

## Imagining the fishing: artists and fishermen in late-century

### Cornwall<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** The focus of postmodernist historians on language and representation has clashed with the more traditional approach of the social historian to material structures and processes. This article adopts the suggestion of Wahrman that a 'space of possibilities' exists where these apparently competing perspectives might be connected. The concept of a 'space of possibilities' is pursued through a case study of a marginal group, the fishing communities of west Cornwall in the late nineteenth century. The article explores points of contact and contrast between artistic and the fishing communities, between the painterly gaze and the subjects of that gaze. It is proposed that, while the artistic colonies and their representations might be explained as a result of discourses reproduced in the centre, their specific choice of location in Cornwall can also be related to the local economic and social history that granted them a space of possibilities.

Researchers in the social and human sciences have increasingly looked towards the 'margins' over the past two decades. The 'othering' of people and places in the margins and the deconstruction of that 'othering' has been explored with a growing fascination.<sup>2</sup> This interest in the 'margins' has been vigorously fanned by the winds of postmodernist theory, with its emphasis on the fragmentation of older certainties and centres. In social history the postmodernist re-discovery of the marginalised and the 'subaltern' meets an established tradition of 'history from below', one already sensitive to the history of dispossessed groups at the margins of political and social structures.<sup>3</sup> However, the focus of postmodernist historians on the analysis of language and representations rather than any material 'reality' that might underlie these representations clashes with older historical approaches to the 'social'. At first glance there appear to be few connections between postmodernist accounts and more traditional readings that

take as their focus the economic and social structures of past communities.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, representations identified by postmodernists sometimes seem to have an autonomy that allows them to be imposed on places irrespective of the economic and social structures of those places. Furthermore, despite an expressed openness towards previously unheard voices, such histories can also be perceived as patronizing and condescending from a position on the margins. As Richard Price points out 'historians touched by postmodernist winds usually end up writing history that forefronts the forces of privilege and established authority even when their subject is supposedly subaltern groups'. This is because a concentration on language inevitably privileges those groups that control dominant discourses and meanings.<sup>5</sup>

How might some connection between these apparently competing perspectives be restored? Dror Wahrman has argued that reconciliation might proceed through focusing on that 'space of possibilities' that exists 'between social reality and its representation'. For him, social processes impose 'certain constraints on the possible and plausible ways in which it can be understood'. What occurs in this 'space of possibilities' has a 'logic and dynamism of its own'.<sup>6</sup> It is not determined by social processes; but neither is it prescribed by language. Instead Wahrman suggests a more contingent and messy outcome but one where, nevertheless, representations have some kind of link to the 'reality' they signify.

This study explores whether such points of contact can be identified in the case of one marginal occupational group: the fishing communities of the small ports of west Cornwall in the later nineteenth century. Specifically, were the representations of Cornish fishing places and people popularised by the Newlyn School of painting in the 1880s and thereafter independent of the economic and social structures of those communities, floating autonomously in the ether of imagination? After establishing the context of Cornish fishing communities in the 'marginal turn', the study investigates the changing ways Cornish fishing ports and the people who lived in them were represented in nineteenth century

writings. The establishment of an artists' colony at Newlyn and the artists' representation of the local community is then briefly sketched before turning to the story historians tell us about the local fishing industry of the nineteenth century. Relations between the artists and the local community are explored and, finally, one or two points of contact are suggested, points where the artistic project might be mapped onto the material structures of life in their subject communities.

### **An occupational and territorial margin?**

Historically, communities making their living from fishing have occupied marginal spaces. In the most obvious sense, their location at the edge of the land has given them a physical marginality. In addition, the study of places where people made their living in the past from fishing or, more broadly, from maritime activities in general, has a disciplinary liminality. John Walton points to the marginalised position of maritime history, which does not form 'part of the mainstream agenda' of social historians. Moreover, he notes that the content of maritime history is itself dominated by vessels, journeys and the navigation of the sea and appears less concerned with the history of those communities that lived on the border of land and sea.<sup>7</sup>

Fishing communities were marginal in a further sense. In his classic account Paul Thompson argued that the 'first true fishing communities represented social disturbance rather than tradition, a response of the disinherited driven to the margins'.<sup>8</sup> With a proportion of their male (and sometimes the female) inhabitants spending longer or shorter periods of the year away from home catching and curing the fish, the texture of life in fishing communities took on markedly different aspects from that in agricultural or industrial villages. From the 1840s the rise of trawling stimulated the emergence of new ports, urban places with more overtly capitalist social relations, where by the last decades of the century a new culture had emerged that was 'incontestably both fisherman and working class'.<sup>9</sup>

One area unaffected by the rise of the 'industrialised' trawler fleets was Cornwall. Here, fishermen used drift net methods to expand their fishery, especially after they were linked to the London market by a railway connection in 1859. However, the fishing communities of Cornwall occupy a marginal space within a margin. Historical studies of the fishing industry give Cornish fishing the briefest of footnotes. Paul Thompson refers to Cornwall as part of a region that, by the 1900s, had experienced 'the most pervasive decay of an entire regional fishery to be found in the whole of Britain'. There is no mention in his work of Newlyn, the largest Cornish fishing port of the nineteenth century.<sup>10</sup> And Cornish fishing has not been subject to detailed economic analysis, unlike the Scottish fishing industry.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, in the writings of 'native scholarship' within Cornwall the rise and fall of the metal mining industry has overshadowed the history of fishing, for the very good reason that mining was considerably more important to the Cornish economy.<sup>12</sup>

More generally, seen from the centre, Cornwall was and is 'on the margins of England and Englishness'.<sup>13</sup> Its peripheral location has led to 'the habitual placing of Cornwall in official and mainstream British culture as a romantic place on the socioeconomic margins'.<sup>14</sup> Cornish fishing communities of the past can therefore be viewed as doubly marginalised. Largely by-passed by the dominant agendas of maritime, social and local history, they were also located in a region that, during the nineteenth century, was re-constructed as a primitive counterpoint to modernity, spatial marginality transformed in the process into social marginality.<sup>15</sup>

As part of the recent 'turn to the margins', Cornwall has attracted the attention of writers intrigued by its apparent re-structuring in the late nineteenth century from industry to tourism. Jane Korey has proposed that, as Cornwall's mining economy de-industrialised after the 1860s, an 'empty semantic space' resulted, one that was promptly filled by the romantic imaginations of English writers.<sup>16</sup>

Philip Dodd has, in a similar vein, argued that Cornwall was re-fixed as a primitive and 'Celtic' periphery in the late nineteenth century. In this re-positioning its fishing ports were given an enhanced role.<sup>17</sup> The artists' 'colonies' which established themselves in the small towns of Newlyn and St.Ives in the west of Cornwall in the 1880s 'helped to give Cornwall a visibility and representational identity'.<sup>18</sup> Perhaps more accurately, they, and particularly the figure painters of Newlyn heightened the visibility of Cornwall for the urban middle classes. Dodd's argument has been echoed by James Vernon, who claims that artists were fixing their 'real' Cornwall in 'a picturesque paradise where the landscape and people remained untainted'.<sup>19</sup> As the metal mining industry contracted after the early 1870s local people found it ever more difficult to hold on to representations based on the regional dominance of that industry.<sup>20</sup> As a result the romantic imagery being produced in the fishing ports was able to colonise the semantic vacuum thus opened up.

However, this focus on the role of fishing places in re-constructions of Cornwall and its identity in the late nineteenth century co-exists with a more traditional perspective that describes the material structures and processes of the fishing industry and, sometimes, the communities surviving on the proceeds of that industry.<sup>21</sup> Local and social historians have outlined the growth and decline of the Cornish fishing industry, structural changes within that industry and the details of the vessels and techniques of the fishermen. They have also sketched the role of women in supporting the industry through shore based activities and as domestic reproducers of the labour force. However, in this literature, there is rarely any direct mention of the artists' colonies. In parallel fashion, academic accounts of the art colonies seldom move far beyond a caricatured description of the local village as 'quaint'.<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps because of their location on both a disciplinary borderland and a conceptual margin, Cornish fishing communities have therefore attracted very different readings. We may not be able to map these differing approaches

directly onto the ongoing debate among social historians about how to represent the social. But there is clearly some affinity between accounts of Cornish fishing villages as locations for changing imaginations which provided 'a benchmark from which the cultured English could assess the progress and discontents of their own modernity' and postmodernist approaches to the past.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, accounts of the economic and social history of the fishing communities share a traditional emphasis on economic and social structures.

The representations of Cornish fishing communities popularised by the activities of the Newlyn school of artists from the 1880s and the timing of these representations would appear to be driven by processes that have their origins well outside the region. But despite that, they could only be imposed on the local social reality if there were some points of contact between them and the changing social and economic structures of their subject communities. Furthermore, although the artists preferred to represent their encounter with Cornwall as the discovery of a timeless rural place, the imaginations of the previous century had to some extent prepared the ground for them.

### **Establishing the picturesque: the tourist gaze**

Before the artists arrived guide book and travel writers had already represented the Cornish fishing villages in words. From the 1780s to the 1870s a trope of fishing ports as the proto-picturesque established itself and then, from the 1850s to the Edwardian era, fishing communities began to be subjected to a process of 'othering'. In the eighteenth-century visitors and locals alike wrote about Cornish fishing ports in a matter of fact way. For Daniel Defoe in the 1720s St.Ives was just 'a pretty good town, and grown rich by the fishing trade'. Newlyn was merely 'a little port at the north west corner of the bay'.<sup>24</sup> However, by the 1780s the word "picturesque" was being attached to some fishing ports. This was notably so in the case of Looe. When visiting in the 1790s William Maton was 'much struck by the view of the river' at Looe, repeating the sentiments of the Reverend Shaw who also felt 'the scene here is truly picturesque, the river winding betwixt

two immense woody hills, not unlike some part of the Wye'.<sup>25</sup> Looe was exceptional, as it contained the wooded features that were essential forms of a formal picturesque landscape at the turn of the century.<sup>26</sup> In contrast, for some contemporaries the Cornish landscape was unpleasing, quite the reverse of 'picturesque' and lacking all those 'necessary appendages of landscape, wood and water (and) even form'.<sup>27</sup> However, ports such as St.Ives were being added to the list of the picturesque by the 1810s and a distinct sub-genre of Polperro as a 'singularly romantic' spot was making itself felt.<sup>28</sup> Yet the appeal of fishing communities remained limited to a long distance perspective.

Two factors helped to prevent the full flowering of a picturesque tourist gaze in the early nineteenth century. Close up, what struck visitors was the narrow, 'intricate and capricious' streets in the fishing villages.<sup>29</sup> For the author of Cooke's *Topography* the streets of St.Ives in 1805 were 'disagreeably narrow, dirty, irregular and ill-paved'.<sup>30</sup> Such townscapes did not fit preferred expectations of open, ordered landscapes and uncluttered vistas. But the irritation visitors felt at the chaotic micro-geography of Cornish fishing ports paled into insignificance when compared to the effects of the fishing industry on their nostrils. The attraction of Cawsand was seriously compromised for George Lipscomb in 1799 when he 'descended a very steep hill, amidst the most fetid and disagreeable odour of stinking pilchards and train oil'.<sup>31</sup> At the same time, Maton concluded that at St.Ives 'the stench arising from the stores, and from the putrid rejectamenta lying about the town, is to strangers almost intolerable'.<sup>32</sup> In 1812 Daniel Webb found the smell from the curing houses at Newlyn and Mousehole 'excessively offensive'.<sup>33</sup> Local writers seemed more immune to the conditions. Samuel Drew makes no mention of offensive smells in his 1820s account of Cornish fishing ports. Even Mevagissey, while its streets were 'frequently dirty', was noted as a place in which 'from time immemorial' the houses of the inhabitants 'have been proverbial for cleanliness'.<sup>34</sup> This was perhaps overstating things, as Mevagissey suffered severely in the cholera

outbreak of 1848 and was dismissed bluntly by Murray's *Handbook* of 1859 as 'noted for dirt and pilchards'.<sup>35</sup>

Dubious smells and poor sanitation were becoming less commonplace in urban Britain after mid-century as sanitary inspectors and suburban builders set about their work. In such a context, Cornwall's fishing ports became ripe for 'othering', seeming to contain the essential primitiveness and the proximity to nature lacking in centres of modernity. From the 1850s narrow streets and even bad smells served to add to the 'strangeness' of the fishing communities when gazed upon by the modern sophisticate. For Walter White in the 1850s places such as Looe and Polperro were not merely picturesque; they were 'queer-looking', 'strange' and 'rare'. Moreover they were 'foreign'.<sup>36</sup> The American observer Elihu Burritt in the 1860s found Looe to be a 'strange-looking, wild, scrawny village' with houses the 'most un-English in appearance that I had ever seen in England - looking like a Mediterranean fishing village broken off whole and transposed upon this Cornish coast'. Not only were Cornish fishing ports now spatially adrift; they were temporally unmoored. St.Ives, for Burritt, seemed to have 'drifted in here whole, from some portion of an older world'.<sup>37</sup> This discourse then became more commonplace and by the 1900s places like Polperro were being routinely described as charming, old-world quaint and picturesque.<sup>38</sup>

At first, 'othering' focused on place rather than people, as did the picturesque discourse in general. The inhabitants only made fleeting appearances. In the 1850s White, for example, had noted only the 'hardy and adventurous' fishermen of Newlyn who 'had sailed from thence on a mackerel boat of sixteen tons for Australia'.<sup>39</sup> For all the other-worldliness of St.Ives Burritt found its people 'loyal, patriotic, intelligent and virtuous', textbook subjects of modernity.<sup>40</sup> It was the Reverend Richard Warner in 1809 who had pre-figured later representations of the fishing communities. 'The inhabitants', he wrote of Mousehole, 'exhibit the finest specimen of Cornish strength and beauty. The broad and muscular outline of the male, and the luxuriant contour of the female form, here, evince that the

climate, food, or employment of these people, (or perhaps all together) are highly conducive to the maturation and perfection of the human figure'.<sup>41</sup> But it was to be the artists based at Newlyn in the 1880s who brought the people of these communities back into the frame of the picture, as primitive components of the landscape.

### **Artistic colonisers : the imperial gaze**

Artistic attention had to await two very material developments, better communications and the internationalization of European art. The first of these, in the form of railways, made sketching expeditions from the artistic centres to the peripheries feasible. Once the west Cornish railway system was linked to the network radiating from London, Cornwall became more accessible for the English artist. By the early 1870s J. Henry Martin was painting the Mounts Bay and Newlyn area, although his work was mainly landscapes.<sup>42</sup> Martin was the forerunner of the large-scale migration of artists that began in 1882. The first painters who settled in Newlyn, Walter Langley and Edwin Harris from Birmingham, were soon followed by a group that included Frank Bramley, Tom Gotch, Chevallier Tayler, Elizabeth Armstrong, Frank Bourdillon, Norman Garstin and Stanhope Forbes. Forbes later became regarded as the leading spokesman for this 'Newlyn School', partly the result of his artistic talents and partly because of the survival of his written correspondence and the fact that he outlived almost all his contemporaries, staying in the Newlyn area until his death in 1947.<sup>43</sup>

Why did so many artists descend on Newlyn in such a short period? Norman Garstin later identified three 'determining' causes.<sup>44</sup> These were the climate, the sympathy and friendship of fellow artists, and the environment. The mild climate allowed the painters to pursue their ideal of painting directly onto canvas 'en plein air' rather than in the studio, while the 'good light' was another oft-cited reason. But the notion of 'good light' was spread to other artists by word of mouth. In this respect it is noticeable how close in age was the first generation of Newlyn artists. Of 18 artists discussed in Fox and Greenacre's *Artists of the Newlyn*

*School*, 15 were born between 1854 and 1860.<sup>45</sup> The existence of an artistic network with shared experiences of the art schools of London and Paris and the earlier artistic colonies of Pont Aven, Douarnenez and Concarneau was a prior condition for the dissemination of the technical advantages of Newlyn.

This generation of artists had a shared background and shared ideals. They were committed to what Stanhope Forbes called 'unflinching realism'.<sup>46</sup> For admirers this was an art that was 'not interested in mere prettiness ... they sought character, and ... pursuit of truth'.<sup>47</sup> Here was an art that supposedly erased sentiment and narrative in pursuit of a literal transcription of society, a 'fidelity to nature' and the realistic depiction of light, shade and colour.<sup>48</sup> Yet the 'realism' of the first generation of the Newlyn School had clear limits. The artists could not escape the consumers' demands and works such as Walter Langley's *Among the Missing – Scene in a Cornish Fishing Village* (1884) or Stanhope Forbes' *By Order of the Court* (1890) contained both sentiment and narrative. This was a 'realism' 'coloured by a leaning towards drama and pathos'.<sup>49</sup> It was technically influenced by French realist painters such as Bastien-Lepage but firmly located in an English tradition of genre painting. As one critic in 1892 stated, it was 'pathetic genre'.<sup>50</sup>

'Realism' was more of an approach to representation – local models, authentic background, open air painting - than a scientific quest to record the life of a community. Some themes were favoured, such as grief and stoicism, reflection on a life of hardship, or emotional dignity in the face of natural disasters. Driven by both the need to market their products and by their own sense of 'taste' the Newlyn artists preferred not to dwell on unpleasant aspects of poverty or on difficult moral issues. Weisberg thus views them as part of an English 'rustic naturalism'.<sup>51</sup> In practice their ideological assumptions and the accompanying internal tensions framed the representation of the local community. Subjects had to be 'wholesome'.<sup>52</sup> This desire to avoid the 'crude' was embedded in the values of the English painterly gaze. As Forbes put it, the search was for 'beauty' and

'charm'.<sup>53</sup> The mundane could be represented, but it had to fit certain preconditions. For the Newlyn artists, and perhaps especially for Stanhope Forbes, 'charm' was to be found in a nostalgic search for the 'old-fashioned' and the 'simple'.<sup>54</sup>

This relates to the third self-confessed attraction of Newlyn for the artists – the local environment. For Forbes 'the little port was active and picturesque, and the commerce of the place, carried on under more primitive conditions, was none the less attractive to the artist's eye'.<sup>55</sup> Newlyn and its people appeared to be closer to the 'nature' that the artists celebrated. Recollecting the attractions of the place twenty years later, Langley also highlighted the 'picturesque occupation of the fisherfolk'.<sup>56</sup> Forbes noted how the people were 'weather stained and tanned into harmony by the sun and the salt wind, so that the whole scene was in keeping and of one piece. Nature ... has built up a race of people well knit and comely, fit inhabitants of such a region'.<sup>57</sup> Yet, in choosing a fishing community the artists were working a well established vein of subject matter. The social realist painter Frank Holls had painted *No Tidings from the Sea* in 1871 after a short stay at Cullercoats in Northumberland. In this picture a suffering woman and her family grieve over missing fishermen while a signal light indicates a remaining glimmer of hope. This scene both prefigured the work of Langley (*But Men Must Work and Women Must Weep*, 1882) and Frank Bramley (*A Hopeless Dawn*, 1888) and may have been directly stimulated by the similar work of the Dutch painter Josef Israels in the fishing village of Zanderfoot in Holland in 1851/52.<sup>58</sup> By the 1880s the symbolic relationship of death and the sea meant that fishing communities possessed elevated allegorical potential and the combination of marine painting and genre had become firmly established.<sup>59</sup>

Vernon has argued this representation of the Cornish 'othered' the people, as well as their places. It was an 'othering', an ascribed identity, which also had to know its place. Difference from the modern and the urban was exalted, only to be denied by the 'all-knowing, imperial gaze of the English artist'.<sup>60</sup> In turn, through

the technique of 'realism', the artist narrated the primitive condition of the people in order to express some truth or moral value apparent only to their superior knowledge and sensitivity. It was a subjectivity that could only co-exist with poverty and hardship. Indeed, these were essential components of the 'primitive' scene.

This suggests at least one point of contact between the artistic gaze and the material conditions of everyday life of the Newlynians. But the choice of subject matter equally entailed absences and lack of contact with other aspects of local life. For instance the focus is on the exchange and the servicing of the fishing industry rather than the production of the fish. The common artistic viewpoint is from shore to sea. The sea is a background and frames the community but the actual activities of the absent men at sea remain largely invisible. Meanwhile, on shore, religious life, despite its importance for the local community, is rarely depicted.<sup>61</sup> And while the artists may have leaned towards drama there were no attempts to record the drama of the riots of May 1896 when Newlynians attacked East Anglian boats that fished on Sundays.<sup>62</sup> Dodd suggests that in the artistic gaze the 'recent experience of the Cornish - of mass emigration, of a declining tin industry, of the decimation of the fishing industry by European competition' were absent.<sup>63</sup> While emigration is referred to indirectly in various paintings, for example Forbes' *The Letter* (1898), Henry Scott Tuke's *The Message* (1890) and Langley's *Anxious News* (1883), the community was indeed rendered timeless by the implied 'tradition' and 'archaism' of its ways. Such absences might suggest that the artistic gaze had little connection with actual material conditions.<sup>64</sup>

### **Histories of fishing : the modernist gaze**

As the 'modern' west European of the nineteenth century encountered the 'other', they also erased their history. Primitive peoples were defined as peoples without history, existing in a timeless vacuum.<sup>65</sup> Timelessness was applied not just in the colonial context overseas but in encounters on nearer peripheries. Of course, despite the 'timeless' motif attached to them, Cornish fishing communities had

hardly been unchanging over the previous 100 years. Around 1870 Joseph Polsue catalogued the various improvements at such places as Gorran Haven, St.Ives, Polperro, Looe, Porthleven and Mevagissey. At the latter place there were 'several modern well built houses in or near the town'.<sup>66</sup> More generally, the Cornish fishing industry had been undergoing change during the nineteenth century in two main ways. First, there was a changing division of labour. Part-time inshore seasonal seine fishing, predominantly for pilchards, and providing employment for a few weeks or months at the most from August onwards, had declined relative to full time all year round drift fishing for herring, mackerel and pilchards.<sup>67</sup> In an inversion of what might be expected, the more capitalistic variety of fishing was ceding to one characterised by small units and a more egalitarian ownership structure, described in 1838 as a 'poor man's fishery'.<sup>68</sup> At the same time the intense, periodic community involvement of the seine fishery was giving way to an industry where separate gender spheres were inscribed more profoundly on local life.

Second, local fishermen had sailed further in their search for fish stocks, spending increasing proportions of the year away from their home ports. In 1816 St.Ives fishermen had begun to take advantage of the Irish herring fishery, to be followed in 1821 and 1823 by boats from Newlyn and Mousehole respectively. Around the same time even small boats might join in the Plymouth based herring and mackerel fishery.<sup>69</sup> By 1864 evidence was being given to the Sea Fisheries Commission that fishermen from Newlyn had extended their drift fishing to the North Sea and Ireland.<sup>70</sup> In the 1880s, growing numbers of Cornish boats were making the long trip as far as Scotland.<sup>71</sup> Cornish fishing communities thus shared in the general expansion of fishing, although in a far less spectacular way than those affected by the rise of the North Sea trawler fleets after the 1840s.<sup>72</sup> Overall, the 368 drift boats of 1827, with an estimated capitalisation of around £92,000, had grown to become 624 boats by 1883, valued at £368,000.<sup>73</sup> By the latter date the capitalisation of the drift boats was about 50% higher than that of the seine concerns.

The Cornish fishing industry had continued to grow, albeit slowly, even when Cornish mining was faltering.

Table 1

Population change, 1831-1891 (%)

	1831-41	1841-51	1851-61	1861-71	1871-81	1881-91
Newlyn	+11	+22	-2	+11	+4	-1
Cornish fishing parishes	+12	+4	+3	+6	-1	-1
Cornwall	+14	+4	+4	-2	-9	-3

Source: Published Census Reports, 1831-91.

As Table 1 illustrates, population change in the Cornish fishing ports before the 1860s closely mirrored the general demographic pattern in Cornwall. Strong growth in the 1830s flattened out in the middle decades of the century. However, there was some expansion in the 1860s. Significantly, this immediately followed improved railway links, at a time when mass emigration was leading to actual depopulation in mining and farming districts. In the 1870s population loss set in, although the fishing communities escaped the scale of depopulation endemic in de-industrialising Cornwall. Newlyn matched the general pattern of fishing parishes after 1851, although it showed more buoyancy in the 1860s and 1870s. But the village had grown very rapidly earlier, in the 1840s, at a time when the rate of population growth was falling in the other parishes.

The geography of the fishing industry in these decades adds another, contrasting aspect to the picture. Census data, indicating full time drift fishermen rather than part-time or seasonal seine fishermen, show a total male employment in fishing in Cornwall of around 2,100 in 1851. By 1881 this had grown to 3,200, a figure

very close to the estimated size of the Cornish fleet at the time of the International Fisheries Exhibition of 1883, when it was said to employ 3,000 men and boys.<sup>74</sup> In both 1851 and 1881 Paul parish, including Newlyn and Mousehole, was the principal location for these fishermen, but the numbers had only risen by 10% in 30 years, from approximately 960 to around 1,060. In contrast, other ports, in particular St.Ives, Porthleven, Looe and the smaller ports of Sennen and Gorran saw much greater percentage increases in the numbers of fishermen returned in the Census. Paul's share of all full time Cornish fishermen fell from 45% to 32% in this period.<sup>75</sup>

From this history it can be seen that Newlyn had established itself as the main port for drift fishing before mid-century. But it had few seine concerns. As the switch from seining to drifting took place after mid-century structural change was therefore greater in ports such as St.Ives, Mevagissey or Looe. In relative terms Newlyn therefore experienced less qualitative change than these other ports in the decades before 1881, although, in quantitative terms, it remained the most important port in the local fishing economy. While growing absolutely, Newlyn also had few visible examples of modernisation in its built environment. The over 400 fishing vessels in the Newlyn fleet were still making use of one, small, medieval harbour and landing their fish on the open beach as late as 1880, despite intermittent proposals for new harbour works since 1795.<sup>76</sup> When the artists arrived they therefore found a suitable candidate for picturesque 'timelessness'. It was certainly a better candidate than Porthleven, a place that Forbes briefly visited before settling on Newlyn, but one where considerable investment in the harbour had stimulated the local fishing industry to a much more rapid growth between 1851 and 1881.

### **Two communities, two cultures?**

Artists and locals were divided in a number of obvious ways, by class, culture, gender, age and origin. As Marion Whybrow notes, the figures and landscapes of west Cornwall provided 'romance and reality to a hypnotic degree for people who

could observe from the safe divide of a different class and culture'.<sup>77</sup> Most artists were from middle class professional families. Stanhope Forbes' father was a railway manager while Frank Wright Bourdillon's had been in the Indian Civil Service. Fred Hall and Henry Scott Tuke were sons of doctors and Elizabeth Armstrong the daughter of a Canadian government official. Meanwhile A.Chevallier Tayler was the son of a solicitor, Norman Garstin came from a minor Irish landed family and Thomas Cooper Gotch's family had made their money from shoe manufacture and banking in the east Midlands.<sup>78</sup> The only major exception was Walter Langley, son of a Birmingham tailor and apprenticed at 15 years old to a lithographer. Over time class differences were formalised in Newlyn as the artists gradually moved up the hill to houses with commanding views over the bay, or even out of Newlyn altogether and into the genteel middle class terraces of nearby Penzance.<sup>79</sup>

However, despite class and spatial divides the dominant reading of relations between the two groups seems to be one of unproblematic integration. Stanhope Forbes had some initial doubts in 1884 about both local religious attitudes – 'I am in a hot tub of narrow-minded bigotry and bigotry of the worst kind' – and cleanliness: 'These dirty untidy looking people are indeed different from the ... bretonnes you have seen posing for me at Cancale and Quimperle ... We are accustomed to think in England that in all sanitary arrangements and general cleanliness we are centuries in advance of those benighted foreigners. This at least in Newlyn, Porthleven and Cornwall generally is a sweet fiction'.<sup>80</sup> But early misgivings soon gave way to public comments of appreciation, of the 'kindly reception at the hands of the natives', who were a 'kindly disposed set of inhabitants'.<sup>81</sup> Such comments, made to Cornish audiences, have since been uncritically repeated.

However, such a rosy picture can be qualified. Writings of later generations of locally born people are more hesitant and ambivalent. John Corin accepts that 'by degrees they became accepted and integrated into the community,

particularly in the second generation, although they did to some extent fuel the move towards de-industrialisation in taking over lofts and fishermen's dwellings'.<sup>82</sup> John Chambers goes further and asserts that 'by and large the Newlyn painters were never fully integrated into the local community, they were politely tolerated but they were essentially seen as outsiders, their middle class values and life styles viewed with some, if not deep, local suspicion by the non-conformist fishing village community'.<sup>83</sup> Reminiscences from locally born contemporaries are striking for their lack of mention of the artists. More of these exist for St.Ives and here the artists are almost totally absent from accounts of local life.<sup>84</sup> This echoes their treatment in the pages of local newspapers such as the *Cornishman* in the 1880s. While noting submissions to the Royal Academy and their public theatrical entertainments, the newspaper was much more concerned with the price of fish, the progress in building new piers at Newlyn and the unceasing round of chapel events.<sup>85</sup> This literature strongly suggests two parallel communities, pursuing their own lives side by side but with limited direct contact.

Misunderstandings could also arise from different readings by artists and locals. For instance Walter Langley is repeatedly represented as the artist who most 'identified emotionally and politically with the Cornish fishermen and their families'.<sup>86</sup> Yet this is at odds with the remark of one Newlyn local historian, who claimed that 'Langley was apparently unpopular in a community that was affronted by his irreligious attitude and his extreme political views'.<sup>87</sup> Comments by Forbes in 1884 and 1885 that Langley was 'reviled in Newlyn because of his support' of Charles Bradlaugh support this interpretation.<sup>88</sup> On a more subtle note, C.Morton Raymont, born in the early 1870s at St.Ives, remembered a concert given by the artists. They had invited the woman who cleaned the hall to the performance. 'One of the artists came and asked her how she liked it. "Aw, 'tes beautiful", she said "but I wish to Gawd 'twas awver" (over)'.<sup>89</sup>

If locals sometimes resisted the allure of the artists' culture, they also drew firm boundaries around elements of their own. The potential flashpoint was religion and the local importance of Sunday observance. While the artists were generally agnostic, the fishing communities were firmly attached to Methodism. In 1851 84% of church-goers at Paul and 76% at St.Ives attended the Methodist chapels.<sup>90</sup> Despite Forbes' irritation at local attitudes, the Newlyn artists accepted an informal ban on Sunday painting. At St.Ives, attitudes were, if anything, even stronger. In 1890 'a Japanese artist, who visited St.Ives on a recent Sunday, and commenced painting ... had a lively half hour with a large number of children. They threw missiles at him and threatened to tell the policeman if he didn't clear out!'<sup>91</sup> Relations between artists and locals at St.Ives seem to have been more strained than at Newlyn, possibly due to the more 'nomadic' character of the artists visiting St.Ives and their international background, a factor adding further to class and cultural divides.

It was at St.Ives that the normal tolerant relations temporarily broke down. In the summer of 1897 an art journalist reported from the town that 'artists, always pretty numerous, are, I think, very welcome to the fisher folk'.<sup>92</sup> Yet, just two months later, some artists unwisely intervened in the heated aftermath of a municipal election involving an unsuccessful 'fisherman's candidate'. Some violence ensued, triggered, it was claimed by the defeated candidate, by an insult proffered by an artist to a Methodist preacher. On the following morning a party of artists set up their easels as usual on the beach. 'They had not been at work many minutes before they were surrounded by a crowd of fishermen, who politely asked them to clear off the beach'.<sup>93</sup> At a time of political tension the fishermen were asserting their ownership of the beach. Class differences were as much the issue in this dispute as 'community'. One artist attacked the creation of a 'class antagonism where none ought to exist' and another, in a speech to local councillors and businessmen at the Porthminster Hotel, spoke to general support of 'the attack by a small section of the inhabitants', caused by 'a little primeval ignorance'.<sup>94</sup>

Local members of the middle classes shared many of the artists' values and put more value on the possible economic benefits.<sup>95</sup> Artists employed models, built studios and generally injected money into the local community.<sup>96</sup> When laying the foundation stone of the Newlyn Art Gallery in 1895, the Cornish born benefactor Passmore Edwards noted that 'these gentlemen [the artists] are interpreting ... and ... adding to the wealth of Cornwall'.<sup>97</sup> On the opening of this same gallery, Lord St. Levan noted a further cultural 'debt' owed to the Newlyn artists: 'they contributed to the education and formation of the tastes of the people of the neighbourhood'.<sup>98</sup> The Newlyn artists were thus co-opted by the local middle and landed classes into a paternalistic role, one they had slipped easily into by the later 1890s, helping, for example, to start a metalworking class 'to find employment for the spare moments of fisher-lads, and certainly a more admirable safety valve for their superfluous energy could not have been devised'.<sup>99</sup> By the Edwardian period artists at Newlyn and, perhaps to a lesser extent, at St. Ives, had thus found their niche in the local class structure. This institutionalised the differences between them and the working class fishing community and provided a familiar framework for mutual respect. Differing values but mutual, if guarded, toleration, echo very closely the relations of artists and villagers in other art colonies in Britain, such as Staithes in Yorkshire.<sup>100</sup>

This reminds us in turn that the artists might be viewed as a part of a 'project' to incorporate the 'traditional' into ideas of Englishness. While fishing communities were constructed as a primitive, conservative and timeless 'other' they were also being recuperated as part of a reconstructed English 'nation', one that included the domestic, the rural and the provincial. Bendiner argues that the turn to Cornwall 'stemmed in part from a desire to attract the British public'.<sup>101</sup> Forbes' description of Newlyn in 1884 as 'a sort of English Concarneau' was not, as it is often read, an explicit allusion to the shared Celticity of Brittany and Cornwall but an appeal to a familiar Englishness. Forbes saw Newlyn as 'a corner of [his] native land'. But when listing the features of 'this fair English county, ... the

wild grandeur of its rugged coast, or ... the softer beauty of its valleys and wooded glades', or lamenting the 'extinction of so many beautiful parts of our English landscape: the thatched roof, the little latticed windows, the many characteristic and essentially cottage features', Forbes seems to be laying claim to Cornwall as a part of a southern English rural landscape.<sup>102</sup> Yet the artists' incorporation of Newlyn into an English nationhood soon clashed with another interpretation of this 'remote other', as a Celtic periphery.<sup>103</sup> In the Edwardian period and later in the twentieth-century it was to be the 'Celtic' representation that became fixed in Cornwall rather than the representation of 'rural England'.<sup>104</sup> For, while the space of possibilities allowed the artists to fix their image of Newlyn as a 'traditional' community of 'fisherfolk' in the 1880s, it did not allow a discourse of essential Englishness to become equally fixed.

### **The space of possibilities**

So were there components in the social history of Newlyn that helped to make it a suitable place for the artists' representations? In the mid-1880s Walter Langley decided to return to Birmingham but he made few attempts to portray working class poverty in the city. When his Newlyn pictures began to sell he hastened back to Newlyn.<sup>105</sup> Fishing communities like Newlyn could be subjects of a social realist narrative; industrial cities like Birmingham could not. Here the dominant discourse of art provided the limits of the potential subject. What made poverty picturesque was the relationship between it and nature. Fishing communities generally met the requirement of harmony with nature, with their workers battling the elements in a constant struggle to win their livelihood, in a context where nature dramatically and regularly interrupted their endeavours. Within this broad discourse, Newlyn may have been particularly attractive because of the structure of its fishing industry. Drift-fishing, the 'poor-man's fishery' seemed simpler, more egalitarian, more 'traditional' than the merchant dominated seine fisheries of other ports, irrespective of the fact that the more capitalistic seine fishing was the older element of Cornish fishing. But Newlyn had never been a seining port and, although their design had been improved markedly since the 1830s, its small,

locally owned sailing boats were sufficiently 'traditional' from the point of view of the artists who were, presumably, unaware of this local history.<sup>106</sup> The artists were also seeking a particular built environment; it had to be 'old' as well as simple, resonant of the 'traditional' as well as echoing the poverty of its inhabitants. Newlyn was still sufficiently 'old' in 1882. According to Stanhope Forbes, 'when I first remember Newlyn, it was full of quaint and interesting corners, rambling old streets and buildings picturesquely piled together; and though not, perhaps, possessing any very remarkable architectural features, still attractive in their unostentatious simplicity'.<sup>107</sup> A significant proportion of the housing stock in 1880 was still of a courtyard plan, combining lower story fish cellars with dwellings above.<sup>108</sup>

However, in another sense, the artists were also seeking selected aspects of modernity. Full-time deep-sea fishing had created gendered divisions of labour that were much more marked than in the part-time fishery and the seining ports. Paintings such as Forbes' *A Fish Sale on a Cornish Beach* (1885) or Langley's *Breadwinners* (1896) clearly portrayed this gendered division of labour as women fish sellers marketed on land the fish that their men had caught at sea. But other paintings, for example Langley's *But Men Must Work and Women Must Weep* (1883), with its portrayal of mother and wife anxiously waiting the return of their menfolk, played on an ideal view of gender relations dominant in late nineteenth century society. With their men away from home for a proportion of the year the women were left ashore in a position that could be read as one of passively awaiting their absent men. This relationship was one easily recognised by late nineteenth century consumers of the Newlyn artists' products as the 'natural' gender division at a time when an ideology of separate spheres had become firmly established.

This combination of elements – hardship, a marginal location (but one close to a convenient railhead for transport of paintings to the London market)<sup>109</sup>, a particular 'traditional' built environment, separate gender spheres – might have

made Newlyn especially suitable for the artistic gaze. ‘Tradition’ might also involve a romanticised sense of ‘community’, seen in contrast to the bourgeois individualism of the towns. Hardship had to be shared and not suffered in individual isolation. The desire of the artists for indicators of a harmonious community could possibly be linked to a final set of factors making Newlyn an appropriate setting for their representations. Tom Cross claims that ‘doors were always open and relationships were close, with families extended by elderly relatives and orphaned children’.<sup>110</sup> This, if true, could be another measure of ‘primitiveness’ at odds with the privatised nuclear family norm of Victorian Britain. However, Census data imply a more ambiguous picture. Table 2 compares the family structure in Paul and St.Ives parishes in 1881 with their neighbours in agricultural St.Buryan, urban Penzance and mining St.Just.

Table 2  
Family structures, 1881 (%)

	Solitary/ frereche	simple	Extended	N
Paul	8	65	27	266
St.Ives (fishing districts)	7	79	14	101
St.Ives (non-fishing)	18	64	18	153
St.Buryan	11	65	24	223
Penzance	14	59	27	268
St.Just	8	71	21	244

Source: Census enumerators’books, 1881 for Paul, St.Ives, St.Buryan, Penzance and St.Just RG11/41-42, 44-51.<sup>111</sup>

The proportion of extended family households in England and Wales peaked in the second half of the nineteenth century, at just over 20%.<sup>112</sup> Allowing for the standard sample error, the proportion of extended families in Newlyn’s fishing

community was slightly higher than this. Yet certainly Penzance and possibly St.Buryan and St.Just also show slightly higher than normal proportions of extended families. The exception was St.Ives, where fishing families in 1881 displayed a much more 'modern' structure. The snapshot evidence provided by the Census does not therefore point to any major difference in family structure between Newlyn and other local communities. But a family structure dominated by conjugal household units could still co-exist with a high degree of relatedness between households and a widespread and unusually keen awareness of kin relationships.<sup>113</sup> For example, in the fishing community of Seahouses in Northumberland it has been claimed this extended to second and third cousins.<sup>114</sup> Indeed, other data from the Census imply that, in terms of inter-relatedness and kin networks, both Newlyn and St.Ives may have been markedly different from other places in Cornwall. Table 3 compares the proportions of residents who were born in the parish of enumeration in the same five districts.

Table 3

Proportions of the population born in the parish of enumeration, 1881(%)

	%	N
Paul	85.9	1156
St.Ives (fishing districts)	92.6	433
St.Ives (non-fishing)	69.6	586
St.Buryan	70.3	1124
Penzance	51.4	1183
St.Just	75.9	1105

Source: Census enumerators'books, 1881 for Paul, St.Ives, St.Buryan, Penzance and St.Just RG11/41-42, 44-51.

The population of Paul and 'downalong' St.Ives were significantly more likely to have been born in the parish. Such low rates of in-migration seem to be common to fishing communities. In Cullercoats in Northumberland there was, as in

Cornwall, a high proportion born in the parish between 1851 and 1891 plus a high concentration of names and a persistence of residence.<sup>115</sup> This suggests that fishing communities were considerably more 'closed' than other types of community, and may have helped to produce a sense of homogeneity within fishing communities making them appear qualitatively different.

### **Conclusion**

The representations of the rural naturalists of the Newlyn School were produced by cultural and economic factors working themselves out in the centre rather than the periphery. The search for the 'primitive' in maritime communities owes much to wider discourses of 'taste' in Victorian art and culture. Nevertheless, some aspects of the socio-economic structures of Newlyn may help to explain why this place was particularly suitable for the artists and why some aspects of their vision became fixed. The modest pace of change in the built environment and the structures of the fishing industry over the previous half century, the close-knit sense of community reproduced by low rates of in-migration, and the economics of drift fishing, the 'poor-man's fishery', all held obvious attraction for those seeking out their 'primitive' counterpoint of modernity.<sup>116</sup> In addition Newlyn happened to be just the right size for the figure painters. Forbes visited St. Ives but found 'rather too much going on to work comfortably'.<sup>117</sup> Newlyn was large enough in which to find a variety of models and subjects but not too busy. There was sufficient space for the artists' work. In these ways social processes, while not determining the outcomes, had, in Wahrman's words, imposed 'certain constraints on the possible and plausible ways in which (the social) can be understood'.<sup>118</sup> While the dominant influence was from outside the merely local, local history had produced a space in which some of the painterly representations could be fixed and, later, flourish.

But even timeless paradises change. During the 1880s the courtyard houses of Newlyn began to give way to terraced rows of cottages.<sup>119</sup> In the decade from

1884 two new piers were completed and Newlyn became a haven for a growing number of east-coast boats fishing Cornish waters. 'For many, Newlyn became less interesting, less "picturesque"'.<sup>120</sup> Nonetheless, a conjunction of economic and cultural processes, both local and non-local, during the nineteenth century had helped to make Newlyn the site for fixing a representation of Cornish fishing communities as unchanging and traditional. Paradoxically, this was just at the point when the pace of change in Newlyn began to pick up markedly. Nevertheless, despite this, Newlyn was to maintain its more visible position in representations of Cornwall, both in the centre and in the margins, as the new century began.

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#### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> This article originated in a paper presented to a maritime history conference at Exeter University in 1998. I am grateful to those present for their comments and to the anonymous referees of an earlier draft of the article.
- <sup>2</sup> Examples can be found in Malcolm Chapman, The Celts: The Construction of a Myth (London, 1992); Simon James, The Atlantic Celts: Ancient People or Modern Invention? (London, 1999); Chris Philo, 'A "Lyffe in Pyttes and Caves": Exclusionary Geographies of the West Country Tanners', Geoforum 29, 1998, 159-172; D. Sibley, Geographies of Exclusion: Society and Difference in the West (London, 1995); Rob Shields, Places on the Margin: Alternative Geographies of Modernity (London, 1991).
- <sup>3</sup> For the context of post-war British social history see Miles Taylor, 'The Beginnings of Modern British Social History?', History Workshop Journal, 43, 1997. For the more specific concern with marginal groups the classic work is E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (London, 1963).
- <sup>4</sup> The contrasting approaches are set out in Neville Kirk, 'History, language, ideas and post-modernism: a materialist view', Social History 19 (1994), 221-240 and Patrick Joyce, 'The end of social history?', Social History 20, 73-91.
- <sup>5</sup> Richard Price, 'Postmodernism as theory and history', in John Belchem and Neville Kirk (eds), Languages of Labour (Aldershot, 1997), p.27.
- <sup>6</sup> Dror Wahrman, Imagining the Middle Class: The Political Representation of Class in Britain, c.1780-1840 (Cambridge, 1995), pp.6 and 8.
- <sup>7</sup> John Walton, 'Seaside Resorts and Maritime History', International Journal of Maritime History 9 (1997), 125-147.
- <sup>8</sup> Paul Thompson, with Tony Wailey and Trevor Lummis, Living the Fishing (London,

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- 1983), p.15.
- <sup>9</sup> Thompson, Living the Fishing, p.22.
- <sup>10</sup> Thompson, Living the Fishing, p.26.
- <sup>11</sup> Malcolm Gray, The Fishing Industries of Scotland, 1790-1914: a Study in Regional Adaptation (Aberdeen, 1978).
- <sup>12</sup> See for example Philip Payton, The Making of Modern Cornwall (Redruth, 1992). A.K.Hamilton Jenkin, Cornish Seafarers: the smuggling, wrecking and fishing life of Cornwall (London, 1932) is the exception.
- <sup>13</sup> James Vernon, 'Border crossings: Cornwall and the English (imagi)nation', in Geoffrey Cubitt (ed.), Imagining Nations (Manchester, 1998), p.153.
- <sup>14</sup> David Crouch and Mark Toogood, 'Everyday abstraction: geographical knowledge in the art of Peter Lanyon', Ecumene 6 (1999), 75.
- <sup>15</sup> Cubitt, Imagining Nations, p.12.
- <sup>16</sup> Jane Smith Korey, 'As we belong to be: the ethnic movement in Cornwall, England', unpublished PhD thesis, Brandeis University, 1992.
- <sup>17</sup> Philip Dodd, 'Englishness and the national culture', in Robert Colls and Philip Dodd (eds), Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880-1920 (London, 1986), pp.1-28.
- <sup>18</sup> Philip Dodd, 'Gender and Cornwall: Charles Kingsley to Daphne du Maurier', in K.D.M.Snell (ed.), The Regional Novel in Britain and Ireland 1800-1990, (Cambridge, 1998), p.124.
- <sup>19</sup> Vernon, 'Border crossings', p.160.
- <sup>20</sup> For aspects of this shift see Bernard Deacon, 'Proto-regionalisation: the case of Cornwall', Journal of Regional and Local Studies 18 (1998), 27-41 and Philip Payton and Paul Thornton, 'The Great Western Railway and the Cornish-Celtic Revival', Cornish Studies 3 (1995), 83-103.
- <sup>21</sup> See, for example, John Rule, 'The home market and the sea fisheries of Devon and Cornwall in the nineteenth century', in Walter Minchinton (ed.), Population and Marketing: Two Studies in the History of the South West (Exeter, 1976), 123-139; John Corin, Fishermen's Conflict: The Story of Newlyn (Newton Abbot, 1988); Dave Smart, The Cornish Fishing Industry: a brief industry (Penryn, 1992).
- <sup>22</sup> See, for example, Kenneth Bendiner, An Introduction to Victorian Painting (London, 1985), p.103.
- <sup>23</sup> Vernon, 'Border crossings', p.162.
- <sup>24</sup> R.Pearse Chope (ed.), Early Tours in Devon and Cornwall (Newton Abbot, 1967), pp. 160, 195. See also Theophilus Botanista, Rural Beauties; or the natural history of the western counties (London, 1757, pp.67, 70.
- <sup>25</sup> Chope (ed.), Early Tours, p. 224. See also George Lipscomb, A Journey into Cornwall

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- (Warwick, 1799); Richard Polwhele, The History of Cornwall (London, 1803-1806), p.167.
- <sup>26</sup> For the features see Stephen Daniels, Fields of Vision (Cambridge, 1993).
- <sup>27</sup> William Gilpin, Observations on the Western Parts of England (London, 1808), p.197.
- <sup>28</sup> Daniel Carless Webb, Observations and Remarks during Four Excursions, made to various parts of Great Britain, in the years 1810 and 1811 (London, 1812), p.134; Daniel and Samuel Lysons, Magna Britannia, being a concise topographical account of the several counties of Great Britain, volume 3 Cornwall (London, 1814), p.180; Fortescue Hitchins and Samuel Drew, The History of Cornwall (Helston, 1824), p.401.
- <sup>29</sup> Richard Warner, A Tour through Cornwall (Bath, 1809), p.139.
- <sup>30</sup> George Alexander Cooke, Topography of Great Britain or British Traveller's Directory, and Travelling Companion, volume 1 (London, 1805), p.153.
- <sup>31</sup> Lipscomb, Journey, p.226.
- <sup>32</sup> Chope (ed.), Early Tours, p.260.
- <sup>33</sup> Webb, Observations, p.131.
- <sup>34</sup> Hitchins and Drew, History, p.471.
- <sup>35</sup> John Murray, A Handbook for Travellers in Devon and Cornwall (London, 1859), p.245.
- <sup>36</sup> Walter White, A Londoner's Walk to the Land's End; and a trip to the Scilly Isles (London, 1855), pp.175-179.
- <sup>37</sup> Elihu Burritt, A Walk from London to Lands End and back (London, 1868), pp.200-201, 239.
- <sup>38</sup> Clive Holland, From the North Foreland to Penzance (London, 1908), pp.276-284.
- <sup>39</sup> White, Londoner's Walk, p.239.
- <sup>40</sup> Burritt, Walk, p.240.
- <sup>41</sup> Warner, Tour, p.174.
- <sup>42</sup> Tom Cross, The Shining Sands: artists in Newlyn and St.Ives 1880-1930 (Tiverton, 1994), p.12.
- <sup>43</sup> Caroline Fox, Stanhope Forbes and the Newlyn School (Newton Abbot, 1993)
- <sup>44</sup> Norman Garstin, 'The Work of Stanhope A.Forbes', Studio, 33 (1901), p.88.
- <sup>45</sup> Caroline Fox and Francis Greenacre, Artists of the Newlyn School 1880-1900 (Newlyn, 1979).
- <sup>46</sup> Stanhope Forbes, 'A Newlyn Retrospect', Cornish Magazine 1 (1898), 83.
- <sup>47</sup> C.Lewis Hind, 'Stanhope A.Forbes, R.A.', Art Journal, Christmas1911, p.6.
- <sup>48</sup> Roger Langley and Elizabeth Knowles, Walter Langley: Pioneer of the Newlyn Art Colony (Bristol, 1997), p.21.
- <sup>49</sup> Julian Treuherz, Victorian Painting (London,1993), pp.181-182
- <sup>50</sup> Cited in Michael Canney, Paintings by artists of the Newlyn School, 1880-1900,

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- (Newlyn, 1958).
- <sup>51</sup> Gabriel P.Weisberg, The naturalist impulse in European art 1860-1905 (London, 1992), p.132.
- <sup>52</sup> Fox, Stanhope Forbes, p. 93
- <sup>53</sup> Stanhope A.Forbes, 'Cornwall from a Painters' Point of View', Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society Report 68 (1900), 59.
- <sup>54</sup> Fox and Greenacre, Newlyn School, p.65.
- <sup>55</sup> Forbes, 'Newlyn Retrospect', p.82.
- <sup>56</sup> Cited in Fox and Greenacre, Newlyn School, p.20.
- <sup>57</sup> Forbes, 'Cornwall', p.53.
- <sup>58</sup> Lionel Lambourne, Victorian Painting (London, 1999), p.338; John Chambers, The Auckland Bramley, (Penzance, 1999), p.8.
- <sup>59</sup> Treuherz, Victorian Painting, p.118.
- <sup>60</sup> Vernon, 'Border crossings', p.162.
- <sup>61</sup> Two exceptions were Forbes' *Soldiers and Sailors* (1891) and the St.Ives based W.H.Y.Titcomb's *Primitive Chapel, St.Ives* (1889)
- <sup>62</sup> See Corin , Fishermen's Conflict.
- <sup>63</sup> Dodd, 'Englishness', p.14. This argument would have greater force if the summary of 'recent experience' were more accurate. In fact in 1882 it was copper mining that had declined more dramatically than tin and there had been no 'decimation' of the Cornish fishing industry this early. See Payton, Modern Cornwall, 99-116.
- <sup>64</sup> This is the argument of Michael Jacobs, The Good and Simple Life: artist colonies in Europe and America (Oxford, 1985).
- <sup>65</sup> James, Atlantic Celts, pp.54-55.
- <sup>66</sup> Joseph Polsue, Lake's Parochial History of the County of Cornwall, volume 3 (Wakefield, 1974, originally published 1867-73), p. 333.
- <sup>67</sup> John Rowe, Cornwall in the Age of the Industrial Revolution (Liverpool, 1953), p.300. For the part-time aspect of seine fishing see Sea Fisheries Commission, minutes of evidence (London, 1864), p.473.
- <sup>68</sup> J.S.Courtenay, 'A treatise on the statistics of Cornwall', Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society Report 6 (1838), 81-140.
- <sup>69</sup> Courtenay, 'Treatise', pp.130-132.
- <sup>70</sup> Sea Fisheries Commission, p.531.
- <sup>71</sup> Rule, 'Home market', p.130. Cornish boats were noted in the North East herring fishery as early as 1820 (see Thompson, Living the Fishing, p.35).
- <sup>72</sup> F.G.Aflafo, The Sea-Fishing Industry of England and Wales (London, 1904), pp.210-212; Rule, 'Home Market', p.125.

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- <sup>73</sup> Jonathan Couch, 'Essay on the natural history of the pilchard', Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society Report 3 (1835), 65-96; James G. Bertram, The Unappreciated Fisher Folk: their round of life and labour (London, 1883), p.36.
- <sup>74</sup> Rule, 'Home market', p.128.
- <sup>75</sup> These figures are from a database comprising a sample of the Census Enumerators' Books for the whole of Cornwall in 1881. The population frame for the sample is modified Registration Sub-Districts, with variable sample proportions of one in two to one in ten designed to keep the standard error to a minimum.
- <sup>76</sup> Corin, Fishermen's Conflict, p.33
- <sup>77</sup> Marion Whybrow, St.Ives 1883-1993: Portrait of an Art Colony (Woodbridge, 1994), p. 21.
- <sup>78</sup> Fox and Greenacre, Newlyn School.
- <sup>79</sup> Iris Green, Artists at Home: Newlyn 1870-1900 (Newlyn, 1995).
- <sup>80</sup> Forbes' letters to his mother in 1884, cited in Bendiner, Victorian Painting, pp.111, 162.
- <sup>81</sup> Forbes, 'Cornwall', pp.51-52.
- <sup>82</sup> Corin, Fishermen's Conflict, p.115.
- <sup>83</sup> Chambers, Auckland Bramley, pp.13-14.
- <sup>84</sup> See William Paynter, Old St.Ives: The reminiscences of William Paynter (Penzance 1999); Eddie Murt, Downlong days: a St.Ives miscellany (St.Ives, 1994).
- <sup>85</sup> Cornishman, 1884-87.
- <sup>86</sup> John Halkes, A Century of Art in Cornwall 1889-1989 (Truro, 1989).
- <sup>87</sup> Ben Batten, Newlyn of Yesterday (Newlyn, 1983), p. 9.
- <sup>88</sup> Fox and Greenacre, Newlyn School, p. 98.
- <sup>89</sup> C.Morton Raymont, Memories of Old St.Ives (St.Ives, 1958) p.23.
- <sup>90</sup> Calculated from the unpublished schedules of the Religious Census, 1851, PRO HO129.
- <sup>91</sup> St.Ives Weekly Summary, 11 Oct 1890.
- <sup>92</sup> W.H.Bartlett, 'Summer Times at St.Ives, Cornwall', Art Journal 5 (1897), 293.
- <sup>93</sup> Cornishman, 4 Nov 1897.
- <sup>94</sup> St.Ives Weekly Summary 6 Nov 1897; Cornishman, 11 Nov 1897.
- <sup>95</sup> See the use of the description 'picturesque' in W.S.Lach-Szyma, Newlyn and its Pier (Newlyn, 1884), pp.23-34.
- <sup>96</sup> Fox, Stanhope Forbes, p.21; Ronald Perry, Ken Dean and Bryan Brown, Counterurbanisation: International Case Studies of Socio-Economic Change in the Rural Areas (Norwich, 1986), p.39.
- <sup>97</sup> Cornishman, 30 May 1895.

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- <sup>98</sup> Cornish Telegraph, 24 Oct 1895.
- <sup>99</sup> Forbes, 'Newlyn Retrospect' p. 89.
- <sup>100</sup> See Peter Phillips, The Staithe Group (Nottingham, 1993), pp.12-14.
- <sup>101</sup> Bendiner, Victorian Painting, p.109.
- <sup>102</sup> Forbes, 'Newlyn Retrospect' pp.82 and 90; 'Cornwall', pp.62 and 58.
- <sup>103</sup> See W.H.Hudson, The Land's End (London, 1908), pp.178-181.
- <sup>104</sup> See Ella Westland (ed.), Cornwall: The Cultural Construction of Place (Penzance, 1997).
- <sup>105</sup> Langley and Knowles, Walter Langley, pp.76-78.
- <sup>106</sup> Corin, Fishermen's Conflict, p. 88.
- <sup>107</sup> Forbes, 'Cornwall', p.56.
- <sup>108</sup> Corin, Fishermen's Conflict, p.47.
- <sup>109</sup> Jacobs, Good and Simple Life, p.145 points out how the nearness of 'primitive' Newlyn to 'modern' Penzance, with its convenient shopping and evening entertainments, was an extra attraction for Stanhope Forbes.
- <sup>110</sup> Cross, Shining Sands, p.28. See also Corin, Fishermen's Conflict, p.62.
- <sup>111</sup> Tables 2 and 3 are derived from sample proportions of one in two (St.Buryan) one in five (Paul), one in six (St.Ives and St.Just) and one in nine (Penzance).
- <sup>112</sup> Steven Ruggles, Prolonged connections: the rise of the extended family in nineteenth century England and America (Madison, 1987), p.5.
- <sup>113</sup> Barry Reay, Microhistories; Demography, society and culture in rural England, 1800-1930 (Cambridge, 1996), pp.164-168.
- <sup>114</sup> Eric King, 'A study of family histories in the fishing community of Seahouses , Northumberland between 1871 and 1921', CD-ROM (forthcoming) in L.Faulkner and R.Finnegan (eds), Project reports in family and community history (Milton Keynes, 2000).
- <sup>115</sup> Stephen Sanderson, 'A preliminary study into aspects of residential persistence and community ties in Cullercoats, a Northumbrian fishing village , between 1851 and 1891', CD-ROM in L.Faulkner and R.Finnegan (eds), Project reports in family and community history (Milton Keynes, 2000).
- <sup>116</sup> See Leone Levi, The Economic Condition of Fishermen (London, 1883), p.27 for evidence of lower savings and higher pauperism in St.Ives as compared with east coast ports.
- <sup>117</sup> Fox, Stanhope Forbes, p.10.
- <sup>118</sup> Wahrman, Imagining, p.6.
- <sup>119</sup> Corin, Fishermen's Conflict, p.47.
- <sup>120</sup> Cross, Shining Sands, p.120.