmother of Mary Calvert, who was a maid to Senior's family. The scene is not as dark as the cottage interiors by Hopwood, and Peggy is seen cooking on the grate. Light shines on her from a window on the left and the fire in the grate provides extra light. During the time this painting was produced, Senior made several visits to Bruges, where he met Brangwyn at summer schools organised by him. On these visits in 1907 and 1908, he saw Flemish paintings of cottage interiors and this has clearly influenced his work.

²²⁸ *The Studio*, vol. XXVII, 1903, 295.

Part F Photography in the Area.

Besides the paintings produced, many photographs were taken by Frank Meadow Sutcliffe.²²⁹ While the artists were depicting fisherfolk on canvas, he was photographing their lives in Whitby and the surrounding villages including Staithes and Runswick Bay (figs. 4, 26, 30, 78, 96). Other than contact with E. E. Anderson, there is no documented information on links between Sutcliffe and other artists. His naturalist photographs were a reaction to industry and urbanisation. Like the paintings they show the dignity of labour of the fisherfolk, their close relationship with nature and their good health compared with city dwellers. As with the artists, in his portrayal of fisherfolk he avoided any aspect of modern life.²³⁰

P. H. Emerson, one of the pioneers of naturalist photography, influenced Sutcliffe. Emerson collaborated with the artist T. F. Goodall on *Life and Landscape in the Norfolk Broads*, which appeared in 1886. This documented the lives of local people and the scenery. Local dialect was used for the titles of photographs and links with folk culture were highlighted. Within a few years he had changed his mind about the artistic possibilities of photography, outlining his views in a black-edged publication, *The Death of Naturalist Photography*, in 1890.²³¹

Jeffrey maintains that Sutcliffe:

...recorded the vanishing face of traditional life on the sea coast, with something of the compassion which Emerson had accorded to life on the Broads. There is the same generalising concern for the archaic, the sailing ship rather than the steamer, the authentic seaman rather than the engineer.²³²

Hiley contends that:

Sutcliffe's misty landscapes, with the sun breaking through the sea fret and figures in the foreground set against hazy backgrounds, were the early examples of naturalist photography of the kind promoted by Emerson. In both his photography and writing, Sutcliffe showed an awareness of the techniques and the ideas of other visual artists, such as the French painter Jean-François Millet. His work embodied a sophisticated approach previously seen in painting, combined with the strength of the direct recording powers of the camera.²³³

Like Millet and Bastien-Lepage he did not sentimentalise his subjects, for example, women collecting bait. Sutcliffe acknowledged his debt to Millet: 'I believe that Jean-François Millet

²²⁹ See M. Hiley, *F. M. Sutcliffe* (London 1974) .Also the wide range of photographs at the Sutcliffe Gallery, Whitby.

²³⁰ See J. L. Hankey, 'F. M. Sutcliffe, Memorial Lecture', *The Photography Journal*, August 1942, 280-291; W. J. Warren, 'F. M. Sutcliffe of Whitby: An Appreciation and Some Examples of his Work', *The Amateur Photographer*, 15.6.1900, 470-473.

²³¹ For further information on Emerson see McConkey, *Impressionism in Britain*, ex. cat., 28-9,122-3.

²³² London, Hayward Gallery, *The Real Thing: An Anthology of British Photographs, 1840-1950*, ex. cat, I. Jeffrey, 1974.

²³³ M. Hiley, 'Sutcliffe, Francis Meadow (1853-1941)' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford 2004) online edition., 2008, www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38440[15.12.06].

has shown me more than any others'.²³⁴ In an article Sutcliffe discussed Millet's influence on his work:

...today as I walked home through the fields, I came across a grand subject, which was absurdly suggestive of Jean François Millet. There was a man with a gripe [fork] spreading muck, and behind was a middle aged woman standing. Her pose was most majestic and statuesque in its simplicity. A queen could have not have appeared more dignified...²³⁵

Sutcliffe was also influenced by Millet in his approach to recording a range of images.²³⁶ Like Millet, Sutcliffe recorded his own surroundings. Sutcliffe thought '...that such giants as Jean-François Millet do not run all over the world to hunt for pictures, but that they find them near their own homes...' ²³⁷ Sutcliffe was conscious of trying to capture pictures of the countryside and the traditional way of life which was fast disappearing. He saw photography as a direct medium and his 1500 images provide a record of Whitby, the surrounding area and the people who lived there.

As Hiley argues:

At the same time he produced a portrait of Whitby that is both an extraordinarily detailed record of life in and around the town at the end of the nineteenth century and also one man's vision of the place he loved.²³⁸

Frank asserts that: 'Few other photographers have devoted themselves so exclusively to one locality'.²³⁹ Sutcliffe advised photographers to concentrate on capturing an image at different times.

Choose one subject, anything will do - your own house, or the house opposite - and in place of a tripod, drive a stake into the ground, nail a board on top of this, and make a screw hole in the board for the screw of your camera...Photograph your subject at every hour of the day, on fine days, and at intervals on dull days, photograph it after it has been rained on for weeks, and after it has been sun-dried for months.²⁴⁰

He extolled the virtues of fisherfolk and explained why he thought they were good subjects for photography:

Not the least picturesque part of the seaside are the inhabitants thereof, especially the fishermen. Their distinctive dress of sou' wester, Guernsey and sea boots would be worth taking alone, but when you have besides a handsome, open, bronzed face without guile or deceit of any kind, the photographer and not the model will be at fault if the photograph turns out to be a failure.²⁴¹

²³⁴ Quoted in F. C. Lambert, 'The Pictorial Work of F. M. Sutcliffe', *The Practical Photographer*, no. 8, May 1904, 2-3.

²³⁵ *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, 2. 3.1918.

²³⁶ See Hiley, *F. M. Sutcliffe*, 1974, 92.

²³⁷ Quoted in Hiley, *Frank Meadow Sutcliffe*, The Aperture History of Photography Series (London 1979), 9.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

²³⁹ P. Frank, 'History and Photographs of F. M. Sutcliffe', *History Workshop*, nos. 1-2, 1976, 93-5.

²⁴⁰ See Hiley, *F. M. Sutcliffe*, 1979, 9.

²⁴¹ *Amateur Photographer*, 24. 7. 1896, 68.

Sutcliffe describes the different approach of artists and photographers in portraying a scene. His biographer Hiley describes some of the specific techniques used.²⁴²

Sutcliffe describes in more detail the differences between a photographer and an artist portraying a storm:

Sea-side photographers are often asked why they do not get more pictures of storms. Now a photograph of a storm is one thing and painting of a storm is another. In the first place, the sky is seldom as black as painters make it, and the waves seldom as big - for when the wind is blowing its hardest it seems to flatten the sea down and keep it from knocking about. Then those picturesque groupings of fisherpeople are, I may safely say, never seen in real life. What you do see is a black mass of humanity sheltering as much as possible out of the wind. The force of the wind is seldom taken into account. You see people in paintings standing in places where nothing less than an elephant could stand. In fact, sometimes the only way of getting along is to go on your hands and knees.²⁴³

Hiley also describes some of the differences between the two mediums.²⁴⁴ While painting took many years to learn, photography could be learned in a short time.²⁴⁵ Hiley also argues that this is reflected in two images, a photograph and a painting of a subject. A painter would bring considerable knowledge acquired over many years to the portrayal of the subject compared with a photographer.²⁴⁶ Besides Sutcliffe, another photographer who worked in the area was T. Watson (1863-1957), who lived in Lythe, near Whitby.²⁴⁷

In this chapter the wide range of images of the villages and their inhabitants has been examined. Paintings of fisherfolk were popular between 1880 and 1914. Various factors have been examined: there was considerable sympathy for fisherfolk and they were thought of as beacons of virtue in a rapidly changing society. They were seen as honest, masculine and steadfast. Employers viewed them as ideal workers and role models for their own employees. There were religious overtones in how they were represented. At a time of imperialism and nationalism they were seen as embodying the best features of the nation's manhood. The paintings were produced at a time of declining fortunes for fisherfolk, but this is not apparent in these works. The costumes differentiated the paintings from those produced in other fishing villages. There was co-operation from the local people as models. How women were portrayed as workers and wives and mothers was examined. Women in the villages, when compared with other women workers such as seamstresses appear strong and independent.

²⁴² See Hiley, *F. M. Sutcliffe*, 1974, 83.

²⁴³ F. M. Sutcliffe, 'Photography at the Seaside', *Amateur Photographer*, 24.7.1896, 68. This was read at the Photography Convention, Leeds 1896.

²⁴⁴ See Hiley, *F. M. Sutcliffe*, 1974, 88.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 89

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 96-97.

²⁴⁷ Examples of his work can be found in the library of the Pannett Art Gallery and Museum, Whitby.

How the topography of the villages was represented was also examined. They were ideal locations for painters, they could not be modernised and there were many interesting motifs. They were portrayed as pre-modern, which appealed to patrons. It is demonstrated that there were two distinct villages. Most paintings of Staithes show people as a component of the paintings, landscapes without people are rare. How interiors were depicted in both villages was examined, particularly in terms of the strong Dutch influence.

How hazardous scenes were portrayed was discussed and this is a particular aspect of the villages, especially Staithes, due to the dangerous sea conditions that prevailed. Photography is examined with particular reference to F. M. Sutcliffe. Like the painters, he avoided aspects of modern life when depicting fisherfolk. These images supplied the increasing demand from the urban population for traditional fisherfolk imagery, including scenes of fishing villages and the sea. Chapter 4 now looks at Markets and Collectors.

CHAPTER FOUR MARKETS AND COLLECTORS

This chapter examines the production, consumption and reception of the paintings. Part A discusses the artists' exhibition practices and Part B presents some case studies of individual patrons.

Little research has been undertaken on the exhibition venues and the patrons of the painters who worked in Staithes and Runswick Bay. This is another area that has been marginalised. There is little discussion of this in 'The Staithes Group' catalogues by Phillips and Haworth.¹ Relatively little research has been undertaken on patronage in Yorkshire and Lancashire between 1880 and 1914. However, there has been some on the Cullercoats' artists and Newcastle-upon-Tyne as an exhibition venue.² The long neglect of British art of this period up to the early 1960s resulted in many paintings languishing in the basements of art galleries, or being sold for low prices.

From the early 1960s, there has been an increasing interest in patronage in British art between 1880 and 1914. In 1963 F. Davis examined the collections of twelve patrons.³ In 1968, R. Ormond discussed patronage in one British city.⁴ In 1982, J. Chapel wrote of T. Holloway's paintings, which now forms the collection at the Royal Holloway College.⁵ D. S. Macleod discusses patronage in an article, but this mainly focuses on the early Victorian period.⁶ Another article by her examines patronage in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.⁷ Later, in a book published in 1996, Macleod also discusses the collections of Victorian middle-class patrons.⁸

S. M. Duval has undertaken research on the Liverpool patron, F. R. Leyland.⁹ P. Starkey has also written about other Liverpool collectors.¹⁰ An exhibition in 1989 in Bradford examined local patrons and collectors, focusing on A. Mitchell.¹¹ An R. A. exhibition looked at another northern art patron, Lord Leverhulme, and this gives an insight into his philosophy and

¹ Phillips in *The Staithes Group*, ex. cat. discusses this in two paragraphs on p.8. Haworth's ex. cat. also has no discussion on patrons.

² Newton, *Cullercoats*, ex. cat., 40-66.

³ F. Davis, *Victorian Patrons of the Arts* (London 1963).

⁴ R. Ormond, 'Victorian Paintings and Patronage in Birmingham', *Apollo*, vol. LXXXVII, 1968, 240-251.

⁵ J. Chapel, *Victorian Taste* (London 1982).

⁶ D. S. Macleod, 'Art Collecting and Victorian Middle-Class Taste', *Art History*, vol. X, no. 3, September 1987, 328-350.

⁷ Macleod, 'Private and Public Patronage in Victorian Newcastle'.

⁸ Macleod, *Art and the Victorian Middle Class* (Cambridge 1996).

⁹ S. M. Duval, 'F. R. Leyland: A Maecenas from Liverpool', *Apollo*, vol. CXXIV, 1986, 110-116.

¹⁰ P. Starkey, ed., *Riches into Art: Liverpool Collectors, 1770-1880* (Liverpool 1989).

¹¹ Bradford Art Galleries and Museums, *The Connoisseur: Art Patrons and Collectors in Victorian Bradford*, ex. cat., 1989.

collecting policy.¹² Little work has been undertaken on patronage in Leeds and Manchester, but there is a chapter on art collections in Manchester in a book edited by J. H. G. Archer.¹³ Most of the paintings produced by artists in Staithes and Runswick Bay were sold in London or in northern cities, such as Leeds, Manchester, Nottingham and Newcastle. Some paintings were sold locally in exhibitions held in Staithes and Whitby.

¹² London, R. A, *Lord Leverhulme*, ex. cat., 1980.

¹³ Archer (ed.) *Art and Architecture in Manchester*.

Part A Exhibiting Practices.

Part A discusses the exhibiting strategies of artists and the venues available. They sold their work through local, regional, national and international outlets. The following are examined: exhibiting in London, mainly at the R. A., artists' societies and private galleries; exhibition venues outside London, particularly Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle and Nottingham; venues in the Whitby, Staithes and Runswick Bay area, and some international outlets. The role of the S. A. C. as an exhibition venue is also examined.

Between 1880 and 1914 there was an increased interest in art and this was reflected in attendance at the R. A., other London exhibitions and in the provinces. Hobsbawm states that: 'The R. A. exhibition in 1848 attracted perhaps 90,000 visitors, but by the end of the 1870s almost 400,000'.¹⁴ Artists and exhibitions received wide press coverage. Art was seen as serving many purposes: for enjoyment, for inspiration, for escape and to adorn the home. It was also seen as an investment, a commodity to be traded and for status purposes to impress others. The vast wealth generated by the booming economy in Britain and from the Empire provided resources for patrons to buy works of art. London was the imperial capital and a major centre for international finance. An increasingly confident middle-class used their new-found wealth to educate themselves and to acquire material possessions. As Hobsbawm contends:

There is no understanding the arts in the later nineteenth century without a sense of this social demand that they should act as an all-purpose suppliers of spiritual contents to the most materialist of civilizations.¹⁵

The art market was able to support more artists because of the increased demand for paintings. Art appealed to a wider public; as Bendiner maintains:

The detailed styles, sentimentality, moral tone and topical and non-topical characteristics of Victorian art can all be read as attempts to appeal to this new mass public.¹⁶

The paintings of fisherfolk were a part of this process as they were aimed at a wider public. These were in demand and they were produced in sites such as Staithes and Runswick Bay. The art-consuming public was looking for understandable art, and as Huneault maintains: 'Viewers could only make sense of such imagery in relation to their own cultural and social experiences'.¹⁷

¹⁴ E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital* (London 1962), 335.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 333.

¹⁶ Bendiner, 2.

¹⁷ Huneault, 4.

The artists who worked in the fishing villages also painted in other parts of Britain and overseas and their work was exhibited at a variety of venues. Jackson sold most of his work in Manchester, but also sold some in London. In the case of artists, such as Hopwood, Jackson and the Knights, their Staithes and Runswick Bay paintings were exhibited with work produced in other places. The work created in the fishing villages was only a part of the output of most artists. No one worked exclusively in the villages, see **Appendix 2**.

Artists had to know what would be acceptable to patrons. In many cases they were a part of the taste-forming circles in London and in cities like Leeds and Manchester. There were identifiable trends in the art world in this period; for example, there was an interest in Dutch and French art, also in fisherfolk and agricultural subjects. Artists had to position themselves to ensure they were supplying what the market demanded and some artists specifically tailored their output for the London market. Most paintings were undertaken on a speculative basis rather than as commissions. L. Knight describes a few small commissions, mainly for portraits, that she and her husband received, but the bulk of their work was produced for exhibitions such as the R. A. Summer Exhibition.¹⁸ Producing a work was only the first step. What were their exhibiting strategies? How did they display the work for patrons? What role did artists' societies play? What role did private dealers play? These are some of the questions discussed below.

London

Royal Academy

In Britain there was an institutional framework, which determined what would be exhibited and brought to the attention of patrons. Exhibiting at the R. A. was crucial to many artists, and was a sign of their success in the art world.¹⁹ An artist who exhibited there was reported in the national press and the local press, both in north Yorkshire and also in the artist's home city. For those who could not attend, publications such as *Royal Academy Pictures*, the *Pall Mall Gazette Extra* and H. Blackburn's *Academy Notes* featured a selection of the paintings exhibited.

To ensure success, both financial and critical, artists had to exhibit in London, where the buyers and critics were situated. By exhibiting there they increased their chances of selling their paintings and of broadening their network of patrons and friends, which could result in

¹⁸ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 96.

¹⁹ See Shannon, 278.

more commissions. Most artists exhibited at the R. A. and their work was for national, not local, consumption. Increasingly, London rather than the regions became the most important art centre. As Corbett, Holt and Russell argue:

Artists and later art historians, were drawn to national institutions in the capital city. This reflected a larger picture of developing centralisation as London, dominating the ever-expanding hinterland, accrued greater cultural as well as economic authority.²⁰

For younger artists such as the Knights, the R. A. was crucial in establishing their reputations. At the 1904 Summer Exhibition, E. Stott purchased L. Knight's *Mother and Child* (**fig. 69**) for £20.²¹ The money was welcome, as she was living on a meagre income, and this also brought a vital recognition which encouraged her to continue as a painter. It is possible that F. Mayor and Jackson, who were friends of Stott, may have interceded on Knight's behalf. Exhibiting at the R. A. was also important for H. Knight. F. Dicksee bought *A Cup of Tea* (**fig. 42**), in 1905 for £100 for the Queensland Art Gallery.²² In many parts of the British Empire there was a yearning for images of the home country and this is why some paintings, produced by artists in Staithes and Runswick Bay, were bought for art galleries in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa.

Artists' Societies

Artists also sold their work through exhibitions organised by artists' societies, mostly based in London.²³ Some were founded in the early nineteenth century such as the Royal Watercolour Society (1804) and the Royal Society of British Artists (1823). Others were established in the late nineteenth century, for example, the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers and Engravers (1880) and the New English Art Club (1886). Artists also exhibited at the Royal Scottish Academy based in Edinburgh, the Glasgow Institute of Fine Art and the Royal Cambrian Academy based in Conway. Improvements in communications meant that artists could easily transport themselves and their paintings throughout Britain. At these exhibitions, painters could meet patrons and mix with other artists. Many were first introduced to Staithes and Runswick Bay through meeting others at these societies.

Some exhibited at the R. B. A.: Jackson became a member in 1894, E. E. Anderson in 1903 and Bagshawe, Foster and Mason in 1904. Jackson, through his network of contacts, may have helped others to become members. Staithes and Runswick Bay were popular painting

²⁰ Corbett, Holt and Russell, eds., *The Geographies of Englishness*, x.

²¹ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 121.

²² *Ibid.*, 131.

²³ Artists' societies for women were discussed in Chapter 2.

venues. Paintings of Staithes were shown earlier in the nineteenth century at the society's exhibitions. In 1845, J. B. Pyne showed *Staithes, a Fishing Town on the Yorkshire Coast*, (1847 Government Art Collection) and the following year, A. Clint exhibited *The Arrival of Fishing Boats, off Staithes* (1848 untraced) followed in 1855 by *Staithes, near Whitby* (1855 untraced).²⁴

Some artists were associated with the N. E. A. C. and Jackson was one of the 44 founder members in 1886. He exhibited until 1891 and then later in 1907 and 1910. E. Dade joined in 1887; he exhibited in that year, in 1888 and finally in 1890. Hopwood also exhibited in 1907, H. Knight in 1908 and Friedenson in 1910. By 1888 a group, led by Sickert, was planning to take over the N. E. A. C. Following a struggle with a faction led by S. Forbes and the Newlyn Group, 'The London Impressionists', as they styled themselves, were in control by 1890. The Newlyn artists and the Glasgow Boys resigned and it is likely that Jackson was allied to this group. Other members included Aumonier, Llewellyn, Short and H. Mann. The latter is mentioned in L. Knight's autobiography.²⁵

The N. E. A. C. was set up to challenge the R. A. by artists who had mainly trained in Paris to: '...promote that kind of French painting which its members considered to be "modern" '.²⁶ Bastien-Lepage was an important influence. The artists were unhappy with the R. A.'s selection policies and its treatment of new paintings. M. Chamot contends that:

The painters who first formed the New English Art Club must have been struck by the difference between the pursuit of literary subject and historical accessory fashionable among English painters, and the new realistic outlook and open-air painting in France.²⁷

A. Thornton describes how:

Into a hothouse of sentimentality in the late eighties it blew again the fresh breath of the open air, of the vitality of the thing seen, of reality faced and its beauty sought out.²⁸

At the first exhibition, 43 artists displayed 58 pictures at the Marlborough Gallery. Many continued to exhibit at both the R. A. and N. E. A. C. Chamot argues that the Royal Academicians thought the N. E. A. C. would only last a short time:

The Academy, as might be expected, was scornful, and Leighton, then P. R. A., predicted that, "the second year would try and the third probably disband them". He little realized what positions members of the Club would hold in the future - his own present successor, Sir William Llewellyn, was a member in 1887!²⁹

²⁴ For further information see the R. B. A. archives in the National Art Library.

²⁵ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 74.

²⁶ Cherry, 74.

²⁷ M. Chamot, *Modern Painting in England* (London 1937), 29.

²⁸ A. Thornton quoted in Chamot, 28.

²⁹ Chamot, 29.

Jackson's *May* received the following review:

Entering on the left is no. 21) *May* by Fred Jackson. A difficult picture to paint as there is no subject in front of the background, or visible behind it; the work may be looked upon as a successful study of still life, bar the ducks, which are a trifle small for the background.³⁰

This painting was also shown at the Manchester Autumn exhibition. *The Art Journal* described it:

...a weather-beaten old barge is lying lazily in still water beneath the shadow of blossoming hawthorn. This young artist's work is full of promise, and proves his possession of strong painting power and true feeling for the beauty of nature.³¹

Hopwood became an Associate of the R. W. S. in 1896 and a full member in 1908. The Society's summer and winter exhibitions were the most important venues for him from 1896 until his death in 1914.³² He stopped exhibiting at the R. A. and only displayed a few paintings at the M. A. F. A. exhibitions. Later, in 1909 L. Knight became an Associate of the Society.

New societies were formed to foster the development of different aspects of art. One example is the Royal Society of Painter-Engravers established in 1880. Barrett became an Associate in 1887; later L. Knight displayed work at the society's exhibitions.³³ This society provided a focus for artists to meet others, to learn new techniques and ideas and was also an important means of selling work. Short worked in Staithes and Whitby and the area became attractive to those interested in etching, possibly due to Barrett and Short teaching this skill. Crawshaw, Foster, Friedenson, Jackson and H. Knight also exhibited at the R. O. I., founded in 1882.

The International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers, established by Whistler in 1898, was another exhibition venue. Efforts were made to provide more space to display paintings compared with the clutter of the R. A. exhibitions. In 1906, an exhibition was held in Bradford of contemporary artists, including the Knights and H. Mann. Some also exhibited with the Allied Artists' Association established in 1908 by F. Rutter. This provided another exhibition venue at which there was no selection committee and an effort was made to adopt democratic procedures.

³⁰ *The Bohemian*, 23. 4. 1887, 3.

³¹ *The Art Journal*, 1886, 317.

³² Full details of the sale of Hopwood's work can be found in the archives of the R. W. S., Bankside Gallery, Southwark, London. The society also owns several of Hopwood's paintings.

³³ Details of works displayed by Barrett and L. Knight can be found in the archives of the Royal Society of Painter-Engravers, Bankside Gallery, Southwark, London.

Private Art Galleries in London

During this period more dealers established galleries. In London the Leicester Galleries and the F. A. S. helped artists such as the Knights and Hopwood to display their work. When they became more successful, they turned to dealers to sell their work through the enhanced marketing infrastructure which had developed. Newspapers and art magazines publicised exhibitions and all these developments contributed to an expanding art market.

The Leicester Galleries

Exhibiting work at the Leicester Galleries in 1906 and 1907, while they were still living at Staithes, was a turning point in the careers of the Knights. E. Brown helped them; he was popular with collectors and dealers, and many of his friends were artists.³⁴ He was formerly a manager at the F. A. S. where he was responsible for organising exhibitions. Brown brought with him to the Leicester Galleries knowledge of the art dealers' network of Bond Street. One of the first exhibitions at the Leicester Galleries was *Pastels and Watercolours of Fred Mayor* in 1902. Mayor painted in Staithes from around 1899 to 1902 and is mentioned in Knight's autobiography.³⁵ The following year, another exhibition was held, *The Watercolour Drawings of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Stevens*; A. Stevens also worked in Staithes.³⁶

It is possible that F. Mayor introduced the Knights to Brown who organised two exhibitions of their work.³⁷ The 1906 exhibition included paintings produced on a visit to Holland. An exhibition review states:

The drawings and paintings of Dutch subjects - mainly figures - by Mr. and Mrs. Harold Knight are very "intimate", fluently drawn and subdued in colour. It is almost impossible to tell the work of one artist from the other, so similar are their vision and style.³⁸

In October 1907, another exhibition of paintings and watercolours, many inspired by Staithes and Runswick Bay, was held at the Leicester Galleries. A newspaper review states:

At the same galleries is a fresh and intimate collection of paintings and watercolours, mainly of landscapes and peasant life by Harold and Laura Knight.³⁹

³⁴ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 126.

³⁵ Ibid., 79.

³⁶ London, Leicester Galleries, *Pastels and Watercolours of Fred Mayor*, 1902; *The Watercolour Drawings of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Stevens*, 1903.

³⁷ London, Leicester Galleries, *Paintings of Dutch Life and Landscape by Mr. and Mrs. H. Knight*, ex. cat., 1906; *Paintings of Life and Landscape by Harold and Laura Knight*, ex. cat., 1907.

³⁸ *The Times*, 11.6. 1906, 4.

³⁹ *The Times*, 12. 10. 1907, 6.

One of L. Knight's earlier works, *Mother and Child* (**fig. 69**), was included in the exhibition. In her autobiography, she describes the difficulties of selling paintings and how, before Brown's assistance, she and her husband tried to persuade London art dealers to buy their work.⁴⁰ They had also tried on several occasions to establish contacts with art dealers in Nottingham, but with little success, so they concentrated on London.⁴¹

The Fine Art Society

The F. A. S. helped artists such as Hopwood, and three exhibitions of his work were held there between November 1897 and December 1913. The first was *Water-Colour Drawings of Interiors and Markets in Normandy and Brittany*. A review stated:

Mr. H. S. Hopwood is one of the newly made associates of the Old Water Colour Society, and he bids fair to do credit to the well established reputation of that body. His interiors and markets in Normandy and Brittany are seen with the eye of an artist, and are carefully and intelligently painted...⁴²

Despite the title, there were several paintings of Staithes and Runswick Bay on display, for example, *Packing Fish-East Coast*; 31 out of the 63 paintings on display were sold, mainly to buyers in London and the South East and around £600 was raised.⁴³

In 1902, an exhibition was held of charcoal drawings by Hopwood. He had built his reputation on his watercolours, but here he showed his versatility. Many drawings were inspired by the landscape and fisherfolk of Staithes and particularly Runswick Bay. One example was *Content* (**fig. 59**), which was sold for 12 gns. to Mr. Miller of Streatham. This exhibition was not so successful, as only 15 of the 52 drawings were sold, mainly to patrons in London and the South East, and raised around £100.⁴⁴ The final exhibition in Dec. 1913, shortly before Hopwood's death, was entitled, *Exhibition of Pictures and Sketches in the Near and Far East*. 68 works were shown, mainly of scenes in North Africa and some of a visit to Malaysia, Singapore and Japan. Only 21 works were sold for £232.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 127.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 126.

⁴² *The Times*, 1.11.1897, 4.

⁴³ Exhibition Sales Books, November. 1897-August 1899, F. A. S., London. The sales ranged from 8 gns. for *On the Fish Quay, Dieppe*, sold to L. H. Moriarty of Harrow-on-the-Hill to £150 for *Embers* sold to W. F. D. Waterhouse of 50, West End Lane, London.

⁴⁴ Exhibitions Sales Books, F. A. S., Jan. 1902-Jan. 1905. The prices ranged from 3 gns. for *Cottage, Runswick* bought by Miss A. Percival of 18, Linden Gardens, Bayswater, London to 10 gns. for *Whitby Jet Workers* sold to Mrs. Dobson of Oakwood, Bath.

⁴⁵ Exhibition Sales Books, F. A. S., Dec. 1912-July 1917.

Other London Galleries

Hopwood also had an exhibition at Van Wisselingh's gallery in April 1907, which featured work inspired by North Africa as well as Staithes and Runswick Bay.⁴⁶ A. Stevens and his wife also had an exhibition at the Modern Galleries in July 1900. Most paintings were of France, Italy and Switzerland; and a further exhibition was held there in June 1901.⁴⁷ Dade had an exhibition at the Dowdeswell Gallery in 1888, and in 1911 Jackson displayed some of his work there. He occasionally exhibited in London, but preferred northern venues, particularly Manchester.⁴⁸ In 1911, Friedenson had an exhibition at the Goupil Gallery.⁴⁹ Later in 1913, J. Terry displayed his work at the Carfax Gallery.⁵⁰

Exhibition Venues Outside London

For artists in Staithes and Runswick Bay, the most important venues were Leeds and Manchester and to a lesser extent Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Nottingham, Liverpool and Birmingham. They also exhibited in Wales, Ireland and Scotland. C. Whaite and other Manchester artists established the R. C. A. in 1881. Booth, Bowen and Teasdale were members; Booth was originally from Manchester, so this could explain the link. All three played an active role in the Academy, sitting on the hanging and other committees.

Others, including Crawshaw, Friedenson, I. Jobling, L. and H. Knight, F. Mayor, P. M. Teasdale, Senior and Mackie exhibited at the R. S. A. In 1900, Mackie was elected Chairman of the S. S. A. In 1902, he became an associate of the R. S. A. and a member of the R. S. W. He was in Staithes and Runswick Bay between 1900 and 1902 and was a founding member of the S. A. C. He was a mentor to L. Knight and helped others by introducing them to the Scottish art world. Richardson exhibited from 1887 and was elected a member of the R. S. W. in 1893. He may have been another link between the artists and exhibitions in Edinburgh.

Artists exhibited at the G. I., founded in 1861. Glasgow was in the avant-garde with its early support of the Barbizon School, Bastien-Lepage and the Hague School. This had a profound effect on the work of the 'Glasgow Boys'. H. Mann, who was on the fringe of this group,

⁴⁶ For further information see *The Studio*, 1907, vol. XL, 234. Also letters from Hopwood to E. A. Taylor, Glasgow University, Special Collections, MS Gen, 1654/100-103. The letters are undated in the archive but using *The Studio* article it has been possible to verify the dates of the letters as 1907.

⁴⁷ London, Modern Galleries, *Works by Mr. and Mrs. Albert Stevens*, July 1900 and June 1901.

⁴⁸ London, Dowdeswell Galleries, *A Series of Drawings and Oil Paintings of the Herring Fishery, Whitby*, 1888; and *The Works of F.W. Jackson*, 1911.

⁴⁹ London, Goupil Gallery, *The Works of Arthur Friedenson*, 1911.

⁵⁰ London, Carfax Gallery, *The Works of J. A. Terry*, 1913.

painted in Staithes in 1886 and 1887. He displayed: 1886 394) *Breeze and Sunshine-Yorkshire Fishing Station* £7; 1887 71) *The Beck, Staithes, Yorkshire* £19 and 483) *Packing Fish-Yorkshire Coast* £63. The latter had previously been shown at the R. A. in 1886. Richardson exhibited at the G. I. from 1887 to 1894. Later Crawshaw, Jackson, the Knights, Mayor and Friedenson showed their work here. The Knights exhibited at the R. H. A. in Dublin, probably as a result of their close links with O. Sheppard. He was a member of the R. H. A. and was well established in Dublin art circles. The Knights mainly displayed paintings of Staithes and Holland.⁵¹

Many provincial art galleries opened during this period. Among the most important were the City of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery (1867), the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool (1877), Manchester City Art Gallery (1882), the Mappin Art Gallery, Sheffield (1887) and the Leeds City Art Gallery (1888). It was thought that these art galleries gave cities cultural respectability. They were seen as symbols of civic pride and there was competition between cities as to which had the biggest gallery, the largest collection and the most expensive paintings.

The Knights displayed their work at exhibitions outside London, including Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dublin, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Nottingham and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. In these cities, exhibitions were a major event, both in terms of art and in the social calendar. Some galleries also bought paintings from Staithes and Runswick Bay artists, for example, the Castle Museum and Art Gallery, Nottingham, acquired *The Last Coble* (**fig. 81**) by H. Knight in 1902 and Rochdale Art Gallery purchased *A Welcome Visitor* (**fig. 63**) from Jackson in 1893.

McConkey argues that with regard to the collecting policies:

In the newly opened galleries of the Midlands and the north of England there was a tendency to favour artists who were just becoming established, and that in practice this meant painters who were likely to have trained in France and who, after a struggle, were beginning to have success in the Grosvenor, the New Gallery or the Royal Academy... There are numerous cases of artists positioning themselves in order to match the template.⁵²

He also points out that these municipal art galleries had a strong impact on local and national art markets:

The purchasing committees of the new municipal galleries located in the midst, and created from the wealth, of the new industrial age were substantial market presences... The existence of local academies, art clubs, autumn

⁵¹ R. H. A. exhibitions: H. Knight: 1905: 131) *Portrait*; 1906 81) *Peeling Potatoes* (£30); 1908 65) *Coffee Time In Holland* (£40). L. Knight: 1904: 49) *On the Beach*; 1905 52) *The Old Mill* (£40); 134) *The Little Mother* (15 gns.); 1906: 50) *The Baby* (12 gns.); 176) *Washing Day* (15 gns.); 1908: 105) *Girl and Kitten* (15 gns.); 179) *A Cup of Coffee* (15 gns.).

⁵² McConkey, *Memory and Desire*, 65.

exhibitions and local industrialist collectors had a direct bearing upon the nature of the collections which emerged.⁵³

Many paintings acquired were thought to be of great educational benefit to the lower classes who viewed them. McConkey contends that pictures, which were bought by municipal galleries or worthy benefactors, had to be 'democratic', i.e. the public could relate to them and understand them:

The collectors who, motivated by civic pride, acquired works which they then donated to the local municipal collection sought out pictures with which everyone could identify. For this reason, newly formed public galleries were the ultimate goal for this "democratic" art.⁵⁴

Leeds and Manchester

Leeds

The artists' colonies in Staithes and Runswick Bay were recognised in Leeds which was an important exhibition venue. Many artists divided their time between the city and the fishing villages, particularly Runswick Bay. They played a prominent role in the city's art world; some were teachers, others were full-time painters meeting at the Leeds Fine Art Club and the Savage Club. The social network in Leeds was also extended to the artists' colonies and was a way of introducing new artists to the area. Foster taught art at the Leeds Grammar School and the Leeds School of Art until his death in 1906.⁵⁵ Other artists based in Leeds were Bowen, Friedenson, Senior and Teasdale.

The Y. U. A. and Leeds City Art Gallery were key exhibition venues. Many Yorkshire artists sold a fair proportion of their work in the county and Yorkshire was an important art economy. Yorkshire was an essential part of the national economy and could be compared with some countries in terms of population and wealth. It was an economic powerhouse and some of the wealth created was directed into art and art galleries, which brought cultural respectability for individuals and towns and cities. Many collectors were self-made men, such as S. Wilson, who used their wealth to acquire large art collections. He also sat on the Leeds City Art Gallery committee and helped them to build their collection.

⁵³ McConkey, *Memory and Desire*, 64.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 135.

⁵⁵ See E. Wilson, *Leeds Grammar School Admission Books: 1820-1900* (Leeds 1906).

From 1889 to 1910, a Spring Exhibition was held annually at the Leeds City Art Gallery. This was one of the major events of the Leeds art calendar, and gave local artists an opportunity to display their work. Others who painted in Staithes and Runswick Bay also exhibited there because of their connections with Leeds artists. Many works portrayed the fishing villages and their inhabitants and these scenes were familiar to local people who had visited Staithes and Runswick Bay. Analysis of the 1891 and 1892 exhibition catalogues gives information on which artists were working in the fishing villages, the subjects they painted and the prices they asked for their work.⁵⁶

The 1895 Spring Exhibition had 1015 paintings on display, but by 1899 the number of exhibits had fallen to 716. Several local artists who worked in Staithes and Runswick Bay displayed work. In the watercolour section were: P. M. Teasdale 4) *October*, 4 gns; W. G. Foster 85) *Morning Haze* and 194) *The Fairest Flower*, both priced at 15 gns. R. Jobling also exhibited *The Woodmen* priced at 15 gns. Langley displayed *In the Fishing Season* priced at 100 gns. Langley saw Leeds as a market for his work as fisherfolk subjects were popular and there were many buyers from the burgeoning middle-classes.

In the oil painting section other artists with national reputations showed their work: for example, La Thangue 380) *A Sussex Cider Press*, £500; B. Shaw 526) *Truth* 700 gns.; E. Forbes 613) *The Dream Princess*, £100; and S. Forbes 621) *October*, £250. This shows the significance of this exhibition venue, with many London and Newlyn artists displaying their work. The paintings had a wide range of subjects including the Nile, France, Greece and Venice. There were also portraits, as well as paintings of Cornwall and Yorkshire, including some of the fishing villages.⁵⁷ Some works were offered at high prices; for example, £250 for paintings by E. Rigg, Jackson and Foster. There are no details of sales. By 1905 the Newlyn artists ceased exhibiting in Leeds. Many paintings by the Staithes and Runswick artists were still exhibited; some of these were also shown at the S. A. C.⁵⁸ In 1905 Lavery showed *The*

⁵⁶ 1891: O. Bowen, *A Rainy Day* (10 gns.); E. Bagshaw, *A Glimpse of the River* (10 gns.); *Where the Green Sea Laps the Golden Shore* (20 gns.); W. G. Foster, *Prelude to Spring* (£15); L. Sutcliffe, *By River and Sea* (15 gns.). T. Williams also exhibited, *Return of the Herring Boats, Katwijk* (£35) and *The Fisherman's Family* (£150). 1892: out of the 894 exhibits there were several paintings by local artists: W. G. Foster, *A Land Where it Always Seemed Afternoon* (£60) and *Birds of a Feather* (£100); Friedenson, *Thistledown Gatherers* (30 gns.).

⁵⁷ For example 295) E. H. Rigg, *The Lost Child* (£250); 329) Jackson, *A Golden Evening* (£80); 359) O. Bowen, *Summer* (£50); 439) Hedley, *Threshing the Gleanings* (50 gns.); 448) H. Knight, *On the Scaurs* (£20); 475) Senior, *The Wild Rose* (£100); 577) Friedenson, *Early Morning, Staithes, Yorkshire* (80 gns.); 617) Jackson, *The Rescue of 'the Carulla', off Runswick* (£250); 640) Foster, *Whispering Evening* (£250).

⁵⁸ For example, 109) Jackson, *At Runswick* (£20); 143) R. Jobling, *A Dutch Maiden* (10 gns.); 474) E. R. Taylor, *Runswick* (£150); 484) F. S. Richardson, *In the Roar of the Sea* (45 gns.); 515) Jackson, *On the East Coast* (£50); 45) Friedenson, *Early Morning, Runswick* (£6 10s.).

Lady in Black, priced £500. From 1909 there were fewer works by artists in the fishing villages and fewer paintings with fisherfolk subjects.

The Yorkshire Union of Artists

Leeds was the most important centre for the Y. U.A. and exhibitions were held there in 1889, 1890, 1891, 1898, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1905 and 1908.⁵⁹ The number of exhibits varied from 200 to 600. Some artists in Staithes and Runswick Bay played a prominent role by serving as committee members. Exhibitions were also held in other cities and towns, such as Bradford, Hull and Whitby. From 1889 to 1914, W. E. Tindall, a Leeds artist, was the secretary and was responsible for organising the touring exhibitions.⁶⁰

At the 1898 exhibition, the Lord Mayor of Leeds remarked: ‘In these days of protection of home products it was only just that Yorkshire artists should have their patronage’. The Y. U. A. was significant in that local people organised exhibitions where Yorkshire artists could display their work, which often included works inspired by Yorkshire motifs. Many of the patrons who lived in the county bought the paintings.

In the 1908 catalogue, Hopwood, Friedenson and Teasdale are listed as Vice-Presidents and Hill, Mackie and his friend E. A. Hornel, Jackson, Senior and Crawshaw as committee members. With the exception of Hornel, most were linked with Runswick Bay and also involved in the S. A. C. Yorkshire arts groups, such as the Leeds Art Circle, the Leeds and Yorkshire Architectural Society, and the Arcadian Art Club had representatives on the Y. U. A. committee.

By 1908 the Y. U. A. was largely based in Leeds and Bradford.⁶¹ At the 1908 exhibition, which was held at the Leeds City Art Gallery, 182 artists displayed 579 paintings and some were acquired by local public art galleries. The Y. U. A. was an influential regional organisation, promoting paintings by Yorkshire artists, and was an important part of the Yorkshire art market.

⁵⁹ See D. Child, *The Yorkshire Union of Artists* (Leeds 1994).

⁶⁰ See the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 15.6.1914, 7.

⁶¹ Y. U. A., ex. cat., 1908.

Manchester

As with Leeds, the artists' colonies Staithes and Runswick Bay were recognised in Manchester which was also an important exhibition venue. This been overlooked by some art historians, for example, Lübbren does not refer to Manchester or Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and maintains that: '...the catchment area of Staithes was confined to Nottingham and Yorkshire'.⁶² Jackson retained strong links with the city throughout his life, exhibiting paintings and played a leading role in the local art world.⁶³ He had many contacts in the city and introduced others to the artists' colonies. Manchester, like Leeds, was a city whose wealth had come from industrialisation and many businessmen were interested in art. There was an artistic infrastructure with local art dealers including Capes, Dunn and Pilcher, and C. Jackson, the brother of F. W. Jackson. C. Jackson sold paintings from his gallery at 7, Police Street. Exhibitions were regularly held at the M. A. F. A. and the Manchester City Art Gallery.

Manchester Academy of Fine Arts

Booth, Hopwood and Jackson exhibited here. Jackson became a member at 21 and played an important role in the work of the Academy throughout his life. Although he lived at Ivy Cottage, Hinderwell, he regularly visited the city. *The Studio* observed that:

...a quarter of a century ago, Manchester held quite an important position in the art world...but one admires the staunchness of Fred W. Jackson who has remained true to his homeland against many odds. His influence on many of the younger Manchester artists is quite marked and considering the superiority of his vision and sentiment, it is distinctly for the good.⁶⁴

Hopwood, who spent his early life in Manchester, first exhibited in 1884, but sold few works. In 1893 the local newspapers commented on Jackson's paintings, *Venice* (1894 untraced) and *Ploughing the Headland* (1894 Private Collection). The following year, he showed 6 paintings, including one produced in Runswick Bay, *The Welcome Visitor* (**fig. 63**). Booth also exhibited two paintings, *Head of a Fisherman* (1895 untraced) and *After the Night's Fishing* (1895 untraced).⁶⁵

Most local artists did not paint their home city, as collectors would not buy paintings which showed aspects of modern life. Hopwood and Jackson's work attracted national attention from

⁶² Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*, 2.

⁶³ Rochdale Art Gallery, *F. W. Jackson*, ex. cat., 1978. I would like to thank Roy Jackson, F. W. Jackson's great-nephew, for his help.

⁶⁴ *The Studio*, vol. XLIII, 1910, 230.

⁶⁵ *Middleton Albion*, 3. 3. 1894, 4.

The Studio. An article about the 1907 exhibition was generally disparaging, but praised Hopwood's work particularly, *Morning* (1907 untraced) which shows the critical acclaim he was receiving.⁶⁶ *Industry* (fig. 58) is also mentioned.⁶⁷ Jackson was also commended for his work.⁶⁸

Manchester City Art Gallery

Exhibitions were also held there, an example being the exhibition of watercolours held in spring 1908. 52 paintings by Jackson were displayed, as well as work by his former colleagues from the Manchester School: C. Whaite, A. Hague and T. Mostyn. All the paintings were either from Jackson or from patrons who loaned them. Among these was Miss Holden, who inherited paintings from Sam Barlow. There were also works loaned by Jackson's friend H. C. D. Chorlton, and by W. Butterworth who, at that time, was Chair of the Art Gallery Committee. In a review in the local newspaper, several works by Jackson are described.⁶⁹ His brother, Charles, helped him by selling work to local collectors, providing artist's supplies and framing his pictures.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Newcastle-upon-Tyne was also an important exhibition venue for the artists who worked in Staithes and Runswick Bay, particularly in the early part of the period under study. Art historians, such as Lübbren, have ignored this. The links with the city were established through the artists who came to work in the fishing villages, some of whom also worked in Cullercoats. According to Newton:

...one of the main differences between the colonies at Cullercoats and Newlyn was that the latter produced work aimed at the London art market, whereas Cullercoats artists primarily fed a regional demand.⁷⁰

She also argues that:

⁶⁶ *The Studio*, vol. XL, 1907, 234: 'It was a feeling of sadness, one experienced, after viewing the recent exhibition of the Manchester Academy of Fine Arts...The work of H. S. Hopwood, A. R. W. S., claimed at once the attention...while *A Street in Staithes, Yorkshire*, by the same artist, impressed one by its charming composition, colour and dignified strength'.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 236: 'Lovers of the work of an artist, and those wishing to see more of Mr. Hopwood's pictures than those here illustrated, will have an opportunity to do so at Mr. Van Wisselingh's Gallery in London, where an exhibition of his ...sketches and colour harmonies of his own homeland will be opened on the 19th. [April], and a visit to the Tate Gallery will repay them where his *Industry* has found a permanent resting place'.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 'Mr. Fred. W. Jackson is another artist whose work one can linger over with growing appreciation. His *Ferry* is a water-colour of much charm and masterly handling, the same power and individuality being shown in his larger canvases in oil, *The Brook in Springtime* and *Pastures*'.

⁶⁹ *Manchester City News*, 7. 3.1908, 6: 'His moods vary with the changing aspects of nature, and his technique varies with his subject, *The Wreck of the Carrulla*...a fine subject, dramatically conceived and powerfully executed and...*In the Spring Time* expresses the joy of life at its fullest tide'. Two paintings are described, both produced in Runswick Bay.

⁷⁰ Newton, *Cullercoats*, ex. cat., 40.

Their determination to resist the metropolitan-centred art market fostered a self-sufficiency which manifested itself in the establishment of numerous art clubs, exhibition opportunities and educational facilities.⁷¹

I take issue with this. The artists in Staithes and Runswick Bay who came from Leeds, Manchester and Nottingham were also involved in the artistic infrastructure in these cities. Talented, aspiring artists sought to exhibit their work in London and they saw this as essential to further their careers.

Some artists from Staithes and Runswick Bay showed their work at the Bewick Club exhibitions, which started in January 1884 in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Newton states that: ‘The primary objectives of the Bewick Club [were] to further art and artists in the north east’.⁷²

Leading artists such as Clausen and Langley also exhibited after 1885. Newton argues that:

These works not only helped to disseminate the newer French painting techniques being adopted by young British artists, but would have reinforced the acceptability of naturalistic images of working-class life, encouraging local artists to abandon any remaining vestiges of sentimentality in their work.⁷³

Their close proximity to the rapidly expanding industrial city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne gave the Cullercoats artists and others opportunities for exhibiting their work. Jackson, Blandford Fletcher, Friedenson, Foster and Hopwood exhibited at the Bewick Club in the early 1890s. Newton states: ‘...other Bewick members including J. Watson, W. H. Charlton, T. M. M. Hemy, J. H. Campbell and H. C. Charlewood...’⁷⁴ also worked in Staithes. It is possible that they found Staithes a more attractive painting venue as Cullercoats became rapidly modernised from around 1893.

Of the artists who exhibited at the Bewick Club, Blandford Fletcher was only in the Staithes and Runswick Bay area for a short time. By 1890 Jackson had exhibited at the Paris Salon, the R. A., Manchester and other regional locations. Newcastle-upon-Tyne was seen as another outlet for enhancing his reputation and selling his work. Friedenson had exhibited his work at Leeds and also the R. A. He was at the beginning of his career and saw Newcastle-upon-Tyne as another opportunity to sell his work.

By 1894 Foster was the elder statesman of the Leeds art world and his work enjoyed a good critical reception. In 1896 a Newcastle-upon-Tyne newspaper described one painting: ‘A canvas, which stands out as one of the finest landscapes in the exhibition is, “The Silver Strand” by Gilbert Foster, R. B. A.’.⁷⁵ By 1895 Hopwood had established a reputation as a

⁷¹ Newton thesis, ‘The Cullercoats Artists’ Colony’, 238.

⁷² Newton, *Cullercoats*, ex. cat., 55.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁷⁵ *Newcastle Daily Journal*, 23.12.1896

watercolour painter and Newcastle-upon-Tyne was another regional exhibition venue. Later the Knights displayed their work at the Laing Art Gallery. Much of the art produced in the city was for a local market. The city was accruing great wealth and some of this was invested in paintings. For most artists the R. A. and not a provincial outlet was the place to aim for.

Nottingham

The annual exhibitions of the N. S. A. displayed work by T. Barrett, L. and H. Knight and J. Bowman. The first was held in 1879 at the Castle Museum and Art Gallery. Barrett exhibited there until 1890 and Bowman only exhibited in 1903 and 1904. The subjects of the paintings and the dates when they were displayed are useful in determining when the Knights were at Staithes. L. Knight did not show her work until 1900 and this may have been due to her lack of confidence; much of her early work was destroyed. She continued to show her work until 1907. H. Knight exhibited from 1890 to 1907. There is little information on collectors or dealers of the Knights' work in Nottingham. Painters exhibited there because of family and artistic connections, but it was not seen as an important outlet compared with London.

Whitby, Staithes and Runswick Bay

Whitby

Newton contends that there was a '...high number of local artists [and there was a] reliance on a local market'.⁷⁶ As argued earlier, few artists could be described as 'local'. If they had relied on the local market most would have received little income. The most important outlets were London, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Nottingham. However, some outlets for selling their work were available, mainly in Whitby which was the hub of the local art economy. It had an artistic infrastructure with resident artists, shops selling artists' supplies, patrons, exhibition venues and art dealers. From 1894 to 1897, the annual exhibition of the Y. U. A. was held there. The 1895 exhibition catalogue states:

Artists born or residing in Yorkshire or of Yorkshire extraction are eligible for membership, but all work sent for exhibition is subject to the Hanging Committee.⁷⁷

The 1896 exhibition was held at the West Cliff Salon and the organisers hoped to attract wealthy visitors in Whitby for 'the season'. There was limited space and 543 paintings were

⁷⁶ Newton thesis, 'The Cullercoats Artists' Colony', 228.

⁷⁷ The Y. U. A., ex. cat., 1895.

sent in, but only 333 were displayed. The hanging committee included Jackson and Hopwood. Jackson had 4 paintings on display and Hopwood 2 paintings. H. Walker, speaking at the opening of the exhibition, commented:

...seeing that it was a Yorkshire exhibition...it was the fact that if a Yorkshireman lived to be as old as Methuselah he was always getting better.⁷⁸

At the 1897 exhibition, 270 of the 500 paintings sent in were hung. There was concern that certain artists were not displaying work:

We miss the names - once familiar at this exhibition - of artists such as H. S. Hopwood, C.W. Flower, J. J. Wilson, H. R. Oddy, E. Renard, A. Friedenson, F. Dean, F. W. Booty, Harwood and R. Jacques. We don't know why these clever artists have dropped out of the running, but perhaps the Secretary would explain.⁷⁹

Friedenson and Hopwood may have thought that other venues were better places to sell their work, particularly in London. E. Anderson, the father of the artist E. E. Anderson, was a leading local art dealer based at the Rembrandt Gallery. An article states:

Whitby is fortunate in the possession of an art-dealer, who, by always keeping examples of the best class of work, creates, in his depot, a kind of Mecca for those engaged in the elevating study of line and form and colour...⁸⁰

Whitby is described as:

...the most paintable place in the British Isles, it naturally follows that such a picture-spot should be adequately represented - and so it is, there being about thirty or forty views of Whitby and district on view on the walls.⁸¹

The article also gives details of who exhibited there, such as Mason:

...another artist whose pictures are prominent at this gallery is Frank Mason. He is a faithful and vigorous portrayer of marine incidents and effects, and there are two or three very good examples of his style.⁸²

Others showing work included: 'A. Dudley, F. W. Booty, A. Powell, H. Stannard, I. Drummond, J. Olsson, R. Knight, G. S. Wright, F. Dade,⁸³ [brother of Ernest]; W. L. Wylie, A.R.A. and J. Atkinson', a member of S. A. C.⁸⁴ Both Olsson and Wylie had painted in or around Whitby; Wylie had also painted in Staithes.

In August 1906 there were four art exhibitions in Whitby. These were at the Rembrandt Gallery, the Studio, the Annual Exhibition of Oil Paintings and Watercolour Drawings and the S. A. C. exhibition. Artists working in the fishing villages displayed paintings at these.⁸⁵ In a review of the Rembrandt Gallery exhibition Mason and F. Dade were praised:

⁷⁸ W. G., 17. 7. 1896, 5.

⁷⁹ W. G., 23. 7. 1897, 5.

⁸⁰ W. G., 4. 8. 1905, 5.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ F. Dade died at the age of 35. In recent years there has been an increased interest in his work.

⁸⁴ W. G. 4. 8. 1905, 5.

⁸⁵ W. G., 17.8.1906, 1.

No. 5 entitled, "Dutch Fishing Boats" by Frank Mason, R. B. A. stands out with much forcefulness by reason of its vigour and rich brown colouring... "Staithes Cobles" by Frank Mason, R. B. A. is a charming little study, the cobles, as it is not always the case with many artists, being well drawn... over the mantelpiece we find a large watercolour by Frank Mason entitled "A Dash for the Port". Fred Dade shows much strength as an oil colourist in "Whitby Evening".⁸⁶

Another review in August 1909 describes the role of E. Anderson in organising the exhibition:

With a discrimination and enterprise worthy of the proprietor of the West Cliff Fine Art Depot, Mr. E. Anderson has got together, for the purpose of the edification of the public and his own pecuniary gain, a fine collection of the works of contemporary artists, as well as some grand pictures by deceased painters who have left their mark upon time's broad and ample canvas.

Again Mason's work was praised:

Frank Mason looms large with several strong and vigorously painted shipping pieces - work which is arrestive, substantial and enduring.⁸⁷

A painting by Jackson, *Cottages at Runswick*, was described as a: '...characteristic little piece of rare quality and charm'.⁸⁸

Many exhibitions were held, but there were not enough wealthy local patrons to support the artists. In an end of year survey on painting in Whitby, the lack of patrons is highlighted:

Were it not that Whitby is situated far distant from good commercial centres, where art patrons abound, there is little doubt that the number of local artists would be greatly increased. It is one thing to paint a picture, and another to find a market for it.⁸⁹

Some artists also organised their own exhibitions, and in 1904, the following advertisement appeared:

A Small Exhibition of Sketches and Drawings in Holland by Mr. H. S. Hopwood and Mr. and Mrs. Harold Knight is now on view and will remain open until 22nd. September at "The Studio", adjoining Mr. Hopwood's house at Hinderwell, near the station.⁹⁰

This was the only attempt by individual artists to organise a sale of their own work. This initiative was aimed at attracting wealthy visitors from Whitby to Hinderwell, which was approximately 25 minutes by train. No information is available on the paintings exhibited, their prices and sales details. Hopwood had visited Holland many times and invited the Knights to accompany him in 1904. These visits had a great influence on their work. H. Knight was beginning to achieve success, but L. Knight was at the start of her career. Hopwood may have invited the Knights to participate in the exhibition to help them in their respective careers.

⁸⁶ W. G., 14. 9. 1906, 4.

⁸⁷ W. G., 27. 8. 1909, 7.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ W. G., 30. 12. 1904, 8.

⁹⁰ W. G., 26. 8. 1904, 1.

The Staithes Art Club

In Chapter 2 the organisation of the S.A.C. was examined. The following discussion is concerned with what was exhibited. The S.A.C. existed from 1901 to 1907. The first 3 exhibitions were held in Staithes and from 1904 they were transferred to Whitby, where there were more patrons and larger premises. The initiative for this seems to have come from Bagshawe, who lived in Whitby.⁹¹ In that year the S. A. C. exhibitions were incorporated into the Y. U. A. exhibition, which after Whitby travelled to Hull. The records of the S. A. C. exhibitions, which were kept by the Bagshawe family along with press cuttings, have revealed much new information.⁹² All paintings are untraced unless indicated.

The first exhibition was held in August 1901, but no catalogue survives. The second was held at the Fishermen's Institute on 1. 8. 1902, with 41 paintings on display. The hanging committee included Bagshawe, Barrett, Friedenson, Hopwood, R. Jobling and H. Knight. The prices ranged from 2 gns. for *Mezzoprint* by Barrett, to £60 for *Moonlight on the Bay* by Mackie, which was inspired by Runswick Bay. Also included was *La Fête Dieu, Concarneau* by Jackson, confirming that he had worked in this French artists' colony. An exhibition review stated:

Like Whitby, the paintable parts of Staithes and Runswick are absolutely illimitable, and winter or summer, it is all the same, artists may grow grey in the effort to characterise the people and places along this part of the north east coast of England...many of the cleverest of nature's artists have found inspiration hereabouts...There can be but one opinion among the fraternity of the brush as to the value of an exhibition of this kind, for compassion and criticism are the very soul of improvement, and are valuable guides to a complete success.⁹³

It closed on 19. 9.1902 and 30 out of the 41 paintings were sold. Sir Charles and Lady Palmer and E. Beckett, M. P. patrons of the S. A. C., visited the exhibition.⁹⁴ These were people with influential links in London who could help artists with selling their work. There is little information on how many paintings were sold at subsequent exhibitions. Of those exhibited, few can be traced and most are in private collections.

The 1903 exhibition was also held in the Fishermen's Institute, with 44 paintings ranging in price from 2 gns. for *Pastel* by F. Mayor to £40 for *The Carpenter's Shop* by Hopwood. Jackson's *Off to the Rescue* inspired by the Runswick Bay lifeboat, was sold on the opening day for £25.⁹⁵ It also comments on the lack of large paintings from Mackie, Richardson,

⁹¹ W.G., 19. 8. 1904, 7.

⁹² Little work has been undertaken on the S. A. C. See Phillips, 15-16, Haworth briefly mentions it in his ex. cat.

⁹³ W. G., 8. 8. 1902, 7.

⁹⁴ W. G., 19. 9.1902, 4.

⁹⁵ W. G., 14. 8. 1903, 4.

Hopwood and H. Knight; this was due to the lack of gallery space. The proceeds of the entrance fees went to the Fishermen's Institute.

The lack of space led to the fourth annual exhibition being held in Whitby in August 1904. 88 pictures were shown at the newly-opened gallery, which was owned by the father of E. E. Anderson.⁹⁶ The prices varied from £1.5s. for *Robin Hood's Bay* by J. Wright to £200 for *The Wreck of 'the Curulla' at Runswick Bay* by Jackson. *Toilers of the Deep* by H. Knight was priced at £150. There were no paintings by Barrett, Hopwood or Senior. Much of the credit for the enlarged exhibition went to Bagshawe, who - through his own contacts - could rely on an extensive network of patrons. A review states:

It seems mainly owing to Mr. J. R. Bagshawe's enterprise that the exhibition has, this year, enlarged its borders, by adding to the size and importance of the works shown; and we congratulate that energetic and able artist on the measure of success he has attained for the club's efforts.⁹⁷

After the exhibition closed, all the paintings were transported to the Y. U. A. exhibition at Hull. This also included paintings which were not displayed at Whitby by A. G. Stevens, S. Lawson Booth, G. S. French, F. W. Booty, W. Scott Hodgson and T. C. Alder.⁹⁸

The 1905 exhibition was held in Whitby and Jackson replaced Bagshawe as secretary. The introduction to the exhibition catalogue states:

The Staithes Art Club was originally formed in 1901 by a number of painters working in the district, with the idea of holding an annual exhibition of sketches. Lately, it has been the desire of the members to give the exhibitions a more serious character, and, while still including sketches, to endeavour to show works which, whether slight or elaborate, represent their honest interpretation of nature. Many of the members have already attained some position in their profession...⁹⁹

71 paintings were displayed compared with 88 in the previous year. Prices ranged from £5 for *Runswick Village* by Hill to 40 gns. for *In the Springtime* (c.1905 Bradford Art Galleries and Museums) by Jackson. This compares with the *The Wreck of 'the Curulla' at Runswick Bay* by Jackson at £200 and *Toilers of the Deep* by H. Knight at £150 in the previous year. A review states:

The Club is composed of a number of artists who have in a measure, settled in this district; but, unlike many similar art institutions, there appears to be no particular leader, or style, such as was to be found in the Newlyn or even the Glasgow School. The exhibition, in consequence, possesses a most varied and agreeable interest. Take, for instance, the works of Mr. Hopwood, Mr. Mackie and Mr. Jackson, and, one might say, the majority of the members. Their aims are similar, but their methods are very dissimilar. They each try to give the broad truths of nature, ignoring almost entirely anything, which would distract from the first impression.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ S. A. C. ex. cat., August 1904, Bagshawe Family Archives.

⁹⁷ W. G., 19. 8. 1904, 4.

⁹⁸ W. G., 28. 10. 1904, 8.

⁹⁹ S. A. C., ex. cat., August 1905, Bagshawe Family Archives.

¹⁰⁰ W.G., 18.8. 1905, 7.

The sixth exhibition was held in August 1906 in Waterloo Place, Whitby, and approximately 70 pictures were displayed. The catalogues for the 1906 and 1907 exhibitions are not available. The former mainly displayed small pictures with several works by new members, such as Garrido and Terry. The final exhibition was held in August 1907, with new members Elmhirst and Atkinson displaying their work. Other exhibits included *A Souvenir of Venice* by Garrido and *Venice* by Jackson, but there were no paintings by the Knights.¹⁰¹ This was because they had spent several months painting in Holland and many of their works were exhibited at the Leicester Galleries in London.

Why was this the last exhibition? By 1907, the number of artists coming to the fishing villages was declining. Foster had died in 1906, and Mayor and Mackie had left, while other artists were exhibiting in London and other major cities. The exhibitions were limited in terms of the number and the size of paintings displayed. There was also an absence of patrons and it was not thought worthwhile continuing the exhibitions. By 1907, paintings of fisherfolk were not so popular and some artists switched to other subjects such as rural scenes. Although Senior appears in the minutes of the S. A. C., there is no evidence of him exhibiting.¹⁰² Another notable omission is E. Dade who, after spending time in Staithes, moved to Scarborough.

The S. A. C. enjoyed patronage from wealthy local people. Sir C. Palmer, M. P., who lived in Grinkle Hall, several miles from Staithes, gave strong support both as President and Vice-President. In 1905, Lord Grimthorpe, formerly Ernest Beckett, M.P. for Whitby from 1885 to 1905, became President. Between 1901 and 1907, Vice-Presidents included Sir C. Palmer, N. Buxton, M. P., G. H. Pyman, W. O. Turnbull, J. Bruce, H. Hoyland, J. G. Lyon and T. Turnbull. The Turnbells owned the successful Whitby shipbuilding firm, Thomas Turnbull and Sons. In 1901, Bagshawe married Turnbull's daughter and this meant he was now associating with some of the wealthiest people in the area. J. G. Lyon was a wealthy businessman living in Pontefract, but other Vice-Presidents, such as Pyman who owned a building business, lived in Whitby. J. Bruce was the resident manager at Sir C. Palmer's business in Port Mulgrave, near Hinderwell.

Although it was short-lived, from 1901 to 1907, the S. A. C. exhibitions give an indication of the range of artists painting in the area, the subjects they painted and the prices demanded. Members, such as the Knights, Bagshawe, Hopwood and Jackson, were part of the inner-core

¹⁰¹ W.G., 16.8. 1907, 5.

¹⁰² S. A. C. Minutes, Bagshawe Family Archive.

of artists who settled in the area.

Overseas Exhibition Venues

Besides exhibiting within Britain, some artists exhibited overseas. Jackson exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1884 and 1885, as did other artists, such as Terry and Garrido. Jackson exhibited work at the Venice Biennale in 1897, showing 25) *Arando la collina* and 26) *Dopo la pesca della notte*. Other artists who worked in Staithes and Runswick Bay also displayed work at the Venice Biennale, including Hill (1899); H. Knight (1910); L. Knight (1910, 1914); Mackie (1901, 1909, 1910); Mayor (1909) and Senior (1907, 1909, 1910).¹⁰³ Mackie also exhibited in Amsterdam in 1912, where he won a gold medal.¹⁰⁴

For most artists London was the most important venue, particularly the R. A., artists' societies and private art galleries, such as the Leicester Galleries. The paintings produced were mainly for national, not local, consumption. Leeds and Manchester recognised the artists' colonies. Both cities were important venues for artists who kept their close links with these cities which enabled them to move in the same circles as patrons. Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Nottingham were also important exhibition venues. The artists also exhibited through S. A. C and in Whitby, but this only met with limited success. Collectors wanted to buy the pre-modern images produced in the fishing villages and the artists were able to supply such works. It was not sufficient just to produce paintings: they had to be able to market their work, and some of the advantages of working in artists' colonies were the support and encouragement from other artists, and also the help in establishing contacts with dealers and patrons. Having examined artists' exhibiting practices, we now look at collectors who bought their work.

¹⁰³ See Bowness and Philpot, eds., *Britain at the Venice Biennale, 1895-1995* (London 1995).

¹⁰⁴ Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, ex. cat., 33.

Part B The Collectors: J.G. Lyon, Sam Wilson and Samuel Barlow.

Case studies are presented of the following collectors: J. G. Lyon, Sam Wilson and Samuel Barlow. Lyon and Wilson came from the Leeds area and Barlow from Manchester. Besides their interest in art, they were all successful entrepreneurs and active in public life. No work has previously been undertaken on Lyon as an art patron.

Hill describes how:

The prosperous cotton manufacturers of Lancashire and woollen men of the West Riding took a great deal of interest in furnishing their homes in those days. A man who was painting consistently well and could get in touch with these prosperous businessmen could always find a ready market for his pictures. There was a great deal of camaraderie among the painters and while they would quarrel and argue and have differences their dirty linen was never washed in public. They were extremely kind in doing one another a good turn and one man often put another in touch with a good stroke of business.¹⁰⁵

There has been interest in Wilson because of his links with Brangwyn and A. Gilbert. Barlow was one of the early buyers of Impressionist paintings in England. He is discussed briefly by Macleod and also in a book on art and architecture in Manchester.¹⁰⁶ No work has previously been undertaken on his links with artists working in Staithes and Runswick Bay. This link was discovered through research on Brymner, who lived in Runswick Bay in 1884. Barlow was an important collector of Jackson's work, and there is also a brief discussion on other collectors of his work.

Art collecting was an expression of wealth in the status-driven society in Britain between 1880 and 1914. The American economist T. Veblen devised the term 'conspicuous consumption' to describe the activities of those who acquired luxury goods to show off their status and wealth.¹⁰⁷ Examples of 'conspicuous consumption' were acquiring lavish houses, estates and luxurious yachts. Some artists also became wealthy and were able to flaunt their money by building luxurious houses; a case in point is Lord Leighton's house in Kensington. Other artists built expensive houses in Melbury Road nearby. Middle-class collectors tended to follow the advice of dealers in buying paintings by contemporary artists rather than the 'old masters'. This created many opportunities for British, French and Dutch artists. Collectors such as Lyon, Wilson and Barlow not only relied on the advice of art dealers, but also developed their own views on the paintings they wanted. They had to be easy to understand and to tell a story which was uplifting and conveyed a message to the viewer. These collectors were 'down to earth'; they wanted paintings which were value for money, were the work of skilled craftsmen who produced first class products. They would bargain for the best price.

¹⁰⁵ Hill, 'A Seaside Colony of Painters', *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 30.8.1939.

¹⁰⁶ Macleod, *Art and the Victorian Middle Class*; J. H. G. Archer, ed., *Art and Architecture in Manchester*.

¹⁰⁷ Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York 1899).

McConkey discusses P. G. Hamerton, the editor of the *Portfolio*, and his approach to collecting. He:

...recommended collectors to avoid miscellaneous purchases. Everything in a collection should cohere; there should be some "great lending purpose" which will give unity to the whole. The collector should be sensitive to differences of scale and subject matter within a single room. In a domestic setting, pictures should be "intellectually in harmony with the uses of the room".¹⁰⁸

Besides buying images of fisherfolk and their communities, collectors also bought works by other artists of different subjects. Lyon not only acquired works by Hopwood, but from other artists. Wilson's art collection comprised paintings by artists on different subjects. Barlow collected paintings of flowers, the works of the Manchester School and French Impressionist paintings. The work by artists in Staithes and Runswick Bay only made up a part of their collections and the discussion is concentrated on these paintings.

John George Lyon (1841-1915)

Lyon was a collector of Hopwood, and between 1897 and 1912 purchased 20 paintings from exhibitions at the F. A. S. and the R. W. S. He lived in Carleton Close, Pontefract, but was closely associated with Leeds. Lyon was a wealthy industrialist who made his money by founding the Aire Tar Company with his partner, M. Stainsby. The company was primarily concerned with refining crude oil, but developed into a transport business using barges. Lyon was a local benefactor, donating money to build Knottingley Town Hall in 1901. In 1905, in recognition of his services to the community, he was made a Freeman of the Borough of Pontefract.¹⁰⁹

Further recognition of his generosity to the local community came on 30.1.1913 when Pontefract Town Council gave a banquet in his honour. He was presented with a portrait painted by H. Knight, which still hangs in Pontefract Town Hall.¹¹⁰ He died in 1915 and left £244,000. At a meeting of the Pontefract Town Council on 1.9.1915, the Mayor described Lyon as:

One of the most generous patrons of the arts in the district...he has helped many a struggling artist against whom circumstances had told heavily and by his kindness has stimulated his genius afresh. Though not an artist himself he was a connoisseur of art, and of him it may be said that his works do follow him.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ McConkey, *Memory and Desire*, 44.

¹⁰⁹ I am indebted to B. Hudson, Assistant Keeper of Social History, Pontefract Museum and H. Pickard for this information.

¹¹⁰ *Pontefract and Castleford Advertiser*, 1. 2. 1913, 6.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 4. 9. 1915, 7.

He was closely linked with the Leeds City Art Gallery and presented to the gallery *The Letter* by H. Knight in 1909 through the Leeds Art Collection Fund. Lyon was a patron of H. and L. Knight and she describes in her autobiography how he helped them.¹¹²

He bought 3 watercolours at an exhibition of Hopwood's work in 1897 at the F. A. S., London.¹¹³ He also acquired 3 charcoal drawings at another exhibition at the same venue in 1902.¹¹⁴ Lyon bought 7 other works by Hopwood at a F. A. S. exhibition in December 1913.¹¹⁵ He also purchased Hopwood's paintings from R. W. S. exhibitions.¹¹⁶ At the 1909 Summer exhibition, Lyon acquired 2 paintings, and 2 further works at the Winter Exhibition in 1912. In the Sales Book, by the entry for *The Buttermarket, Montreuil*, is a note saying, 'Send to Frank Rutter'.¹¹⁷ He had recently been appointed Director of the Leeds City Art Gallery and Lyon donated this painting to the gallery.

At the 1914 summer and winter exhibitions Lyon bought other paintings.¹¹⁸ He was interested in French and British coastal and rural genre pictures. His patronage supported artists such as Hopwood and the Knights, and he built an art collection mainly of contemporary artists. Lyon was typical of patrons who made their money through industrialisation, and sought pre-modern images to adorn their houses. Like other patrons, he was active in helping the local community. Some of his collection is in the Leeds City Art Gallery, but little is known about when his collection was dispersed and where the contents are now. No information is available about whether he collected other artefacts. He is now largely forgotten.

¹¹² Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, 139.

¹¹³ Exhibition Sales Books, F. A. S., November 1897-August 1899 1) *Household Goods*; 4) *Drawing the Cider, Normandy*; and 29) *Mending the Stool* each priced at 20 gns.

¹¹⁴ Exhibition Sales Books, F. A. S., January 1902-January 1905. At the 1902 exhibition he purchased 28) *Small Repairs* (£6); 32) *The Fishermans Club* (£5); and 34) *The End of the Day* (10 gns.).

¹¹⁵ Exhibition Sales Books, F. A. S., December 1912-July 1917. The paintings purchased by Lyon were as follows: 16) *Colonnade, Biskra* (12 gns.); 21) *A Letter Writer, Biskra* (10 gns.); 33) *A Farm Pond* (8 gns.); 46) *A Picardy Farm* (10 gns.); 50) *On the Edge of the Sahara* (8 gns.); 57) *A Moorish Gateway* (10 gns); 63) and *Afternoon Sunlight, Biskra* (10 gns.).

¹¹⁶ Exhibition Sales Books, R. W. S., 1898-1899, Bankside Gallery, London. At the summer, 1898 exhibition he bought: 113) *The Free Sitings in a Highland Kirk* for £70, at the following summer exhibition he bought a further two paintings, 111) *Fifeshire Fishermen* and 202) *A Sunny Morning-Scotch Fishing Village* [no prices available].

¹¹⁷ Exhibition Sales Books, R. W. S., 1909-1912, Bankside Gallery, London. Summer 1909 62) *Fruit Stall, Biskra* (£15) and 94) *Chelsea Embankment* (£30). Winter 1912 (59) *The Buttermarket, Montreuil* (£15) and 235) *Evening in the Grande Place, Montreuil* (£15).

¹¹⁸ Exhibition Sales Books, R. W. S., 1912-14, Bankside Gallery, London, Summer Exhibition: 224) Payne, *Sketch for A Portrait* (£20). Winter Exhibition: 46) W. T. Wood, *The Lights at Leicester Square-Before the War* (16 gns.) and H. E. Crockett, *The Green Sunbonnet* (12 gns.).

Sam Wilson 1851-1918

Sam Wilson was a Yorkshireman who, in buying images of Staithes and Runswick Bay, was buying images of his native county (**fig. 98**). As McConkey contends, Wilson was an example of the phenomenon whereby:

Many self-made industrialists who were motivated by philanthropy had already formed their own collections before serving in a civic capacity on art gallery committees.¹¹⁹

Wilson was head of Joshua Wilson and Sons Ltd., founded by his father in 1873. The firm manufactured worsted at Bean Ing Mills, Wellington Street, Leeds; it employed 1000 people and had 350 looms. When he died in 1918, Wilson left £191,462.¹²⁰

He was active in public life as a City Councillor, Justice of the Peace and as a member of the Board of Income Tax Commissioners. Wilson was also an active member of the City Council's Art Gallery Committee. He lived at Rutland Lodge, Potternewton, Leeds, and besides paintings, also collected furniture, sculpture and porcelain. Senior was a close friend and acted as an adviser on his purchases of works of art. Senior's granddaughter, Mary Oddie, states that he supervised interior decoration at Wilson's house and also bought furniture and carpets on his behalf.¹²¹ Senior worked in Runswick Bay from Easter to October every year and his family accompanied him (**fig. 99**).

Besides buying works of art, Wilson was also the subject of paintings and sculpture. In the Leeds City Art Gallery there are portraits of him by Senior and Brangwyn, and a bust by E. Caldwell Spruce, a Leeds painter and sculptor. Wilson particularly favoured landscapes and seascapes and he not only bought paintings from local artists such as Senior, but also from nationally known figures such as Brangwyn. Wilson bought four large panels by him, which were shown at the 1905 Venice Biennale, where they were awarded a gold medal. A fellow member of the Leeds Art Gallery Committee, R. H. Kitson, visited this exhibition, saw the panels and contacted Wilson, who agreed to buy them for the Art Gallery.¹²²

The theme of the panels was industry; two measured 165.1 by 541 cms. and the other two, 165.1 by 204 cms. Each one featured workers involved in a particular industry: Potters, Blacksmiths, Excavators and Steelworkers. Wilson commissioned another panel from Brangwyn, *The Spinners*, representing the Woollen Industry which, along with the others, is

¹¹⁹ McConkey, *Memory and Desire*, 65.

¹²⁰ Principal Probate Registry, London: Will of Sam Wilson.

¹²¹ Interview with Mrs. Oddie, 13. 2. 2001.

¹²² 'Brangwyn and the Venice Murals in the Sam Wilson Collection', *Leeds Art Calendar*, no. 59, 1966, 4-7.

on display at Leeds City Art Gallery. In an article in *The Studio*, A. S. Covey was enthusiastic about the Brangwyn panels and the Leeds City Art Gallery in general.¹²³

Wilson was also a patron of the sculptor A. Gilbert. Gilbert had been commissioned by the royal family to produce a memorial for the Duke of Clarence, but he got into financial difficulties, was declared bankrupt and fled the country. Senior met Gilbert in 1907, when he was in Bruges attending a summer school. At this time Gilbert was depressed and short of money. Senior was painting by a canal when Gilbert passed by; he became interested in the painting, and a friendship developed which lasted for many years.¹²⁴

Senior introduced Gilbert to Wilson in Bruges, after Wilson's visit to Rome. At this time, a chimney-piece was being constructed for Wilson's dining room at Potternewton, Leeds, and he asked Gilbert if he would undertake to ornament it, giving him his own choice of subject matter. Senior undertook the detailed negotiations, but there was a change of plan when Gilbert left Bruges to live in Brussels. This upheaval caused him to abandon his plans to ornament the chimney, and instead Wilson asked for a whole chimney-piece, which was not finished until 1912.¹²⁵ That the work was completed shows how close Gilbert was to Wilson and his wife. Gilbert was grateful to Wilson and Senior for this commission, which provided support at a very difficult time. The history of the creation of this chimney-piece shows the patronage of Wilson and the close involvement of Senior as his adviser and supervisor of this project (**fig. 100**).

The Sam Wilson Collection

Wilson's art collection was bequeathed to the city of Leeds. It can now be seen in the Sam Wilson Rooms in Leeds City Art Gallery. The collection shows the taste of an art patron who lived in Leeds throughout his life. He mainly collected modern British paintings and he was particularly interested in landscapes; most works show pre-modern images. Although both Clausen and Senior were friends of Wilson and advised him on the formation of his art collection, Senior was more closely involved in this. In Wilson's will, both painters were

¹²³ A. S. Covey, 'The Brangwyn Room at the City Art Gallery, Leeds', *The Studio*, vol. XL, 1907, 185: 'The City of Leeds has set an example in the matter of establishing an art museum which might well be emulated by provincial cities in general. Their committee seem to be far-seeing in their selection of pictures, and if they proceed in the manner they have been following, one might, if he passed to look into a future generation, see a time when Leeds might, on account of its art treasures alone attract thousands of visitors, just as the little cities of Haarlem, Padua and Mantua and many other Continental places do today'.

¹²⁴ I. Macallister, *Alfred Gilbert* (London 1929); R. Dormant, *Alfred Gilbert* (New Haven and London 1986).

¹²⁵ A. Bury, *The Shadow of Eros* (London 1952), 100, Bury states that the chimney-piece was not finished until this date.

requested to oversee the decoration of the Sam Wilson Rooms in which the collection was to be housed.¹²⁶ Paintings by both artists are included in the collection.

There are 16 paintings by Clausen in the collection. Wilson bought *The Farmyard* (c.1908 Leeds City Art Gallery) for £100 in January 1908 and on 21.6 of the same year acquired *Beatrice* (c.1908 Leeds City Art Gallery) for £30. Wilson acquired *Twilight Interior* (c.1908 Leeds City Art Gallery) for £100 on 12. 4. 1909 and *The Village at Night* (c. 1912 Leeds City Art Gallery) for £100 on 6. 3. 1913. Clausen's influence can be seen in Senior's work. Wilson was also a patron of Brangwyn and, besides acquiring the panels from the Venice Biennale; he bought *Old Kew Bridge* (c.1905 Leeds City Art Gallery) on 19.11. 1905 for £200, and *Study for a Fan* (1910 Private Collection) on 30.12.1910 from the F. A. S. for 45 gns.¹²⁷

Besides his paintings, Wilson also left his collection of drawings, sculpture, furniture and porcelain to Leeds. The French Ambassador opened the collection on 12. 10. 1925, and in the Souvenir Catalogue Wilson's gift is discussed.¹²⁸ The Curator S. C. Kaines-Smith wrote:

Taken as a whole, the collection bears upon it the stamp of a strong controlling individuality, and of a wide sensitive taste, and constitutes one of the greatest educative factors in art, which have been brought within the reach of the public within recent years.¹²⁹

There are 211 works of art, mainly oil paintings, but also included are pastels and watercolours, mostly by nineteenth-and early twentieth-century artists. These include works by Brangwyn, M. Fisher, J. Buxton Knight, G. Sauter, W. Orpen and B. Priestman. There are also paintings by or attributed to Rembrandt, Boudin and Allan Ramsay.

Of the artists who painted in Staithes and Runswick Bay, the largest number of paintings in the collection is by Senior. He was an influential member of the Leeds art world and had married into a family involved in the woollen industry. He was at ease in the company of industrialists and artists and - according to his granddaughter - he was very sociable and a good card player, regularly seen at clubs in Leeds.¹³⁰ Senior and Wilson had mutual interests in art and in the woollen industry. Senior came from a similar background, and moved in the same social circles as collectors, which helped him to sell his paintings and those of others working in the fishing villages. Hill describes how:

¹²⁶ Principal Probate Registry, London: Will of S. Wilson.

¹²⁷ S. Wilson's account book, Leeds City Art Gallery.

¹²⁸ Souvenir Catalogue of the Official Opening of the Sam Wilson Collection, 12.10.1925: 'This collection together with the sum of one thousand pounds for the adornment of its surroundings, was bequeathed in 1918 to the City of Leeds by Sam Wilson, Esq., J. P., a lover of this city, of art and of his fellow men'.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Interview with Mrs. Oddie, 13. 2. 2001.

Mark Senior was one of the men for whom everybody had a great deal of affection and he often helped his fellow painters in a practical way. He had a very generous nature and would often go out of his way to help a man.¹³¹

Of the 18 oil paintings and pastels by Senior in the collection, 3 are portraits of the Wilson family, respectively of S. Wilson, his wife and his father, Joshua. Senior painted *The Flemish Washhouse* (c.1907 Private Collection) during his visits to Bruges in 1907 and 1908. In an article in *The Studio*, the painting was well received.¹³² Most paintings are of Runswick Bay and its inhabitants, including Peggy Calvert, who is also featured in another painting by Senior (**fig. 60**).¹³³ Wilson purchased many paintings directly from Senior.¹³⁴

Although Hopwood is known as a watercolour painter, the only work by him in the collection is an oil painting, *Spring* (c.1900 Leeds City Art Gallery). J. Charles, a friend of Jackson, is represented by one painting, *At Montreuil*, (c.1900 Leeds City Art Gallery) which was acquired from the Leicester Galleries, London, in February 1907 for 40 gns.¹³⁵ In the main, Wilson bought his paintings from exhibitions in Leeds and other northern cities, but also in London galleries.

In an article on the Wilson collection, A. Torcy particularly mentions Sauter, Brangwyn, Clausen, J. B. Knight and Senior. He is rather disparaging about cultural life in Leeds, saying that, despite its size and wealth: '...it would be difficult to pretend that as an artistic centre it has attained any marked prominence'.¹³⁶ He argues that, despite the efforts of F. Rutter, who had been appointed Director of the Leeds City Art Gallery in 1912, there were few exhibitions and private collections were not of a high standard, with the exception of Wilson's.¹³⁷ Wilson played a leading role in Leeds, which was an important art centre with many artists, patrons, exhibition venues, art schools, art dealers and artists' clubs.

¹³¹ Hill, 'A Seaside Colony of Painters'.

¹³² A. Torcy, 'Modern Art in Leeds: The Collection of Mr. Sam Wilson', *The Studio*, vol. LXIX, No. 285, December 1916, 115-116: 'Another painter of Yorkshire who deserves to be better known is Mr. Mark Senior. The Wilson Collection has several of his works which are to be admired, notably *A Flemish Washhouse*. This canvas, broadly treated and rich in impasto, affiliates Mr. Senior to the best colourists of the Flemish School'.

¹³³ *Wild Roses*, (1907 Leeds City Art Gallery) was bought by Wilson from Senior on 13.12.1907 for £80, the model used in the painting is Lizzie Tose, daughter of the coxswain of the Runswick Bay lifeboat. Another painting acquired was *Peggy, Study of an Old Woman* (c. 1905 Leeds City Art Gallery). Peggy is Peggy Calvert, grandmother of Mary Calvert, who was a maid to the Senior family. Hopwood also used Peggy Calvert as a model. *A Bit of Old Runswick* (1902 Leeds City Art Gallery) was bought in 1902 for 7 gns. direct from Senior, two other works - *Spring* (c.1903 Leeds City Art Gallery) and the *The Farm Yard* (c.1903 Leeds City Art Gallery) were also acquired by Wilson.

¹³⁴ Leeds City Art Gallery, S. Wilson File. For example, *The Grindstone*, (1900 Leeds City Art Gallery) painted in Runswick, was sold in 1900 for £31 and in 1902 *The Lighted Window, Runswick* (1902 Leeds City Art Gallery) for 7 gns.

¹³⁵ S. Wilson's account book, Leeds City Art Gallery.

¹³⁶ Torcy, 109.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 'Among these, nevertheless, there is one in which we find some of the greatest names in contemporary English art represented - I refer to the collection of Mr. Sam Wilson'.

Samuel Barlow 1825-1892

Barlow was an important influence in the cultural world of Manchester and an early patron of Jackson (**figs. 101,102**). Like him, he lived for some years in Middleton near Manchester. J. W. Booth, the artist, and E. Wood, the arts and crafts architect, also came from there. Barlow was born in 1825 at Woodhouses, near Manchester and had little formal education. Woodhouses was the inspiration for the folklore writer Ben Brierley's 'Daisy Nook'. Brierley wrote in the local dialect and his Ab'-o'th'-Yate' sketches were particularly successful when published.¹³⁸ Jackson illustrated some of Brierley's books and, like Barlow, he fondly remembered the traditional way of life before industrialisation. Jackson also recorded the passing of the handloom weavers in Lancashire, who were soon to be replaced by machines (**fig. 89**).

Barlow was a polymath: he was an industrialist whose wealth came from his bleach works, which he had turned into a profitable enterprise; he had an interest in horticulture, winning prizes for his fruit and flowers. He was a councillor on Lancashire County Council and on Middleton Council where he also became mayor. Barlow was interested in photography; he was a member of the Manchester Arts Club, Manchester Literary Society and was also a writer on art. He also had a strong interest in Lancashire dialect and folklore.

Barlow was one of the first collectors of French Impressionist paintings in England.¹³⁹ He owned four Pissarro paintings, and, in 1882, tried unsuccessfully to sell *Village Street* at Christie's. He also bought five works by Fantin-Latour from a Manchester art dealer, W. E. Hamer, who also collected Jackson's paintings. *Fruit and Flowers* (c.1875 Private Collection) by Fantin-Latour was bought for £80 on 1. 6. 1877, and on 22. 3. 1878 *White Roses* (c.1877 Private Collection) and *Spring Flowers* (c.1877 Private Collection) were purchased for £100. Barlow bought two more Fantin-Latour paintings on 26. 8. 1881 for £65.

In late 1884, Brymner was staying with Jackson at his home at Middleton. In a letter to his father, he wrote that he had been: '...to see a great many pictures at Manchester and at Mr. Barlow's house'.¹⁴⁰ Brymner also provides information in a letter, written to his father from Paris before his stay in Runswick Bay, which gives details about Jackson's social network in Manchester and his support from Barlow. Jackson knew: '...a great many rich cotton spinners

¹³⁸ Brierley, *Ab'-o'th'-Yate Sketches*, ed., J. Dronfield (Oldham 1896).

¹³⁹ See C. Gould, 'An Early Buyer of French Impressionists in England', *Burlington Magazine*, vol. CVIII, 1966, 141-2.

¹⁴⁰ Letter from W. Brymner to D. Brymner, 10.12.1884. McCord Museum, McGill University, Montreal, Canada.

and such like hereabout who are going in for pictures...Mr. Barlow, a rich dye works man, has given Jackson about £200 a year for the last five years for all his work'.¹⁴¹ Barlow supported Jackson from 1879 to 1884 and in return Jackson gave him all the works he produced.

Jackson worked with other artists of the Manchester School in North Wales, around Conway and Bettws-y-Coed between 1880 and 1881.¹⁴² Following this he studied in Paris at the École des Beaux-Arts, under Lefebvre and Boulanger. He stayed in Paris for many years, but spent time in Yorkshire; he also travelled to Italy and Morocco. Following Barlow's death in 1892, local art dealers Capes, Dunn and Pilcher auctioned a part of his art collection in Manchester. The sales catalogue showed the large number of Jackson's paintings that Barlow owned.¹⁴³ Most of these were produced in the early part of his career before Jackson lived near to Runswick Bay. Barlow also owned many Manchester School paintings.

The early records for Capes, Dunn and Pilcher and Co. were destroyed in the Second World War, but information on the sale is still available from other sources.¹⁴⁴ 210 items were offered for sale and the total proceeds were £700. Some people from Middleton bought these paintings for low prices. During the auction, *Landscape* by Pissarro [sic] was sold for £7. Manchester School artists were also in evidence, including 27 oils and 10 watercolours by A. Hague, 7 watercolours by J. Knight, 4 oils and 2 watercolours by R. G. Somerset, and works by J. Partington and J. H. Davies. Ironically, Barlow made his money from his bleaching business, which had a devastating effect on the local countryside. In his home he surrounded himself with beautiful objects, including paintings paid for from the proceeds of this business. He was a typical northern art patron: as well as being a successful businessman, he was active in public life and also had a wide range of interests, particularly in the arts.

¹⁴¹ Letter from W. Brymner to D. Brymner, 8. 3. 1884.

¹⁴² In the 1881 Census Jackson is recorded as staying at the Blue Bell Inn, 17, Castle Street, Conway. Another Manchester artist, W. Meredith, was also staying there. I am grateful to R. Jackson, a relative of F. Jackson, for providing this information.

¹⁴³ Watercolours: 41) *The Cornfield* (32s.); 42) *Landscapes with Old Cottage* (32s.); 44) *Old Farm Buildings* (29s.); 46) *Ruined Cottages* (30s.); 50) *Head of an Old Man* (30s.); 52) *On the Conway* (£2); 54) *In the Cornfield* (32s.); 57) *The Faggot Gatherer* (54s.); Oil Paintings: *River with Fishing Boat* (42s.); 80) *Landscape-Wild Nature* (£3); 84) *Cottage Interior* (52s.); 93) *Coast Scene with Artists Sketching* (£1); 114) *Shimmers* (£11); 123) *Sketch* (50s.); 124) *Coast with Fishing Boat* (55s.); 125) *On the Conway Estuary with Fishing Cobble* [sic] (£4 10s.); 131) *Landscape with Cattle Drinking* (£11); 133) *Interior of a Kitchen* (£3); 143) *Road Scene with Cattle* (£5 10s.); 148) *Cornfield Figure-Binding Sheaves* (5 gns.); 149) *Landscape with Sheep* (£3); 151) *Landscape-Sketch* (£3), 157); *Woody Landscape With Figure* (38s.); 158) *Coast Scene-Sketch* (36s.); 163) *Harvest Field-Sketch* (£1). All the above are untraced.

¹⁴⁴ I am grateful to Capes, Dunn, Pilcher and Co., Manchester for supplying this information.

Other Patrons of F. W. Jackson

Jackson's patrons were mainly from Manchester and the surrounding area. Like Lyon, Wilson and Barlow, they were successful businessmen, active in public life and interested in art. The Jackson Memorial Exhibition catalogue, held at Manchester City Art Gallery in 1918, confirms that 35 patrons provided 272 paintings.¹⁴⁵

The Beatson Blair brothers, George, James and Alexander, ran a successful cotton import and export and shipping company. They lived at Whalley Bridge, near Manchester, and were art collectors and benefactors to the Manchester art galleries. At his death in 1917, James Beatson Blair left 200 paintings to Manchester City Art Gallery, including 2 paintings by Jackson, *St. Ives* c. (1905 untraced) and *Florence* (c.1895 untraced). George Beatson Blair died in 1941 and left 30,000 items including jade, ceramics and paintings. In the Memorial Exhibition catalogue, 8 works by Jackson are listed as belonging to him.¹⁴⁶

W. Butterworth (**fig. 103**) was a close friend and patron of Jackson and supported other artists who painted in Staithes and Runswick Bay.¹⁴⁷ Besides a booklet written by his son L. Angus-Butterworth, no research has been undertaken on him.¹⁴⁸ Butterworth was a successful businessman who also played an active part in public life, particularly in the arts. He played a significant role in the Manchester art world. In 1904 he was elected to the City Council, and in his most influential role, chaired the Art Gallery Committee from 1906 to 1912. For many years he was also Chair of the Trustees of the Whitworth Art Gallery and played a key role in developing the gallery's watercolour collection.

His art collection included works by Jackson: *The Old Stocking Mender*; *Old Woman Knitting*; *An Old Lancashire Woman* and a pencil drawing, *Handloom Weavers*. Other friends of Jackson are represented; including C. Oppenheimer's *A Grey Morning*, *Runswick* and Crawshaw's *Boys Bathing*.¹⁴⁹ He also owned *The Man with the Scythe* by J. Kerr-Lawson, who painted in Runswick Bay with Jackson and William Brymner in 1884.

J. H. Hoyle was another of Jackson's patrons. He owned the Perseverance Works in Heywood, Lancashire, producing files. He was active in public life as a local councillor and Justice of

¹⁴⁵ Manchester City Art Gallery, *F. W. Jackson Memorial Exhibition*, ex. cat., 1918.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., *In the Shade*; *Venice*; *Early Spring*; *The Stream*; *Milking Time*; *Ploughing the Headland*; *St. Ives* and *Kirkcudbright*. All untraced.

¹⁴⁷ Butterworth accompanied Jackson on his last journey to Russia c.1913.

¹⁴⁸ See L. Angus-Butterworth, *Walter Butterworth: A Patron of Art*, Belfield Papers, no. 2, 1975.

¹⁴⁹ L. Angus-Butterworth donated his father's paintings to a range of art galleries. For example, *Sailing Vessels in Venice* was given to York Art Gallery, *An Old Lancashire Woman* to the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool and the *Handloom Weavers* drawing to Rochdale Art Gallery.

the Peace. Hoyle lent many paintings by Jackson to the 1918 Memorial Exhibition.¹⁵⁰ F. Hindley Smith was another important collector of Jackson's paintings. He was a wealthy cotton manufacturer whose business was based at Lever Bridge Mills in Bolton. He was a friend of Jackson, lending works by the artist to the exhibition.¹⁵¹ Jackson also painted his portrait, which is now in the Bolton Art Gallery. Councillor F. Todd was a member of the Manchester Art Gallery Committee and a Justice of the Peace. He loaned 4 paintings to the exhibition: *The Breezy Moor*; *Autumn Glow*; *Winter Glow*; and *Sardine Fishing Boats, Concarneau*.

In this chapter, Part A has examined the artists' exhibiting practices. London offered the most important venues: the R. A., artists' societies and private galleries. Artists also exhibited work outside London. Leeds and Manchester were two important venues. Many artists came from these cities and had close links with patrons, for example, Senior and Wilson in Leeds. Work was also exhibited in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Nottingham and other cities throughout Britain. Artists exhibited work in Staithes and Runswick Bay, but with little success. The S. A. C. and Whitby as venues are also examined. In Part B, collectors are discussed. They were all entrepreneurs from Northern England: their wealth came from industrialisation, and it was used to buy works of art. They were active in the local art world and in public life. J. G. Lyon was a Vice-President of the S. A. C., and Wilson and Barlow were part of a social network that brought artists and patrons together. In cities such as Leeds and Manchester there was an artistic infrastructure which facilitated sales of works of art which sustained a number of artists. Artists such as Senior and Jackson worked mainly in Runswick Bay, but kept close links with their home cities, Leeds and Manchester respectively.

¹⁵⁰ Manchester Art Gallery, Jackson Memorial Exhibition, ex. cat.: *Mid-day*; *Morning Mist*, *Runswick Bay*; *The Twisted Tree*; *Off Lisbon*; *Mist on the Beach*, *Runswick*; *Cock of the Walk*; *Gathering Faggots*; *A Nosegay of Wild Flowers*; *Still Life*; *Outside Moscow*; *Snow in the Kremlin*; *Snow on the Roofs, Moscow*; *A Peep Through the Door*; *An Anxious Time*; *Windmill and Cottage*; *Sheep in the Farmyard*; *Runswick Bank*; *The Weir, Ludlow*; *A Grey Sea*; *The Towing Path*; *A Grey Day on the Cliffs*; *A Study for a Frieze*; *Counting the Catch*; *St. Ives*; *A Sunny Corner*; *A Blue Day*; *A Break in the Cloud*; *The Sunny Beach*; *Mills by the Canal*; *Yellow Tower*. All the above are untraced.

¹⁵¹ Jackson Memorial Exhibition, ex. cat.: *Roses*; *Primroses*; *Bathers*; *The Green Tub*; *The Way to the Farm*; *The Sheepfold*; *Cottages*; *The Moonlit Bay*; *The Quay at Concarneau*; *A Country Lane*; *Boats in St. Ives Harbour*; *Early Morning, St. Ives*; *Gulls, St. Ives*; *In Tunis*; *The White Sails*; *St. Ives*; *Yellow Marshes*; *Evening Light, Concarneau*; *Sun on the Bay*; *A Russian Church* and *The Blue Sail*. All the above are untraced.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined the artists who worked at Staithes and Runswick Bay between 1880 and 1914. It has also looked at the circumstances in which the paintings were produced and the factors which contributed to the growth and sustainability of the artists' colonies. It has also examined the patronage, iconography and motifs of the artworks. The examination of these points supports my hypothesis that there were two artists' colonies, although they were closely linked. They are of greater significance in terms of the artists who worked there and the paintings produced than has previously been thought. They also shared common characteristics with artists' colonies in Britain and overseas.

The current view, when studying artists in this area, is that there was a Staithes Group of a certain number of painters who mainly worked in the village of Staithes.¹ This work challenges these assumptions. Thinking on this subject has been restricted by this term, and there now needs to be a broader perspective. New evidence from primary sources, particularly about Runswick Bay between 1880 and 1892, has demonstrated that the artists' colonies were more significant than was previously thought. This study provides a framework for understanding the practices and production of artists who worked in them.

It is demonstrated that the artists' colonies lasted longer, until around 1907, because the villages and their inhabitants were slow to change. This made Staithes and Runswick Bay more attractive to artists compared with Newlyn, which had embraced modernity from the 1880s. Throughout, a comparison is made between the artists' colonies in Staithes and Runswick Bay, and Newlyn and Cullercoats. They were largely marginalised until the 1970s when there was renewed interest in the art of this period. One problem in undertaking this study has been that there is a paucity of material on the artists' colonies and those who worked in them, as they were seen to be unimportant and so many records were destroyed.

This study raises many questions: Should these artists' colonies be studied? Should regional art such as art in Yorkshire be examined? Should minor artists be discussed? The answer to all these questions is yes because, without these studies, there is a gap in our knowledge. Only by piecing together information from local studies such as this can we gain a true understanding of art and life in Britain between 1880 and 1914.

¹ See Phillips, *The Staithes Group*, ex. cat. and Haworth, *Paintings by Members of the Staithes Group* ex. cat. Also Lübbren, *Rural Artists' Colonies*.

In Chapter 1, the social and economic context of the villages, particularly the fishing industry and how it shaped the culture was examined. The other major industry, ironstone mining, was not depicted in paintings, as images of miners were not acceptable to collectors. When artists visited at the beginning of the period, they saw a thriving fishing industry, but it gradually declined due to competition from steam-powered trawlers. The artists' colonies existed as the industry slowly declined and from around 1900 many local people left and boats were sold or laid up and fewer artists visited. The difficulties faced by fisherfolk are not depicted in the paintings. The opening of the railway contributed to overcoming the isolation of the villages and improved access for artists.

Women played an important role in the fishing industry, undertaking tasks such as collecting bait, baiting lines and packing fish and, without them, the men would have found it difficult to go to sea. Runswick Bay was smaller and less important as a fishing centre. By providing money for accommodation and food, the artists gave assistance to the communities as the fishing industry declined. Local people realised the economic importance of artists and made them welcome. The social structure of the fishing villages was also examined, the rich culture of the area with its dialect, different forms of dress, and the traditions, customs and superstitions, contributed to the quaintness of the villages and people, and made them attractive to artists.

There were different phases of development in each artists' colony, with Runswick Bay being more important in the period 1880-1892. Staithes was more popular between 1893 and 1907, and Runswick Bay once more took the lead, as Staithes declined, between 1908 and 1914. Using new evidence from previously unknown sources, this work has shown for the first time that Runswick Bay initially attracted more artists than Staithes between 1880 and 1892. This was due to the serious problems in Staithes, resulting from the lack of an adequate sewage system and a supply of pure drinking water. New evidence shows that these problems, coupled with the smell of fish and certain processes, for example, preparation of cod liver oil, must have made Staithes rather unattractive especially in the summer months.² By the mid-1890s, with the decline of the fishing industry, the introduction of pure drinking water and improvements to the sewage system, conditions improved and it became a more attractive place to work.

² See Erichsen, *A North Country Fishing Town*, 463 and *The Times*, 22.9.1885, 4.

By 1914 many had left fishing and were now employed in local ironstone mines or in the Skinningrove works. Tourism brought a means of support to local people, but it was not something artists welcomed. No tourists were featured in paintings until around 1900 in Runswick Bay, although many visited the area. The artists saw visitors as having a detrimental effect on the fisherfolk and their communities and their increasing numbers resulted in more expensive accommodation for the artists.

Chapter 2 examined the characteristics of the artists' colonies and the factors which contributed to their development. The railway improved access for artists and many guide books appeared to cater for the increased number of visitors. There was an infrastructure in place, for the visitors and artists were following a 'beaten track'; they did not discover the fishing villages. Compared with Newlyn and Cullercoats, there was little publicity. The proximity of Whitby, which was only 30 minutes away by train, was an important factor in the development of the artists' colonies. It was an important cultural centre in the summer months and attracted writers such as Du Maurier, Russell Lowell and James, who all visited Staithes and Runswick Bay.

There was a symbiotic relationship between the artists and the fisherfolk: they needed their money and the artists needed the co-operation of fisherfolk as models. The painters were closer to the community than in Newlyn. There was closer integration between the two groups and this was due to the fact that artists stayed with local people. They helped in such tasks as hauling boats ashore and assistance was also given to the Fishermen's Institute. Women artists also found the fishing villages an attractive environment to work in.

The relationships between the artists were also examined. Artists' colonies were social entities comprising a number of sub-groups, and younger artists received help from those who were more experienced. Both artists' colonies were melting pots of influence and experience where the talents of artists, such as the Knights, were nurtured. One attraction may have been the opportunity to learn from experienced teachers such as Barrett, Foster, Jackson and Mackie. The artists' colonies brought together people who had trained at different academies, who were at different stages of their artistic careers and who had come into contact with the latest innovations and influences. This study also reveals where artists stayed and their leisure activities, which show the relationship between the artists and how well they integrated into the local communities. The role of the S. A. C. and French and Dutch influences were also discussed. This work shows the behaviour of one group of the urban bourgeoisie, who showed

their contempt for modernity by depicting on canvas pre-modern images of fisherfolk.

If the work of the artists is analysed, it shows that some artists, such as the Knights, mainly worked in Staithes, and others, such as Jackson and Foster, in Runswick Bay. As an island nation, the sea, fishing and fisherfolk are deeply ingrained in our national consciousness. This work on the artists' colonies of Staithes and Runswick Bay makes a contribution to our understanding of how fisherfolk and their communities were portrayed and is a contribution to the iconography of fisherfolk.

What did the artists' colonies in Staithes and Runswick Bay contribute to British art in this period? It is clear that they were far more significant than was previously thought in terms of the number of artists who were painting in the villages, the number of paintings produced and the length of existence of the colonies. Newlyn, Staithes and Runswick Bay were places where artists put their French training, at places such as the Académie Julian, into practice. They could be seen as the vanguard of French influence, mainly of *plein air*, realist painting. Many artists had studied at French art academies and had been influenced by French methods, and artists such as Bastien-Lepage and Millet. When they returned to Britain they felt isolated due to the antagonism towards French influence. The fishing villages offered a warm, supportive haven away from harsh criticism. They followed Bastien-Lepage's advice of working outdoors and painting the lives of ordinary people in their own villages. The artists' colonies provided an escape from the pressures of urban living and from the stifling atmosphere of the contemporary art world. The artists were escaping from the effects of industrialisation and urbanisation and patrons wanted the pre-modern images they supplied.

Why did the artists' colonies decline? Fisherfolk paintings were not so popular by around 1907 and artists were less interested in painting *en plein air*. It is possible that the artists, in making the villages more attractive through their paintings, may have led to an influx of visitors, which spoiled the villages as places to paint. The railway opened the communities to the outside world and, gradually, this resulted in them losing some of their special character as their customs, traditions and superstitions began slowly to disappear. By around 1907 there were more miners and ironworkers living in the villages and some people, particularly from Leeds, began to buy properties in Runswick Bay.

In Chapter 3 the images of the villages and their people were examined. Many factors were examined as to why paintings of them were so popular during this period. They were seen as

heroes, especially as the crew of lifeboats. Industrialists saw fisherfolk as model workers and, at times of labour unrest, could contrast their untrustworthy workers with the determined, reliable fisherfolk. In contrast, agricultural workers and miners were increasingly seen as a threat to social order by the urban middle class. Fisherfolk were images of how British people liked to see themselves. The paintings record the passing of a traditional way of life in a rapidly industrialising society. Besides the fishermen undertaking a range of tasks, the important work undertaken by women is also featured.

The paintings are placed in categories in an attempt to show aspects of the topography of each village, how fisherfolk were portrayed, and paintings of hazardous scenes. Interior scenes showing the influence of Dutch painting are examined, also how fishing activities are represented. Fisherfolk were seen as models of virtue and were represented in the paintings as independent, honest and determined.

Some paintings depict hazardous scenes. Many fishermen were drowned due to the treacherous conditions and some artists found it difficult to work against this backdrop of tragedy. Many scenes in the villages were not painted, particularly any aspect of modernity such as one of the most dramatic sights, the railway viaduct over Roxby beck. Steam-powered vessels were generally ignored, as were miners and tourists. Some aspects of the fishing industry were also not painted. Equally, there were no paintings of fisherfolk and artists together, and few of artists at work or at social gatherings.

The final chapter is concerned with where painters exhibited and the collectors who bought their work. Very little research has been undertaken on patronage in northern England and the artists who worked in Staithes and Runswick Bay. For these artists the R. A. was one of the most important exhibition venues and selling a painting there for artists, such as the Knights, was a turning point in their careers. Also of significance were artists' societies, such as the R. B. A., where artists could present their works to patrons in London. Using exhibition catalogues and sales records books from private galleries in London has demonstrated how important the F. A. S. and the Leicester Galleries were for artists such as Hopwood and the Knights.

The artists supplied a market where there was a strong demand for paintings of fisherfolk from middle-class collectors in London and in northern cities and many artists sold their work there. Relatively little work has been undertaken on Leeds and Manchester as art centres, but

this study has shown that between 1880 and 1914, both cities were important art centres with exhibitions, art dealers, a range of artists, public and private art galleries and wealthy collectors. The role of the Y. U. A., in bringing artists and patrons together, is also examined. Nottingham and Newcastle-upon-Tyne as exhibition venues are also discussed.

Individual art patrons are discussed: Barlow in Manchester, Lyon in Pontefract and Wilson in Leeds. These men showed similarities in that they were all entrepreneurs who used their wealth to acquire large art collections and they were also active in public life. Barlow was an important patron of Jackson, Lyon of Hopwood, and Wilson of Senior. In this study, it is the first time that Lyon's role as a collector has been discussed and also the roles of Barlow and Wilson as patrons of artists who worked in the fishing villages.

What contribution does this study make? This is the first detailed study of the artists' colonies at Staithes and Runswick Bay between 1880 and 1914. It contributes to the study of British art in this period, particularly the social history of art, by systematically examining the circumstances in which the artists produced their work. In particular, it examines the fishing industry and how the artists represented the different aspects of this. It also analyses how the villages and their inhabitants were represented in the paintings.

This work is a contribution to the general debate on artists' colonies, which were an international phenomenon. It is, in addition, a contribution to the iconography of fisherfolk and how one group of workers, fisherfolk, is represented in art. Little research has been undertaken on art or patronage in northern England during this period, particularly Leeds and Manchester as art centres, and this work makes a contribution to this area of study. It also gives an insight into two groups of the urban bourgeoisie, artists and collectors, between 1880 and 1914.

An interdisciplinary approach was adopted. A contribution has been made to English local history in presenting a history of Staithes and Runswick Bay between 1880 and 1914. Some work has been written on this subject, but does not look in detail at this specific period. This study likewise contributes to economic and social history by presenting, for the first time, a history of the fishing industry in the two villages in this period and other aspects of the economic and social structure. Contributions are also made to the cultural history of north Yorkshire, and to English maritime art in the portrayal of the fishing villages, fisherfolk and their boats. Much of the evidence presented is from previously unknown sources.

What are the limitations of this work? As the first detailed study, there have been difficulties in obtaining information, particularly on the artists' colonies and the painters who worked there. As argued throughout this work, from 1914 to around 1970 there was little interest in the artists and the artists' colonies discussed in this work, and this led to many records being destroyed. Piecing together what is available has been a difficult task. For example, Jackson and the Knights are some of the most important artists discussed in this work, but no letters and other documents of their time in Staithes and Runswick Bay survive. L. Knight's autobiographies do provide an eyewitness account of her life there, but were written decades later and inevitably suffer from omissions and inaccuracies. Markets and collectors were particularly difficult areas on which to obtain information.

It is hoped that this study will encourage further research. Some suggested areas are: fisherfolk in British art, how workers are represented in art, a comparison between the portrayal of fisherfolk and agricultural labourers, the individual artists who painted in the fishing villages, and those who worked there before 1880 and after 1914. Other suggested topics are: Leeds and Manchester as art centres, exhibition venues and individual patrons. The artists' colonies which existed in this isolated corner of Britain are more important than was previously thought. Numerous artists visited the villages and they were inspired to produce numerous paintings. Runswick Bay was an artists' colony in its own right and it has been overlooked, as almost all attention has been focused on Staithes.

The physical structure of the fishing villages has changed little since 1880. It was difficult to build new properties, and they are now conservation areas. Outside the fishing villages, especially Staithes, there have been new developments. Once they were bustling, successful fishing villages which were: '...the eldorado of the painters as they almost jostle one another in the streets'.³ This study highlights the artistic and cultural heritage of two small villages in north Yorkshire. From 1880 to 1914, artists produced many paintings of the villages and their inhabitants, which graced the walls of patrons' houses and public galleries both in this country and overseas. As over the past 200 years, artists still continue to paint there, inspired by the villages and their inhabitants (**fig. 104**).

³ Forman, *A Holiday Tour in and Around Whitby*, 35.

Appendix 1: The Fate of The Staithes' Yawls by 1906

	Tons	Length (ft.)	Crew	
William Ash, WY1	37	61	9	Transferred to Scarborough, 1906.
Good Design, WY15	42	57	8	Not used for fishing, 1892.
Felicity, WY35	49	56	9	Transferred to I.O.M.,1898
Princess Royal, WY40	46	59	8	Transferred to Scarborough.
Dependent, WY83	35	55	9	Not used for fishing, 1902.
Rose of England, WY86	37	50	9	Not used for fishing, 1903.
Confidence, WY87	37	56	9	Transferred to another port.
Good Intent, WY88	36	55	6	Transferred to Scarborough, 1897.
William Clowes, WY89	39	55	9	Transferred to Scarborough, 1889.
Prosperity, WY91	35	55	9	Not used for fishing, 1891.
Ann, WY93	35	55	9	"
Race Horse, WY94	35	55	9	"
Blue Jacket, WY10	34	55	9	"
Venus, WY103	34	53	8	Transferred to Scarborough, 1906.
Refuge, WY104	36	55	10	Transferred to Lowestoft,1897.

Source: Whitby Custom House, Register of Fishing Boats, 1869-1896, North Yorkshire County Records Office, Northallerton.

Appendix 2 Artists Working in Staithes and Runswick Bay 1880-1914.

The sources of information for the below are drawn from the Whitby Gazette, E. Bénézit, *Dictionnaire des Peintres, Sculpteurs, Dessinateurs et Graveurs*, Phillips ex. cat., V.A.M. artists files, Manchester Reference Library artists files, and Leeds Reference Library artists files.

Anderson, Edward Enoch 1875-1961

Born in Whitby. Studied at the Royal College of Art. Mainly painted in Whitby and the surrounding area. Member of R. B. A. 1904, joined S. A. C. in 1904. Left Whitby in 1906. Exhibited at R. B. A., S. A. C. and Y. U. A.

Atkinson, John 1863-1924

Born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Studied at the Newcastle School of Art with W. Hepple. Mainly painted in N. E. England, specialised in painting horses. Painted in Cullercoats. Belonged to S. A. C., Pen and Palette Club and the B. C. Joined S. A. C. in 1907. Work can be seen at the Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Exhibited at L., M. A. F. A., R. A., R. S. A., S. A. C and Y. U. A.

Aumonier, James 1832-1911

Member of the N. E. A. C., 1887. *Runswick Green, Yorkshire* exhibited at the Arts Association, Newcastle, in 1879. Exhibited *Autumn Landscape, Near Runswick* at R. B. A. in 1874 and *Kettleness Point* at 1885 R. I. exhibition. Exhibited at N. E. A. C, R. A., R. B. A.

Bagshawe, Joseph Richard 1870-1909

Born in London. Studied in London and Bruges. Painted on the north Yorkshire coast, Holland, France and Ireland. R. B. A., 1904. A founding member of S. A. C., he was secretary for several years. Work on display at the V.A.M., Accrington and Whitby. Lived in Whitby from 1901. Exhibited at R. A., R. B. A., S. A. C., and Y. U. A.

Ball, William Westley 1853-1917

Born in London. R. E. 1882, R. B. A. 1899. Exhibitions at the F. A. S. in 1899 and the Leicester Galleries in 1907. *Staithes* is on display at the V. A. M. Painted landscapes and coastal scenes, also worked in Europe, Egypt and Sudan. Exhibited at R. A., R. B. A. and R. E.

Bancroft, Elias 1864-1924

Teacher at the Manchester School of Art, taught W. H. Booth. President and Secretary of M. A. F. A., Painted in Conway and Llandudno 1874-1880, Morocco 1882, Clovelly 1888. His wife, L. M. Bancroft was also a painter. Exhibited at M. A. F. A.

Barrett, Thomas 1845-1924

Studied at the Nottingham School of Art and later taught there. Bowman and the Knights were his students and he first suggested that they visit Staithes. He was also an engraver. R. E. (Diploma work *Fishing Boats Setting Sail*, 1886). Also painted in Clovelly, Cornwall and Holland. A founding member of S. A. C., he also acted as treasurer. Work on display at Nottingham. Exhibited at N. S. A., R. A., R. B. A., R. E., and S. A. C.

Booth, James William 1867-1953

Born in Middleton and studied at Manchester School of Art. Mainly painted on the Yorkshire coast. Member of R. C. A. Joined the S. A. C. in 1902. Works can be seen in Manchester, Nottingham, Rochdale and Salford. Moved to Scalby, near Scarborough in 1901. Exhibited at M. A. F. A., R. A., R. C. A., S. A. C. and Y. U. A.

Bowen, Owen 1873-1967

Taught by W. G. Foster at Leeds Grammar School and Leeds School of Art. Painted on the Yorkshire coast, Northumberland, Scotland, Wales, Holland and Austria. Member of R. O. I. and R. C. A., President 1947-1954. Joined the S. A. C. in 1904. Work on display at Bradford, Huddersfield, Leeds, Rochdale, Salford and Whitby. Exhibited at M. A. F. A., R. A., R. C. A., R. O. I., R. S. A., S. A. C. and Y. U. A.

Bowman, John fl.1872-1915

Studied at the Nottingham School of Art. Painted in Nottingham, north Yorkshire coast and North Wales. Member of the N. S. A., also of S. A. C. Work on display at Birkenhead. Exhibited at N. S. A., R. A., R. O. I., and S. A. C.

Brymner, William 1855-1925

Studied at the Académie Julian, Paris. Jackson introduced Brymner to Runswick Bay in 1884. He produced several paintings of Runswick Bay, including *A Wreath of Flowers*. Paintings on display at the National Gallery of Canada.

Burgess, Arthur James Wetherall 1879-1957

Born in Australia, studied art in Sydney. Came to England in 1901, painted in St. Ives, where he was taught by J. Olsson and then moved to London. R. I., 1916 and R. O. I., 1913. Exhibited at S. A. C. in 1906, see *W.G.*, 3. 8. 1906, 4. Previously, was not listed as a member of S. A. C., but only members could exhibit work. Exhibited at R. A., R. I., R. O. I. P., Y. U. A.

Burgess, Ethel Kate fl. 1900-1907

Based in Chelsea. Studied at Lambeth School of Art. Some illustrations of Staithes fisherfolk, appear in *The Studio* vol. XX, 1900, 190-195. *Yorkshire Fisherfolk* [pencil] sold at auction Phillips, Leeds, 16.10. 1991. Exhibited at R. A.

Campbell, John Hodgson 1855-1927

Trained at Newcastle-upon-Tyne School of Art. In Australia 1895: Holland 1903 and 1907 with R. Jobling. Painted in Staithes and Runswick Bay. Exhibited at B.C. Work on display at Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Charlton, William Henry 1846-1918

Newcastle-upon-Tyne artist, painted landscapes and rural scenes. Studied at Académie Julian. Worked in North Shields, based in Gosforth. Friend of Hedley. Exhibited at B. C., R. A.

Conway, Harold Edward 1872-1949

Born in Wimbledon. Writer and painter, studied at the Slade and Académie Julian. A member of the S. A. C. Exhibited at Goupil Gallery, London, R. A, R. I., and R. O. I.

Crawshaw, Lionel Townsend 1864-1949

Born near Doncaster. Studied painting in Düsseldorf and at the Académie Colorossi, Paris. He painted on the Yorkshire coast and in other parts of Britain; also in France, Spain, Germany and North Africa. Member of R. S. W., he joined the S. A. C. in 1904. Work on display at Doncaster, Hull, Whitby, Sydney and Toronto. Exhibited at G. I., L., N. E. A. C., R. A., R. I., R. O. I., R. S. A., R. S. W., S. A. C. and Y. U. A.

Crosse, Edwin Reeves fl. 1888-1925

From Leeds studied at Herkomers. Address 1890 to 1895, Bushey. Painted at Runswick Bay. Exhibited R. A. 1888-1897.

Curruthers-Gould, Sir Alexander 1845-1932

Exhibited paintings of Staithes at R. B. A. 1905-1907.

Dade, Ernest 1864-1935

Originally Ernst Dade. Born in London but moved to Scarborough at an early age. Studied at the Académie Julian. Painted mainly on the Yorkshire coast. Joined the N. E. A. C. in 1887. A member of the S. A. C. Work on display at Imperial War Museum, National Maritime Museum, Scarborough and Whitby. After leaving the Académie Julian, he shared a studio with N. Dawson at Manresa Road c.1887-1888. Here he worked alongside Llewellyn, Brangwyn and Short. Exhibition at the Dowdeswell Art Gallery, London 1888. Returned to live in Scarborough in 1889. Exhibited at L., N. E. A. C., R. A., R. B. A., R. I., S. A. C. and Y. U. A.

Elmhirst, Charles Cutts 1872-1937

From Doncaster area, friend of Crawshaw. Joined S. A. C. 1907. Exhibited at Y. U. A.

Erichsen, Nelly fl. 1882-1917

Lived in Tooting, London. Spent a year in Staithes in 1886 and wrote an article on life there. 1885-1886, exhibited *Staithes* at the Society of Women Artists. Later illustrated many books. Exhibited at R. A.

Fedden, Romilly 1875-1939

At Herkomer's School and Académie Julian. In Staithes c.1899. Painted in Brittany. R. B. A., 1903. Exhibited in London at Baillie Gallery, F. A. S., Goupil Gallery, and Walker's Gallery.

Fletcher, William Teulon Blandford 1858-1936

Born in London. Studied at the South Kensington School of Art 1874-1878. Also studied at the Académie Royale, Antwerp 1879-1883. Friend of S. Forbes, worked in Newlyn and Brittany. Stayed in Hinderwell c.1899. Exhibited at B., B. C., L, M, R. A., R. B. A. and R. H. A.

Foster, Myles Birkett 1825-1899

Originally from North Shields, but brought up in London. He met Brymner in Runswick Bay in 1884. He painted occasionally in Cullercoats. Exhibited at R.A., R. I., R. W. S. Work on display at Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Foster, William Gilbert 1855-1906

Born in Manchester, but spent most of his life in Leeds, where he learned painting in his father's studio. Also known as Gilbert Foster. Painted mostly on the Yorkshire coast and in Leeds. Member of R. B. A. Work on display at Whitby, Leeds and Manchester. Encouraged his students Bowen, Senior and Friedenson to paint in Runswick Bay. Not a member of S. A. C. Exhibited at B. C, L., M. A. F. A., R. A., R. O. I., R. B. A. and Y. U. A.

Friedenson, Arthur 1872-1955

Born in Leeds, taught by W. G. Foster. Apprenticed as a sign painter. Studied at the Académie Julian c. 1889, also studied in Antwerp. Mainly painted in Runswick Bay, but also other parts of the Yorkshire coast, Scotland and in Europe. A founding member of S. A. C. Paintings are on display at Aberdeen, Bradford, Hull and Leeds. Exhibited at B. C., G.I., Le., L., M. A. F. A., N. E. A. C., R. A., R. S. A., and R. I. O. P.

Gardner, Sidney Valentine 1869-1957

From Nottingham and exhibited at the N. S. A. in 1904. Joined S. A. C. in 1903.

Garrido, Leandro Ramon 1868-1909

Born in France. Studied at Académie Colorossi, Paris, possibly with Crawshaw, who may have recommended Whitby to him. In Grez, 1891 and 1898. Lived in Sleights near Whitby between 1906 and 1907; J. A. Terry also lived in the village. Joined S. A. C. in 1906. Exhibited Paris Salon and R.O.I.

Harper, Edward Samuel 1854-1941

Born in Birmingham and studied at the local art school; Langley was a fellow student. His paintings of Runswick Bay include: *In Times of Trouble, Runswick Bay*, painted in 1896 and *A Passage Perilous Maketh a Port Pleasant* in 1899. Taught at the Birmingham School of Art, 1880-1919 and was an art critic for the *Birmingham Post*. Exhibited at B., R. A.

Harris, Robert 1849-1919

Born in Wales, family emigrated to Canada 1856 (Prince Edward Island). In Runswick in 1886, where he painted *Cottage at Runswick, England*.

Hedley, Ralph 1848-1913

Taught by W. B. Scott at Newcastle-upon-Tyne School of Art. Discovered Runswick while

on a walking tour in 1883. Worked regularly in Runswick up to 1900, one example is, *On the Look Out* in 1883. Exhibited at R. A., R. B. A. and Newcastle-upon-Tyne art exhibitions. Work on display at Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Hemy, Thomas Marie Madawaska 1852-1937

Studied at Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Antwerp, under Verlat. Brother of C. N. Hemy. R. A. exhibits: 1884 *Runswick, Yorkshire* and 1886 *Staithes*. Work on display at Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Sunderland.

Hill, Rowland Henry 1873-1952

From Halifax. Studied at the Halifax School of Art and the Herkomer School in 1895. Painted mainly on the Yorkshire coast, but also in Europe and North Africa. Work on display at the Imperial War Museum, Leeds, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Scarborough and Whitby. A member of S. A. C. Lived in Ellerby, near to Runswick. Exhibited at L., Le., R. A., S. A. C., and Y. U. A.

Holgate, Thomas W. 1869-1958

Studied at the Herkomer School and the R. A. from 1899. London based. *Runswick Bay* exhibited at R. B. A. in 1904. Exhibited at R. A. and R. B. A.

Hopwood, Henry Silkstone 1860-1914

Studied part time at the Manchester School of Art and later at the Académie Julian from 1890 to 1892 under Bougereau; also studied in Antwerp. A founding member of S. A. C. Painted in England and Wales, Europe, North Africa and Far East. Work is displayed at the Tate Gallery, London, V.A.M., Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester. Associate 1897 and member, R.W.S. 1908. Exhibited at F. A. S., M. A. F. A., R. A., R. S. A., R. W. S., S. A. C. and Y.U.A.

Inchbold, Stanley 1856-1921

Born in London. Studied at the Herkomer School from 1892 to 1894. Painting in Runswick 1884. *Low Tide at Whitby* exhibited at R. B. A., 1892-3. R.A., 1894 993) *Whitby Twilight*. Lived at Bushey. Exhibited at R. A. and R. I.

Ingall, John Spence 1850-1936

From Barnsley. Studied at the local art school and the Académie Julian. Painted in England

but also in Europe, North Africa and the Far East. A member of S. A. C. Exhibited at Le., M., R. A., S. A. C., and the Y. U. A.

Jackson, Frederick William 1859-1918

Studied at the Oldham School of Art, Manchester School of Art and the Académie Julian. Painted in North Wales, Yorkshire coast, Scotland, Cornwall, France, Italy, Russia and North Africa. Work is displayed at Bradford, Huddersfield, Leeds, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale and Whitby. A member of S. A. C. and served as its secretary for a time. A founder member of N. E. A. C. Exhibitions held at the Manchester City Art Gallery in 1908 and the Dowdeswell Gallery, London, in 1911. A Memorial Exhibition was held at Manchester City Art Gallery in 1918. Exhibition held at Rochdale Art Gallery 1978-9. Exhibited at B. C., G. I., L., M. A. F. A., N. E. A. C., R. A., R. B. A., and R. O. I.

Jelley, James Valentine 1885-1942

From Birmingham. R. B. A. 1891. Taught at the Birmingham Central School of Arts and Crafts with E. S. Harper. Exhibited at B., R. A. and R. B. A.

Jobling, Isa 1851-1926

Born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and studied at the city School of Art. Mainly painted in North East England, particularly at Staithes, Runswick Bay and Cullercoats. Member of S. A. C., B. C. Married R. Jobling in 1893; he also began to paint in Staithes after leaving Cullercoats. Exhibited at A. N. C., B., B. C., G. I., M., R. A., R. B. A., R. S. A., and S. A. C. Work on display at Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Jobling, Robert 1841-1923

Born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. He was mainly self-taught and attended evening classes at the Newcastle School of Art. Painted mostly in North East England and Holland. Works are on display at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, South Shields and Gateshead. He was a founding member of the S. A. C. and also a member of the Pen and Palette Club. Married I. Thompson in 1893. An exhibition of his work was held in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1923 and another in 1992-3 also featuring work by I. Jobling at the Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Exhibited at A. N. C., B., B. C., L., M., R. A., R. B. A., S. A. C. and Y. U. A.

Knight, Harold 1874-1961

Studied at the Nottingham School of Art, and the Académie Julian. Mainly painted in England

and Holland. Member of the R. O. I, R. A. 1937. A founding member of S. A. C. Work is displayed at Tate Gallery, National Portrait Gallery, Cardiff, Leeds, Newcastle, Nottingham and Rochdale. Married L. Knight in 1903. Exhibitions with L. Knight held at the Leicester Galleries, London, in 1906 and 1907. Exhibited at B., G. I., Le., L., M., N. S. A., R. A., R. H. A., R. S. A. and S. A. C.

Knight, Laura 1877-1970

Studied at Nottingham School of Art. Mainly painted in England and Holland. A member of S. A. C. She was made a D. B. E. in 1929. R. E. 1932. R. A. 1936. Work is on display at the Tate Gallery, the Imperial War Museum and many other galleries. Lived in Staithes from 1895 and permanently from c. 1900 to 1907. Exhibited at B., G. I., Le., L., M., N.S.A., R. A., R. H. A., R. S. A. and S.A.C.

Knight, John William Buxton 1843-1908

Exhibited *Rough Weather-Runswick Bay* in 1877 and *Runswick, Yorkshire* in 1882 at R. B. A.

Lawson, James Kerr 1865-1939

Born in Anstruther, Fife., like R. Fowler. Painted landscapes and portraits; he was also a lithographer and a mural decorator. Lived in Canada, Italy and England. Mainly painted in Scotland, North Yorkshire coast, Europe and Canada. Studied at Académie Julian. Exhibited at Dowdeswell Gallery, London, Manchester Art Gallery and Gl. Works at National Gallery of Canada and National Galleries of Scotland.

Lee, Sydney 1866-1949

Studied at the Manchester School of Art and Académie Colorossi, Paris. Had a studio in Manresa Road, Chelsea. Mainly painted in Britain and Europe. *Staithes Bridge* is in the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester. Exhibited in London at the Carfax Art Gallery, International Art Gallery, and Walker's Gallery. Also at R. A., R. B. A., N. E. A. C., R. E.

Llewellyn, Sir William 1858-1941

Studied at the Slade and in Paris c.1884. Had a studio at 6, Wentworth Studios, Manresa Road with Brangwyn, Short, Dade and La Thangue. Member of N. E. A. C., 1887. *Runswick* shown in Leeds 1889. President of R. A. 1928. Exhibited at Le., R. A. and R. B. A.

Mackie, Charles Hodge 1862-1920

Trained at the R. S. A. School. Painted in Scotland, north Yorkshire coast, Ireland, Spain and Italy. Lived in Edinburgh. Member of the S. S. A., R. S. W. and R. S. A. A member of S. A. C. Work on display at the National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth, Liverpool and Leeds. Travelled to France where he met Gauguin, Vuillard and Sérusier. Exhibited at R. A., R. S. W., R. S. A. and S. S. A.

Mann, Harrington 1864-1937

Studied at the Glasgow School of Art, at the Slade under Legros and in Paris at the Académie Julian under Boulanger and Lefebvre. A. R. E. 1885. Painted in Staithes 1885 to 1887 and from 1895 to c.1900. Linked to the Glasgow Boys. Work on display in Belfast, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Melbourne and Sydney. Exhibited at G. I., N.E.A.C., and R. A.

Manning, William Westley 1868-1954

Studied at the Académie Julian. Exhibited *The Bridge, Staithes* at the R. S. A. in 1888.

Marshall, Herbert Menzies 1841-1913

Mainly painted in Whitby. Exhibited *Staithes* at the R. I. 1890 Winter Exhibition.

Mason, Frank Henry 1876-1965

Born in Seaton Carew near Hartlepool, and studied at the Scarborough School of Art with A. Strange. Painted on the north Yorkshire coast, Holland, Italy and North Africa. A member of S. A. C. Work on display at Imperial War Museum, Bradford, Hartlepool and Whitby. Besides painting, he wrote and illustrated many books on the sea. Exhibited at B., G. I., L., M., R. A., R. B. A., R. I., and R. O. I.

Massey, Henry Gibbs 1860-1934

At Herkomers. A. R. E. 1894, Diploma work, *Runswick*. London based. Exhibited at R. A. from 1887 to 1891.

May, Phil 1864-1903

Born Leeds. Drawing *Runswick* at Leeds City Art Gallery (1891). Studied in Paris from 1890 to 1892. Exhibitions in London at F. A. S. in 1895 and Leicester Galleries in 1903.

Mayor, William Frederick 1866-1916

Studied at the Académie Julian. Exhibition at the Leicester Galleries, London in 1902. Painted mainly in England, France, Italy and North Africa. A member of S. A. C. Works are on display at Leeds, the Imperial War Museum, London, Manchester, Middlesbrough, Sheffield and Whitby. Exhibited at G. I., L., Le., M., N. E. A. C., R. A., R. B. A. and R. S. A.

Mayor, Hannah 1871-1947

From Sheffield. Studied at the Westminster School of Art. Met F. Mayor in Staithes. A member of S. A. C. A painting set in Runswick Bay, *Landscape With Cottages* is on display at Grays Art Gallery, Sheffield. Mainly painted flowers. Her son, Freddy established the Mayor Gallery in London. Exhibited at N. E. A. C., R. A., R. B. A. R. O. I. and the Society of Women Artists.

Oppenheimer, Charles 1875-1961

From Manchester and studied at Manchester School of Art. A friend of Jackson and E. A. Taylor. Lived in Hinderwell and painted in Runswick. Settled in Kirkcudbright c.1909. His *Grey Morning, Runswick* is at the Aberdeen Art Gallery.

Parkyn, John Herbert 1862-1939

Studied at the Clifton School of Art, the Royal College of Art and in Paris. He was Head of the Hull School of Art and Curator of the Ferens Art Gallery. Exhibited at R. A.

Paul, Paul 1865-1937

At the Herkomer School in 1897. R. B. A. 1903. Joined the S. A. C. in 1905. A painting is displayed in the Sheffield City Art Gallery. Exhibited at G. I., L., Le., M., R. A., R. B. A. and R. O. I.

Reid, John Robertson 1851-1925

Had an exhibition at the F. A. S. in 1899. *Return of the Staithes Lifeboat*, painted in 1913. Exhibited at N. E. A. C., R. A., R. B. A., R. O. I. and R. S. A.

Richardson, Frederick Stuart 1855-1934

Born in Clifton, Bristol, studied in Paris. Member of the R. S. W., R. I. and R. O. I. Joined the S. A. C. in 1902. Work on display at the Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston. Exhibited at B., G. I., L., M., R. A., R. B. A., R. I., R. O. I., R. S. W., S. A. C. and Y. U. A.

Rigg, Ernest 1868-1947

Born in Bradford, studied at the Bradford School of Art and the Académie Julian. Painted mainly in Britain. Member of S. A. C. Works are on display at Bradford and Sheffield. Lived in Hinderwell 1897, 1904 and 1907 and painted mostly in Runswick Bay. Exhibited at L., Le., M., R. A., R. B. A., S. A. C. and Y. U. A.

Robertson, Charles 1844-1891

Staithes is at Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Also worked in Clovelly in 1881. Known for his oriental works.

Robertson, Percy 1869-1934

Born Bellagio, Italy, educated at Charterhouse. Son of C. Robertson. In *Staithes* c.1902. *Wet Day, Whitby* 1893 at Leeds City Art Gallery. A. R. E. 1887, Diploma work, *Whitby*. R. E. Based in London

Senior, Mark 1864-1927

Born in Dewsbury. Studied at the Wakefield School of Art. Painted mainly in Runswick Bay, other parts of England, and Bruges. Member of S. A. C., but did not exhibit work. Work on display at Leeds, Wakefield and Huddersfield. Exhibited at B., G. I., L., Le., M., R. A. and R. S. A.

Sheppard, Oliver 1865-1941

Studied in Dublin, London and Paris. He taught in Leicester and at the Nottingham School of Art from c.1900 to 1902 where he met his future wife, R. Good. She was one of L.Knight's students in *Staithes* and Sheppard visited her there.

Short, Sir Frank 1857-1945

Trained at South Kensington. Also studied in Paris c.1885. Shared a studio at Manresa Road, friend of Llewellyn, Brangwyn, La Thangue and Dade. He was an instructor in etching at South Kensington in 1891. Master of the Art Workers' Guild 1901, R. A. in 1911. There is an etching of *Staithes, A North Country Fishing Village*, 1887. In 1890 he worked in Walberswick and Volendam. Exhibited at R. A. and the R. E.

Stevens, Albert George 1863-1925

Born in Biggleswade, studied at the local art school and in Antwerp. A member of S. A. C.

Lived in Whitby from c.1903. Exhibited at L., Le., R. A., R. I., S.A.C. and Y.U.A.

Strange, Albert G. 1855-1917

Born in Greenwich. In 1882 appointed the first headmaster of Scarborough School of Art. Mason, H. Watson and F. Appleyard were students. Exhibited at R. A., R. B. A., R. I. and R. O. I. Also designed yachts.

Sutcliffe, Lester 1848-1933

Born near Leeds. Studied at the Leeds School of Art and in Birmingham. Involved in the Y. U. A. W.G., 9.9.1892, 8, 'Exhibition of Lester Sutcliffe's work [in Whitby], he met [Jackson] at the paintable village of Runswick'. Paintings are displayed at Whitby and Leeds. Exhibited at L., R. A., R. B. A., R. C. A. and the Y. U. A.

Swinstead, Frank Hillyard 1862-1937

Studied at Académie Julian. Headmaster of Hornsey School of Art 1890; took over from father, C. Swinestead. Brother George also an artist.

Sykes, John Guttridge 1866-1941

Born in Sheffield. Studied at the Sheffield College of Art. Met the Knights in Staithes in 1903 and later moved to Newlyn. *Staithes Fisherfolk* was sold at Phillips, Leeds in 12.1996. Exhibited in London and Glasgow.

Taylor, Edward Richard 1833-1911

Headteacher at Birmingham Art School from 1877. Took students, including Harper and Jelley, to Runswick Bay. Exhibited several pictures of Runswick at R. A.

Taylor, Ernest Archibald 1874-1952

Born in Greenock. Studied under F. Newberry at Glasgow. Lived in Hinderwell, was a friend of Hopwood. He was a painter, etcher, interior decorator, furniture designer and stained glass artist. He wrote articles for the *Studio*. Exhibited at G. I., R. S. A. and R. S. W. Work on display at Kirkudbright.

Teasdale, Percy Morton 1870-1939

Born in Leeds. Studied at the Leeds School of Art, the Herkomer School and the Académie Julian. Member R. C. A. and joined S. A. C. in 1905. Exhibited at B., L., M., R. A., R. C. A.

Terry, Joseph Arthur 1872-1939

Born in York. Studied at the York School of Art, Académie Julian and Académie Colorossi. Had an exhibition at Carfax Gallery, London, in 1913. R.B.A. Painted in Britain, Greece, Italy and France. Joined S.A.C. in 1906. Paintings are on display at York and Whitby. Exhibited at L., Le., M., R. A., R. B. A., R. O. I., S. A. C. and Y. U. A.

Tollemache, Hon. Duff Randolph S. 1859-1936

Studied at the Herkomer School and Académie Julian. Based in London. Painting in St. Ives c.1885. In Runswick Bay, 1883 and 1884. *After the Catch* (Ipswich Art Gallery) is set in Runswick Bay.

Walker, Hirst 1868-1957

From Leeds. R. B. A. Member of S. A. C. Friend of Bagshawe.

Wanless, Harry 1873-1933

Photographer, writer, builder of model ships as well as an artist. Studied at the Scarborough School of Art under A. Strange. Work is on display in Scarborough Art Gallery.

Watson, James 1842-1926

Born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and studied at the South Kensington School of Art, London. Member of S. A. C., 1903. Exhibited at B. C., R. A. and S. A. C.

Williams, Terrick John 1860-1937

Studied at Antwerp with Verlat and in Paris at Académie Julian from 1887 to 1889, with Constant, Bougereau and Fleury. He also trained with J. W. B. Knight. *A Quiet Morning, Runswick* was exhibited at the R. A. in 1890.

Wright, John 1857-1933

He joined S. A. C in 1904. Lived at Robin Hood's Bay. Exhibited in London at the Baillie Gallery. Also the R. A., R. E., and S. A. C.

Yglesias, Vincent 1845-1911

Exhibited 1888 *Staithes* and 1911 *Runswick* at R. A. Also 1892 *Staithes*, 1894 *Runswick*, 1897 and 1898 *Staithes* at R. B. A. Exhibited at B., G. I., L., M., R. A., R. B. A., and R. H. A.

Appendix 3: A Chronology of Artists Working at Staithes.

Details of when artists staying in the village are from the *W.G.*, exhibition records, L. Knight's autobiographies and from other sources.

1884

T. M. M. Hemy (Antwerp).

1885

Mr. Hemmy (sic) at Station Hotel, *W. G.*, 1. 8-29. 8.

H. Mann.

N. Erichsen.

1886

F.W. Jackson.

T. Barrett stayed for the first time.

H. Mann, F. Short, W. G. Foster, E. Dade, C. Robertson.

1888

E. Bagshaw, (Leeds), at Mrs. Stewart's Fisherman's Cottage. *W. G.*, 3. 8.

W.W. Manning.

Yglesias (London).

E. Dade, paintings of Staithes exhibited at Dowdeswell Gallery, London.

1890

T. B. Hardy.

H. M. Marshall.

1892

Yglesias.

Miss Isa Thompson (Newcastle), staying at Mrs. Verrills, Freemason Arms, Staithes. *W.G.* 9. 9-30. 9.

1893 28.3 Marriage of R. Jobling and I. Thompson.

1894

Mr. and Mrs. Barrett, Nottingham at Sunnyside House, Staithes *W.G.*, 17-31. 8.

Mr. and Mrs. Jobling at Mrs. Ward, Church St., *W.G.* 26. 7.

Mr. and Mrs. Jobling at Mrs. Crooks, Church St., *W.G.* 10. 8 .

1895

Barretts, Morleys, Nottingham and Joblings, Whitley on Sea, *W.G.*, 26.7 - 23.8.

Misses Johnson, Mrs. Laverick's, *W.G.* 16.8.

1896

Blandford Fletcher.

Friedenson (Leeds) at Mrs. Crooks, Church St., W.G. 28.8.

Rosie Good.

1897

H. Knight on returning from Paris, stayed until after Christmas, see Knight, 76.

Mrs. Crooks, Mt. Pleasant, Mrs. West, France. Mrs. Johnson, Nottingham, Mr. and Miss Knight, Miss Good, W.G. 13.8 -17.9.

H. Mann.

1898

L. and H. Knight, Rosie Good at Mrs Crooks, W.G. 12.8-26.8.

H. Mann at Mrs Ward, Church St., F.W. Booty.

1899

W.H. Charlton (Newcastle) at Mrs Crooks, W.G., 28.7.

Mr. and Mrs. S. Lee, London, Mrs. Steward, Cliff Grove, W.G., 1.9.

H. Mann, Prince Royal House W.G., 1.9.

W.W. Ball, Mrs Steward, Cliff Grove.

1900

H. Knight and Friedenson at Mrs. Crooks, Mt. Pleasant, W.G., 6.7.

" at Mrs. Porritts, Fishermans Cottage, W.G., 3.8 , Johnson sisters join them, W.G., 17.8.

R. Good and O. Sheppard at Mrs. Crooks, Mt. Pleasant Cottage, W.G., 17.8.

Mr. and Mrs. S Lee, W.G., 24.8.

1901

From 1901 the S. A. C. held exhibitions annually and members stayed in the village for these in August and September. Details of who belonged to the S. A. C. are at Appendix 5.

J. R. Bagshawe, T. Barrett (Kirkhill House, Church St.), A. Friedenson, Mr. and Mrs. Jobling, Misses Johnson, H. Knight, F. Mayor) Whitby and District Directory, (1901, W.J. Cook) Hull
June Good and Sheppard married.

Cricket Match: in the Staithes team v Hinderwell were Mayor, Knight and Friedenson, W.G., 28.6.

Cricket match: Fred Mayor's X1 includes Knight, Bagshawe and Friedenson, W.G., 16.8.

F.H. Varley painting in Staithes.

Mackie living at Roxby, R.S.A.1901 exhibit *Whitby Bridge*.

1902

Misses Johnson Broomhill, H. Knight and Friedenson, Gungutter, W.G., 18 and 25 .7-5. 9

Mr. and Mrs. Barrett, Kirkhill House.

Mr. and Mrs. Bowman, Mt. Pleasant Cottage.

Mr. and Mrs. Jobling, Dalehouse.

J. Knight, Manchester, at Mrs. Crooks W.G., 15. 8.

1903

Mackie still living at Roxby. *Building the Sea-Wall at Runswick* displayed at the R. S. A.

Guttridge Sykes.

T. Barrett not present after this time.

1904

‘Mr. John Wright (A.R.E.) of Robin Hood’s Bay has had an etching entitled *Canal des Baudets, Bruges* [this was also exhibited at the 1904 S. A. C.] hung in this year’s exhibition at R.A.’. W.G., 29. 4. 1904, 5.

1905

Burgess at Mrs. Mackenzie, 31. 8.

1906

Burgess at Mrs Mackenzie, W.G., 6. 7 - 24. 8.

1907

W.W. Ball, Mrs. Steward, Cliff Grove.

1908 - 1914

Little appears in the W.G. as to who was staying in the village.

Appendix 4: A Chronology of Artists Working at Runswick Bay.

Details of when artists staying in the village are from the *W.G.*, exhibition records, L. Knight's autobiographies and from other sources.

1874

J. Aumonier, *Autumn Landscape, Near Runswick*.

1877

J.W. Buxton Knight, *Rough Weather - Runswick Bay*, at R. B. A.

1879

J. Aumonier, displayed *Runswick Green, Yorkshire* and a *Yorkshire Fishing Village at the Arts Association* exhibition in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

1880

J. Aumonier, *Runswick (Sketch From Nature)* at R. B. A.

1881

F. Jackson in Whitby, *Quayside at Whitby*, was his first work produced in the area.

J. Aumonier, *Low Water, Runswick* and *At Runswick, Yorkshire* at R. B. A.

1882

J.W. Buxton Knight, *Runswick, Yorkshire* at R. B. A.

1883

Hedley stays for the first time.

Tollemache at The Sheffield Hotel, *W. G.*, 7. 7-29. 7.

J.V. Jelley at Mrs. Sayers, *W. G.*, 21. 7 - 25. 8.

S. Inchbold.

1884

Jackson, Brymner, Kerr Lawson, Tollemache at the Sheffield Hotel, *W. G.*, 9. 8-13. 9.

In 1885 Tollemache moved to St. Ives, 'A small studio (which has long gone back to its original state of ruin) had been constructed by the Hon. Duff Tollemache out of a disused and ruinous building at Carn Crowse', Cross, 89.

S. Inchbold and Mrs. Inchbold, *W. G.*, 9-16. 8.

Senior working there for the first time.

M. Birket Foster mentioned in W. Brymner letter.

T. M. M. Hemy, *Runswick Bay*, exhibited at the R. A.

1885

I' Anson and Aumonier working in the village.

1886

W. G. Foster working in the Runswick area. R. Harris painted *Cottage at Runswick, England*.

W. Llewellyn working there.

Yglesias at the Royal Hotel, *W. G.*, 20. 8.

1887

W. Llewellyn, W. H. Charlton and E. R. Taylor, 3. 9. 1887.

1888

Foster bought cottage, exhibited *Kettleness* at R. A.

W. Llewellyn working there.

1889

According to the local newspaper ‘...fifty artists staying in or near the village..’, *W. G.*, 23. 8, 3.

Ingall at Sea View Cottage, *W. G.*, 12. 7, 2.

W.H. Charlton and Hedley.

T. Williams, Royal Hotel, *W. G.*, 19.7-27. 9.

E. S. Harper at the Runswick Bay Hotel.

Friedenson’s first R. A. exhibit.

1890

Friedenson, *Children Playing at Runswick Bay*. He was working there while studying in Paris.
Terrick Williams.

Senior at Mrs. Stewart’s Fisherman’s Cottage, *W. G.*, 1. 8, 2.

Spence Ingall at Sea View Cottage. *W. G.*, 1. 8, 2.

Harper at Mrs. Brown’s, Runswick Bay Hotel, *W. G.*, 8. 8.

E. R. Crosse (Herkomer School) sang Bushey anthem *W. G.*, 19. 8.,3.

1891

Hedley at Mrs. Sayer’s, Prospect House, *W. G.*, 26. 6.

Mr. and Mrs. Colley, Newcastle, at Pansy House.

‘A. Friedenson, Paris’ at Mrs. Sayer’s, *W. G.*, 18. 9-2. 10, 2.

1892

L. Sutcliffe.

Friedenson at Mrs. Sayer’s, Prospect House, singing in concert at Staithes, *W. G.*, 1. 7-7. 10.

Hopwood, Manchester *W. G.*, 1. 7-22. 7. Hedley at Sea View Cottage, *W. G.*, 22. 7-2. 9.

1893

Hedley at Mrs. Sayer’s, Prospect House, *W. G.*, 15-29. 9.

Hill at Mrs. Harland’s, Poplar Terrace, Hinderwell.

1894

J. Booth staying at Jessamine House, Hinderwell, *W. G.*, 17-31. 8.

Mr. Everett, London at Mrs. Dunning's, W. G., 17-31. 8.

1895

Miss Hoyland, Sheffield, Mrs. Sander's, Cliff Cottage, W.G., 30. 8.

August, J. Booth, Jessamine House, Hinderwell.

1896

E. Rigg and E. S. Harper staying there. L. Sutcliffe at Hinderwell, W. G., 1. 5,3.

Friedenson and Jackson in Hinderwell cricket team, W. G., 29. 5.

Mr. and Mrs. B. Fletcher, London, Mrs Harland Poplar Terrace, Hinderwell, W. G. 12.6 - 14.8.

Rowland Hill, Shop Cottage, W. G. 19.6 - 14.8. Senior in Hinderwell cricket team, W. G., 24.7.

Mr. and Mrs. Jelley at 1 Brown's Terrace, Hinderwell, W. G., 31. 7.

J. Booth at Jessamine House, Hinderwell W. G., 14. 8.

1897

E. Rigg.

Hedley at Mrs. Harland's, Hinderwell, W. G., 13. 8.

Friedenson at the Runswick Bay Hotel, W. G., 13. 8.

1898

Senior in Runswick for 6 weeks.

1899

E.S. Harper.

Hopwood, London and R. Fedden, Gloucester at Mrs. Sayer's, Prospect House, W. G., 14. 7.

Friedenson at Mrs. Elder's, Melrose House, Hinderwell, W. G. 1. 9.

1901

Census, Hopwood living in Hinderwell.

E. Rigg 1896, 1897, 1904 and 1907 /left for Sussex 1908 (R. A. exhibitions address.

Hinderwell 1897,1899, 1904-1907,1909- 3).

C. H. Mackie

1902

C. H. Mackie. Mayors to Montreuil.

1903

C. H. Mackie

Hoylands at Hawthorne House, Hinderwell, W. G., 4. 9.

1904

E. Rigg.

Crawshaw at Mrs. Sayer's, W. G., 17. 6., 1-15. 7.

Hoylands at Mrs. McClacklin's, Hinderwell, W.G., 2. 9.

Bowman at Rose Cottage, Hinderwell.

1905

Friedenson at the Royal Hotel.

Bowman at Rose Cottage, Hinderwell, W. G., 18. 8.

1906

Hoylands staying there, W.G., 3. 8.

1907

Knights at Ebor House, W.G., 12. 7-4. 10.

1908

E. S. Harper (Birmingham) W.G., 7. 8.

1909

Friedenson in Runswick Bay where he painted *Passing Clouds*.

'E.H. Rigg of Hinderwell has 2 paintings hung at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool'. W.G., 29. 9, 3.

1910-1914

Little information was available on the artists who stayed.

Appendix 5: The Members of the Staithes Art Club, 1901-7

1901: July meeting, founding members Hopwood, Barrett, R. Jobling, Friedenson, H. Knight, Bagshawe. The following were invited to join: Conway, Hirst Walker, H. Hoyland, L. Knight, Mayor, Richardson, Mackie, Hill.

1902: New members: Dade, Jackson, Ingall, Mason, Rigg, Senior, Stevens, Bowman, Booth, I. Jobling.

1903: New members: Gardner (Nottingham) and Watson (Newcastle).

1904: New members: Anderson, Crawshaw, W. G., 16. 8. 1907 (Whitby) Wright, Bowen.

1905: New members: Paul and Teasdale W.G., 18. 8. 05.

1906: New members: Garrido (France), Terry (Sleights), Burgess, W.G., 3. 8. 1906.

1907: New members: Atkinson (Newcastle), Elmhirst (Doncaster).

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Volume 2

List of Illustrations: All works are oil on canvas unless otherwise stated.

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3 Runswick Bay: locations where the artworks were created (Scarborough District Council).

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Royal Canadian Academy of Arts diploma work, deposited by the artist, Ottawa, 1886
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa Photo © National Gallery of Canada

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Musée des beaux-arts du Canada, Ottawa Photo © Musée des beaux-arts du Canada.

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Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts, USA
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Fig.90 "Image courtesy of East Cleveland Image Archive" - <http://www.image-archive.org.uk/>

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Leeds Museums & Galleries/ Bridgeman Art Library

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Maps

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- 66 M. Senior, **Returning Home**, c.1900, 40.2 x 30.3, The Hepworth Wakefield (Wakefield Permanent Art Collection).
- 67 H. S. Hopwood, **Two's Company, Three's None**, 1894, 128 x 76, Private Collection.
- 68 R. Jobling, **A Lover and his Lass**, c.1900, 54 x 75, Private Collection.
- 69 L. Knight, **Mother and Child**, c.1900, 30.5 x 41.2, Private Collection.
- 70 R. Jobling, **Guiding them in**, c.1905, dimensions unknown, Private Collection.

- 71 M. Senior, *Dada's Comin'*, 1892, 101.3 x 60.9, The Hepworth Wakefield (Wakefield Permanent Art Collection).
- 72 W. G. Foster, *The Skipper's Wife*, 1902, watercolour on cardboard, 50.8 x 75, Ferens Art Gallery, Hull.
- 73 R. Jobling, *Hauling in the Cobles*, 1905, dimensions unknown, Private Collection.
- 74 J. R. Bagshawe, *Lives O' Men*, 1900, 91.5 x 61, Private Collection.
- 75 N. Erichsen, *Fisherwomen*, c.1886, 136 x 90, Private Collection.
- 76 M. Senior, *Runswick Fisherwoman, Knitting*, 1905, 62.5 x 75, The Hepworth Wakefield (Wakefield Permanent Art Collection).
- 77 I. Johnson (Jobling), *Fisher Folk*, 1893, 121.6 x 91, Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne (Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums).
- 78 F. M. Sutcliffe, 'Flither Pickers', photograph, c.1895.
- 79 L. Knight, *The Fishing Fleet*, c.1903, 122 x 81.5, Bolton Museum and Art Gallery.
- 80 H. Knight, *Grief*, 1901, watercolour, 40.7 x 41.9, Private Collection.
- 81 H. Knight, *The Last Coble*, 1900, 92.7 x 127.7, Castle Museum and Art Gallery, Nottingham.
- 82 W. Homer, *Perils of the Sea*, 1881, watercolour, 37.1 x 53.2, Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA.
- 83 J. R. Bagshawe, *Home*, c.1905, dimensions unknown, Private Collection.
- 84 H. Knight, *On the Quay at Staithes*, c.1900, 45.7 x 61, Private Collection.
- 85 F. W. Jackson, *Launching the Lifeboat*, 1890, watercolour, 54.6 x 76.2, Private Collection.
- 86 F. H. Mason, *The Runswick Bay Lifeboat*, c.1900, 55.9 x 81.3, Private Collection.
- 87 E. S. Harper, *In Time of Trouble at Runswick Bay*, 1896, dimensions unknown, Private Collection.
- 88 F. H. Mason, *Women to the rescue at Runswick Bay, The Graphic*, August 1901, 620-1.
- 89 F. W. Jackson, *The Old Weaver*, c.1895, 57.1 x 61.3, from the collection of Rochdale Arts & Heritage Service.
- 90 Maurice Grayson, The Railway Viaduct at Staithes, photograph, c.1950.
- 91 H. Knight, *Staithes Pier*, c.1903, 40.5 x 51, Private Collection.
- 92 E. Dade, *Building A Coble*, an illustration from 'The Cobles', *Mariner's Mirror*, 1934.
- 93 G. Du Maurier, *Punch*, 17. 9.1887, 128.
- 94 H. and L. Knight painting with Jackson at Runswick Bay, photograph, c.1903, from the collection of Rochdale Arts & Heritage Service.
- 95 H. Knight, *A Staithes Funeral*, c.1902, dimensions unknown, Private Collection.

- 96 F. M. Sutcliffe, 'After Forty Years', photograph, Staithes, c.1900.
- 97 Postcard, Staithes, Slip Top, 1932.
- 98 M. Senior, *Portrait of Sam Wilson*, 1906, 91.4 x 71, Leeds City Art Gallery.
- 99 M. Senior and family at Runswick Bay, photograph, c. 1895. The Hepworth Wakefield (Wakefield Permanent Art Collection)
- 100 Bronze Chimney-piece designed by A. Gilbert for S. Wilson's home, Leeds City Art Gallery.
- 101 Anon., F. W. Jackson, photograph, c.1900, from the collection of Rochdale Arts & Heritage Service.
- 102 Anon., Samuel Barlow, photograph, c.1885.
- 103 C. M. Horsfall, *Walter Butterworth*, c.1916, dimensions unknown, Private Collection.
- 104 D. Curtis, *Cobles at Staithes*, c.1995, dimensions unknown, Private Collection.

