

THE IMPACT OF EXTERNAL SHOCKS UPON A PERIPHERAL ECONOMY: WAR
AND OIL IN TWENTIETH CENTURY SHETLAND.

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THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

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July 1995

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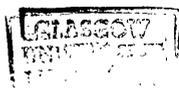
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Abstract

This thesis, within the context of the impact of external shocks on a peripheral economy, offers a socio-economic analysis of the effects of both World Wars and North Sea oil upon Shetland. The assumption is, especially amongst commentators of oil, that the impact of external shocks upon a peripheral economy will be disruptive of equilibrium, setting in motion changes which would otherwise not have occurred. By questioning the classic core-periphery debate, and re-assessing the position of Shetland - an island location labelled 'peripheral' because of the traditional nature of its economic base and distance from the main centres of industrial production - it is possible to challenge this supposition. This thesis attempts a comparison of both the economic and social effects of the three major shocks, deploying oral sources as well as more conventional quantitative material.

The thesis questions whether Shetland's apparent 'peripherality' has any historical foundations. Greater exposure to the world through trade, seafaring travel and emigration ensured that the three external shocks of this century had less permanent social consequences than may have been anticipated. Both World Wars brought naval and military personnel to Shetland, and saw the movement out of men and women from the isles. War experiences and contact with 'outsiders' had some effects on the attitudes and ideas of Shetlanders. But it is difficult to separate these from more long-term cultural change. In contrast, a great deal of concern was expressed over the social impact of North Sea oil, since the perceived vulnerability of this society, and its supposed unique features captured national and international interest. It was feared that the 'traditional way of life', arguably only devised as a reaction to oil, was under threat. But, as Shetland's history shows, it is not as susceptible to change as many may think, and represents a resilient society when exposed to external shocks.

Preface

1. Correct Terminology For Shetland.

The terms 'Shetland,' 'the Shetland Isles,' and 'the islands,' are used inter-changeably to mean the group of over a hundred different islands which make up the most northerly county of the British Isles. 'The Shetlands' is never used.

2. Use Of Dialect.

Oral sources have been used in this thesis, and transcribed in dialect. The problems of oral history as a source are not overlooked, and the transcription of Shetland dialect is an additional difficulty.¹ Brian Smith has noted that there is still concern over the use of dialect and its accessibility to a wider audience. But, he states that,

related to this, in my opinion, is a certain uneasiness Shetlanders still have about accepting their language as a literary language. ... Shetlanders often find dense dialect prose difficult to read, and they seem to think that others will have even more difficulty. I can understand this fear, but I don't take it seriously. D. H. Lawrence's play, The Daughter-In-Law, written in 1911, is entirely written in dialect, and hasn't been neglected. In fact, ..., English literature is full of dialect ... Elizabeth Gaskell, Tennyson, Dickens, even Hopkins.²

1. Davidoff, L., and Westover, B., (ed) Our Work, Our Lives, Our Words, Women's History and Women's Work, (1986), Thompson, P., The Voice of the Past: Oral History, (1988), and Editorial in Oral History, Autumn 1993, Vol.21, No.2. p.2.

2. Smith, B., 'The Development Of The Spoken And Written Shetland Dialect: A Historian's View,' in Waugh, D., (ed) [Title Unknown] (Forthcoming): made available by courtesy of the author.

The most notable sound in the Shetland dialect is the use of 'd' instead of 'th', and it is useful to be aware of easily translated words, such as:

da	- the
dan	- then
dare	- there
dere	- their
dat	- that
de	- you
dem	- them
dey	- they
dir	- their
dis	- this
du	- you
fae	- from
hae	- have
shu	- she
whaur	- where
whin	- when
whit	- what
wid	- would
win	- get to
wir	- were or our
wis	- was
wye	- way
yun	- that/those
yun's	- that is
yunder	- over there

But, for the sake of clarity it has been decided to change certain words to the English form, such as:

hed, or hid - had
fur - for

Other words are recognisably Scottish, such as

cam	- came
hae	- had
ken	- know
kent	- knew
oor	- our

oot - out
tae - to

Other unfamiliar words have been followed by the English equivalent in brackets, except for those widely used, such as:

peerie - small

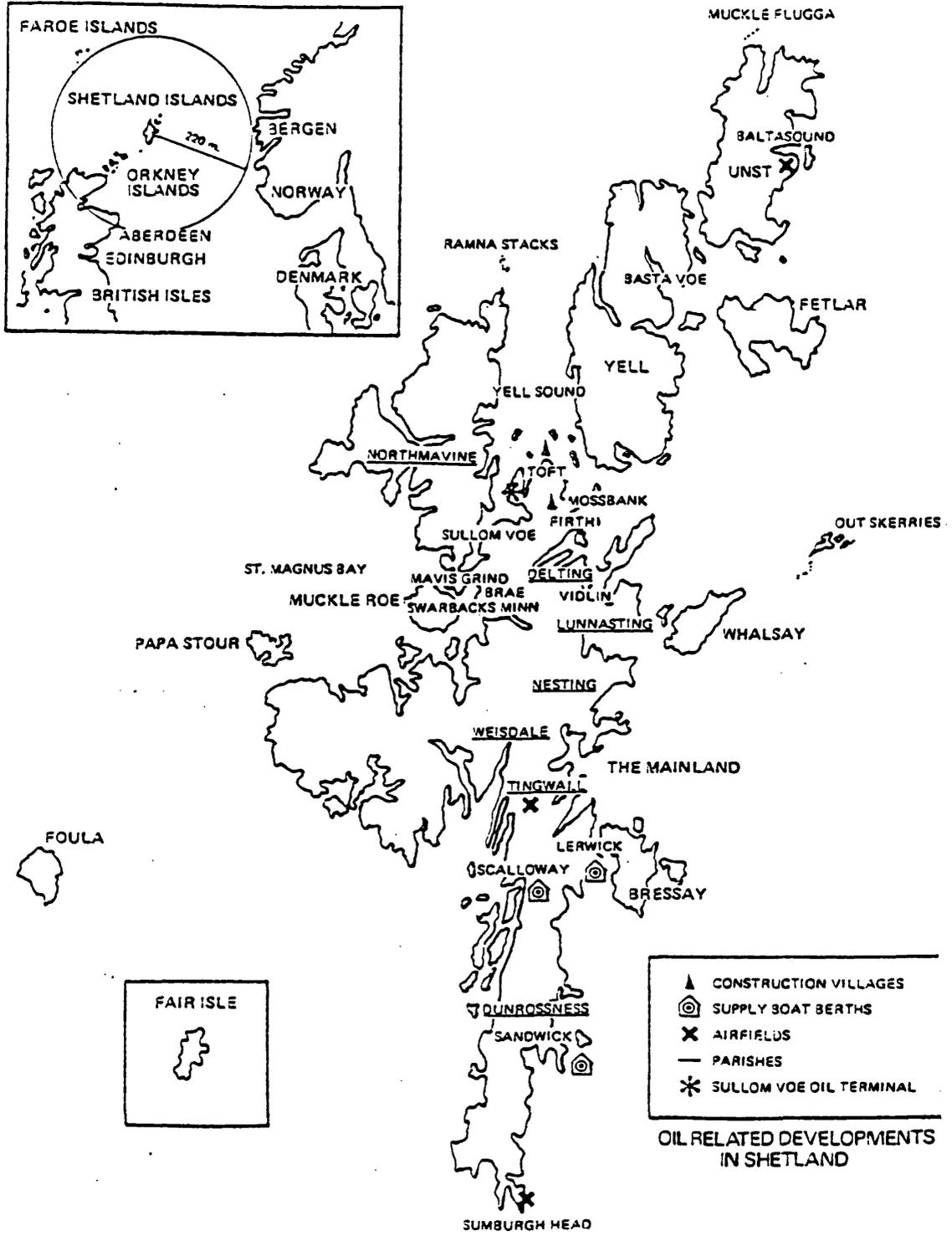
Individual's initials have been cited when using material specifically gathered for this thesis, whereas full names have been given where openly available in the archives. Date of births have been included to give an indication of the age of the individuals, and to differentiate between similar initials. Access to recordings undertaken for this thesis is now available in the Shetland Archives.

Glossary

aa	- all
about	- about
aff	- off
afore	- before
a grain	- a little bit
ain	- own
alang	- along
anidder	- another
atween	- between
auld	- old
awye	- away
aye	- always
bald	- throw
bide	- stay
bigged	- built
bridder	- brother
budder	- bother
caad	- called
cam	- came
dell	- to dig
doon	- down
dunna	- don't
ee	- always
een	- one
eens	- belong to one, people
fae	- from
fan	- found
fedder	- father
feenish	- finished
freend	- friend
geed/gud	- went
geen	- gone
gyann	- going
had	- to take a grip off
hime	- home
hoose	- house
i	- in
idder	- other
joost	- just
kale	- cabbage
lang	- long
leak	- like
lichts	- lights
mak	- make
mare	- more
me	- my
mede	- made
mesel	- myself
midder	- mother
nae	- no
nithin	- nothing

niver	- never
noo	- now
nort	- north
ony	- any
onybody	- anybody
ower	- over
peerie	- small
sae	- say
selt	- sold
smaa	- small
sooth	- south
tae	- to
tagidder	- together
tak	- take
tocht	- thought
toon	- town
twa	- two
wark	- work
wan	- one
we	- with
weemin	- women
weel	- well
wirk	- work
wrought	- to work
wye(s)	- way(s)
yea	- yes
yunder	- over there

Map of Oil Related Developments in Shetland.



(Source: Marshall, E., Shetland's Oil Era.)

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Professor M. A. Crowther and Doctor A. Durie for their supervision of this thesis; Professor R. H. Campbell for advise on sources and comments on draft chapters; Professor A. Slaven, the Centre for Business History, the Shetland Islands Council and subsequently the Economic and Social Research Council for funding; the secretarial staff in the Economic and Social History Department for their assistance; Staff at the Public Records Office, Scottish Records Office, Royal Bank of Scotland archives in Edinburgh, Shetland Museum, Ms M French at National Savings, Glasgow, Mrs Sandison at the Sandison Archives in Unst, and especially Brian Smith and Angus Johnson at the Shetland Archives; Mrs C. Mann at Shetland Council of Social Service; Mr J. Hunter in the Finance Department of the Shetland Islands Council, staff at the Lerwick Harbour Trust for access to material, and Mr Walterson for permission to use his cartoons. I was also helped with advice and information by: Professors John Parr, R. H. Trainor and J. F. Munro. I would also like to extend my gratitude to all the interviewees who allowed me to enter their homes, record their war memories, and look through collections of private papers and photographs; also my relatives in Aberdeen, Edinburgh and London, and the Crowthers for their excellent hospitality during my stay. Finally, my family and Clive for endless encouragement and support.

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List of Abbreviations

- A.R.P. - Air Raid Precautions.
- A.T.S. - Auxillary Training Service.
- E.N.S.A. - Entertainments National Services Association.
- H.I.D.B. - Highlands And Islands Development Board.
- NAAFI - Navy, Army, and Air Force Institutes.
- M.T.B. - Motor torpedo boat.
- P.R.O. - Public Record Office.
- R.N. - Royal Navy
- R.N.R. - Royal Naval Reserves
- S.A. - Shetland Archives.
- S.F.A. - Shetland Fishermen's Association.
- S.H.K.A. - Shetland Hand Knitters' Association
- S.I.C. - Shetland Islands Council.
- S.R.O. - Scottish Record Office.
- S.W.I.A. - Shetland Woollen Industries Association
- W.A.A.F. - Women's Auxiliary Air Force
- W.R.N.S. - Women's Royal Naval Service
- ST - Shetland Times
- SN - Shetland News
- NS - New Shetlander
- SL - Shetland Life
- b. d.- Date of Birth and Date of Death

INTRODUCTION.

A local historian summed up the attitude of many when he said,

Nothing in Shetland's history can compare with the coming of oil. The great herring industry possibly involved a greater number of people, but that was an industry with which Shetlanders felt familiar, and in which they could readily involve themselves because of their age-old familiarity with the sea and the fish in it. But oil was something new - something alien. Though once again the sea was involved, it was from beneath the sea that the harvest would this time come, and that was an unknown quantity - even perhaps a threat.¹

North Sea oil has been viewed as the most significant economic and social catalyst for the Highlands and Islands of Scotland this century.² The impact of external shocks such as this on traditional economies is usually seen by economic and social theorists as disruptive of equilibrium, setting in motion changes which would otherwise not have occurred.³ These theories sometimes take much for granted about both the nature of traditional economies, and the disruptive effects of outside influences. Shetland offers a suitable test case to study the impact of external forces upon a 'peripheral' area within the British economy.

This thesis concentrates on the impact of external shocks upon Shetland, viewing these within a historical

1. Irvine, J. W., Lerwick: the Birth and Growth of an Island Town. (1985) p.272.

2. McDowall, S., and Begg, H., Industrial Performance and Prospects in Areas Affected by Oil Developments. (1981) p.2.

3. Santos, T. D., 'The Structure of Dependence,' and Wallerstein, I., 'The Present State of the Debate on World Inequality,' in M. A. Seligson (ed) The Gap Between Rich and Poor: Contending Perspectives on the Political Economy of Development. (1984), Staniland, M., What is Political Economy? A Study of Social Theory and Underdevelopment. (1985), and Wilber, C. K., (ed) The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment. (1973)

perspective. It argues that without adequate historical knowledge of the isles, both the 'traditional' nature of Shetland society and the subsequent 'disruptive' effects of outside influences have been exaggerated. Because they have ignored the effects of previous incidents, some economists and sociologists have misinterpreted the effects of North Sea oil on Shetland. To understand the scale and nature of the impact of oil in an appropriate context, it is necessary to investigate the two previous shocks of this century: World Wars One and Two.

But there is a problem in separating the short-term and direct consequences of external shocks from those of other long-term factors. It is necessary to ask whether war and oil produced major changes of a permanent and radical nature, merely interrupted long-term trends, or accelerated changes already underway. There has been a tendency, for example, to use 'short term' interpretations of the oil boom, for it was noted in research undertaken in 1972/73 that:

North Sea oil and gas developments are so fragmented by technological progress into specific functions that it is hard to find any point from which to view the whole. They also move so quickly that the ink is scarcely dry on a comment before it is out of date.⁴

Furthermore,

The rapid development of on-shore oil-related developments during the 1970's led to the commissioning of a variety of Impact studies by local authorities and the Scottish Office. ... The official studies appeared to carry great weight at public enquiries, but they were inevitably

4. Francis, J., and Swan, N., Shetland in Turmoil. A Social and Environmental Assessment of the Impact of North Sea Oil and Gas on Communities in the North of Scotland. (1973) p.7.

completed within very short time spans, and were always conducted by non-local consultants.⁵

Nevertheless, it is not the purpose of this thesis to provide a comprehensive study of the impact of North Sea oil upon Shetland, for a great deal has already been written on the subject.⁶ Rather the aim is to draw upon

5. Varwell, A., Way of Life: In Search of Meaning, (c.1981) p.56.

6. Specialised studies including Beadly, A., Grainger, C., and Frisch, R., 'The Impact of North Sea Oil on Shetland,' (MSc thesis 1974), Blackadder, A., 'The Impact of Oil on the Shetland Economy and the Strategy for the Future,' in J. D. House(ed) Fish Vrs Oil: Resources and Rural Development in North Atlantic Societies, (1986), Blackadder, A., and Baster, J., 'Oil and Remote Communities: Shetland and Orkney,' in W. J. Cairns(ed) North Sea Oil and the Environment. Developing Oil and Gas Resources. Environmental Impacts and Resources, (1992), Button, J., (ed) The Shetland Way of Oil: Reactions of a Small Community to Big Business, (1978), Byron, R., Burra Fishermen: Social and Economic Change in a Shetland Community, (c.1981), Byron, R., and MacFarlane, G., Social Change in Dunrossness: A Shetland Study, (c.1980), Church, J. T., 'Political Discourse of Shetland: Confabulations and Communities.' (Dissertation as part of a PhD thesis 1989) Cohen, A. P., 'Oil and the Cultural Account: Reflections on a Shetland Community,' in Scottish Journal of Sociology 3, (1) 1978., Fenwick, J. M., 'The Shetland Islands and the Impact of Oil,' in W. J. Cairns and P. M. Rogers(ed) Onshore Impacts of Off-shore Oil, (1981), and 'The Shetland Experience: A Local Authority Arms Itself for the Oil Invasion,' in The Scottish Government Year Book 1978., Geoghegan, P. B., Oil Related Housing: Some Implications for Rural Areas in Ireland Based on Experience in Shetland and Mainland Scotland, (1982), Goodlad, J., 'Fisheries and Oil: An Update of the Shetland Experience,' in J. D. House(ed) (1986), Graham, J., 'The North and Western Isles: Oil and the Shetland Spirit,' in A. Hetherington(ed) Highlands and Islands: A Generation of Progress, (1990), Grieco, M., 'Oil Related Development and Shetland: Institutional Framework,' in R. Parsler and D. Shapiro(ed) The Social Impact of Oil in Scotland: A Contribution to the Sociology of Oil, (1980), Hamilton, A., 'Shetland. The Response to Oil.' (MSc thesis 1978), Johnston, C. S., 'Protection of the Marine Environment of Scapa Flow and Sullom Voe,' in W. J. Cairns and P. M. Rogers(ed) (1981), MacFarlane, G., 'Bureaucratic Ideology and the Incomers-Shetland Division in Dunrossness,' in A. Jackson(ed) Way of Life: Dominant Ideologies and Local Communities, (c.1982), MacKay, H., 'Everyday Life and Social Change in a Shetland Community.' (1975), Mageean, D. M., 'Oil Developments in Shetland: Social Structure and Change,' in J. Sewel(ed) The Promise And The Reality-Large Scale Developments in Marginal Regions, (1979), Monkton, D., 'The Identity of Shetland its Sense of Community and Direction in the Post-Oil Construction Era,' (Dissertation 1987), Nicolson, J. R., Shetland and Oil, (1975), Renwanz, M. E., 'From Crofters to Shetlanders. The Social History of Shetland Island Community's Self-Image, 1872-1978.' (PhD thesis 1981), Suzman, R. M., Voorhees, D. J. and Rosen, D. H., Impact of North Sea Oil Developments on Mental and Physical Health: A Longitudinal Study of the Consequence of an Economic Boom and Social

specific aspects of the impact of oil and compare them with the equally disruptive effects of war, particularly the Second World War. It is accepted, however, that oil has a much longer and as yet undefined time span, than the earlier 'shocks': and it is necessary to focus upon a particular period in the oil era when much anxiety was being expressed about the destruction of a 'traditional' way of life, namely between 1975 and 1982.⁷

Oil developments are generally divided into three phases: the exploration stage, the development stage and the production stage. For the purposes of this thesis the impact of the development stage, 1975 to 1982, a similar time span to that of both wars, will be analysed in depth, making a comparison possible. This period encompasses the main construction phase, with the building of Sullom Voe oil terminal: the period of greatest 'shock' to the island economy.⁸ This was the stage in development leading several

Change, (1980), Todd, S., and Croghan, M., The Shetland Experience: A Rural Government Faces the Oil Industry, (1979), Williamson, L., 'Troubled Waters. A Study of Changes in Shetland 1971-1980,' in The New Shetlander, No. 137-140 1981-82., Wills, J., 'The Price of Peace and Quiet,' in J. Button(ed) (1978) and Wills, J., A Place in the Sun: Shetland and Oil, (1991). McNicoll, I., has also written extensively on the subject. Finally, wider academic texts on North Sea Oil refer to the experience of Shetland, for example, Carter, I. R., Social Monitoring of Oil Developments in Scotland: An Evaluation, (c.1982), Francis, J., and Swan, N., (1973), MacKay, D. I., and MacKay, G. A., The Political Economy of North Sea Oil, (1975), Mackay, G. A., 'Oil Related Migration in the North of Scotland,' in G. A. Mackay(ed) North of Scotland Population Studies, (1980), and Varwell, A., (c.1981). See footnote thirteen for general texts on Shetland which included material on Shetland and oil.

7. Smith, H., The Making of Modern Shetland, (1977) p.80 suggests that oil developments will continue until at least the year 2000 or 2100, which is reinforced by Blackadder A., (1986) p.58. Piedad, Planning, The Economic Impact of Declining Oil-Related Employment in Shetland, (1991) predicts the closure of Sullom Voe Oil Terminal by the year 2007.

8. Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981) p.4-1.

observers, both local and outside to fear irreversible damage to both the environment and the 'traditional' way of life, seen as worth defending. The President of the Shetland Council of Social Service in March 1978, after giving a lengthy definition of the 'way of life' said that,

If we accept that a way of life, ..., has many rich qualities and that it gives a sense of identity to a community, we must agree that we would not willingly wish to see it eroded. I would argue that, although Shetland has demonstrated in the past that it can absorb modern industrial society without losing its identity, the present oil industry presents such a massive intrusion - socially and economically - as to make adaptation difficult and disruption inevitable.⁹

Similarly, certain outsiders associated the 'Shetland way of life,' with a simple existence based on subsistence crofting, fishing and knitting. Shetland was thought to be an isolated, crime-free society untouched by the evils of urban life: it embodied threatened national virtues which, it was felt, were worth preservation. But what many observers failed to recognise was that 'traditional' does not mean permanent. Change is perpetual, so there is no such thing as a static 'way of life'. Furthermore, variations in interpretation mean that certain activities signify different things to different people.¹⁰

For the purposes of this thesis an 'external shock' is defined as an encounter or disturbance from outside, over

9. Graham, J., 'Oil and the Shetland Way of Life', in Minutes of Executive Committee Meetings of the Shetland Council of Social Service, 23 February and 9 March 1978.

10. These issues are developed in chapter seven: see also Byron, R., and MacFarlane, G., (c.1980), Cohen, A. P., (1978), Francis, J., and Swan, N., (1973), Nicolson, J. R., (1975), Renwanz, M. E., (1981), Varwell, A., (1981), Wills, J., (1978), and Wills, J., (1991).

which minimal internal control or influence can be exerted. But, contrary to popular belief, it will be argued that North Sea oil was much less of an external shock than war. The Shetland Islands Council, reflecting much public discussion in the islands, planned and prepared for oil, and did their utmost to control its impact.¹¹ In contrast, war was directed entirely according to the wishes of central government, with Shetland, the site of an important military base, having no control over proceedings.

It cannot be denied, however, that comparing certain time periods has chronological problems. Long-term influences are difficult to separate from the 'shock' factor of war and oil. For example, mass culture brought to the isles by improvements in transport and communications, especially the radio in the inter-war years and television in the 1960s, had consequences for the 'traditional way of life'. Limits on time and space have made it impossible to provide a detailed analysis of these long-term influences. Hence this thesis does not attempt to provide a full history of Shetland in the twentieth century. Rather, material on the three main shocks has been linked by shorter sections which stress some of the long-running factors and the problem of separating the short- and long-term effects of these events.

In writing the history of 'shocks' upon an island economy, this thesis has drawn on two particular methodologies. Economic and historical theorists have

11. 'Impact' will be used in the historical sense of economic and social effects, not as a geological or environmental study, as is often the case with oil.

provided potentially useful frameworks in which to shape the history of Shetland. The first of these is the highly contentious core-periphery debate. It will be used as a starting point in understanding the nature of Shetland's relationship with the British mainland. Writers on North Sea Oil have automatically assumed the use of core-periphery arguments for analysis,

The north and north east remains an exporting region in the national and international division of labour. Its economic and political status may be characterised as peripheral and dependent. Whether we shall see the redevelopment of underdevelopment is a question of time scale: ... The oil industry and its on-shore support is here for some time, but in the long run, like the black cattle and the sheep, it will go. But the circumstances of this long-run change is something upon which it is not possible even to speculate.¹²

Secondly, the work of Arthur Marwick and other historians of the domestic impact of war will be studied at the beginning of chapter three, as a possible framework in which to place the impact of both wars upon Shetland. The social investigation also asks whether war accelerated change, or whether its effects were short-lived.

Core-periphery debate has often centred on the issue of exploitation, as the relationship between core and peripheral regions is uneven, in favour of the centre. As a result, the core tends to by-pass the periphery. In its disadvantaged position, the periphery loses manpower and resources to the core, with little in return. The core becomes involved in the periphery only when it is

12. Moore, R., 'Northern Notes Towards a Sociology of Oil,' in Scottish Journal of Sociology, No.3, 1978-79. p.35.

advantageous, and even then it is usually an exploitative intrusion, rather than a relationship of mutual exchange.

In the case of Shetland, London showed little interest in these remote and sparsely populated islands until the advent of both world wars and North Sea oil, when Shetland suddenly became of strategic importance. It can be assumed that exploitation by the core would be accepted, in the interests of the 'nation', during both wars. Circumstances surrounding the advent of North Sea oil were more complex, for concern was expressed over the detrimental effects of oil-related activity. It was feared that the exploitation of this peripheral location by multinational oil companies would destroy what people saw as the 'traditional way of life', and effect lasting damage on the environment.

Thus, did oil developments in Shetland fit the assumed position of a peripheral location, exploited in an uneven exchange with the core? Or did it use its war experiences, and those of the 1960s, to get a greater degree of mutual exchange between the core and periphery? The relationship of Shetland with the core, and the effects of sudden intrusions will be a central theme of this thesis.

Although this thesis concentrates on a small location, it covers a long time span. There has been a substantial amount written on Shetland, and the literature can roughly be divided between internal, and external work. The historiography of Shetland has largely been left to local historians, some of whom tend to view the islands in an

idealistic fashion.¹³ More analytical historians are few.¹⁴ In contrast, extensive research, producing a bulk of literature, has been undertaken by 'outsiders', mainly in relation to Shetland and oil. The majority of researchers believed, because of distance from the mainland and its traditional economic base, Shetland society was 'vulnerable' and oil development threatened to destroy it.¹⁵ But a considerable amount of this work was viewed with scepticism by Shetlanders at the time. The President of the Shetland Council of Social Service stated in his report at the Annual General Meeting in June 1977,

Our attention for the forthcoming year ... must be concentrated on two main issues: Shetland's indigenous economy, and the social impact of oil development. The latter is not so much a local issue as a national research industry. Shetland has replaced the Polynesian Islands as the Happy Hunting Grounds of the migrant sociologist. No doubt some of the research will be valuable, but I would

13. Cluness, A. T., The Shetland Isles. (1951), Cluness A. T., (ed) The Shetland Book. (1967), Irvine, J. W., (1985), The Dunrossness Story. (1987), The Ways Are Free: Shetland/Norway Links 1940 To 1945. (1988) and The Giving Years: Shetland And Shetlanders 1939-1945. ([1]1991), Linklater, E., Orkney and Shetland: An Historical Geographical, Social and Scenic Survey. (1984) Nicolson, J. R., Shetland. ([1]1972) and Lerwick Harbour. (1977), Hay and Company Merchants in Shetland. (1982) Traditional Life in Shetland. (London 1st paperback ed 1990)

14. Coull, J. R., (ed) The Third Statistical Account of Scotland, Vol. XXB, The County Of Shetland. (1985), Fenton, A., The Northern Isles: Orkney and Shetland. (1978), Flinn, D., Travellers in a Bygone Shetland: An Anthology. (1989), Fryer, L., Knitting By the Fireside and on the Hillside: A History of the Shetland Hand Knitting Industry c.1600-1950. (1995), Goodlad, C. A., Shetland Fishing Saga. (1971), Heineberg, H., Changes in the Economic-Geographical Structure of the Shetland Isles. (Inverness 1973), O'Dell, A. C., The Historical Geography of the Shetland Isles. (1939), Shaw, F., The Northern and Western Isles of Scotland: Their Economy and Society in the Seventeenth Century. (1980), Smith, H., Shetland Life and Trade, 1550-1914. (1985), and Smith, H., (1977), numerous articles by Smith B., Withrington, D. J. (ed) Shetland And The Outside World, 1469-1969. (1983). Also see footnote thirty-two in chapter one.

15. See footnote six for the specialised work on Shetland and oil, and studies which refer to Shetland.

contend that local people with local knowledge are liable to make more perceptive judgements with more realistic recommendations than short-term visitors - however well-intentioned or highly qualified.¹⁶

Only one study, a popular text, compares the impact of oil on Shetland with a similar location, Alaska.¹⁷ Due to the size and time span of this thesis, no attempt has been made here to compare the experiences of Shetland with other 'peripheral' locations, which might be the basis for future research.

Because of this vast literature, it has been necessary to select areas of interest and impose a fairly rigid structure on the analysis. The thesis is divided into three sections in which each of the shocks is examined in turn. Each part is divided into economic and social chapters. The economic chapters deal first with the scale of each external shock, and then its impact on the three main Shetland industries of agriculture, fishing and knitting. The effects of these shocks include the impact upon incomes in the islands, and the overall structure of the economy. The three social chapters concentrate on selected areas of social life, which are usually described as susceptible to sudden shocks, such as war. A short section on social relations is followed by a more lengthy emphasis on the role of women in the labour market, since they were a key group in the island economy, and are therefore a central theme in this thesis. The demographic impact of war, the absence of island men, and the presence of varying numbers

16. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Shetland Council of Social Service, 2 June 1977.

17. Wills, J., (1991).

of 'strangers' is examined, in relation to possible abnormalities in the pattern of marriages and births. Finally, the attitudes of Shetlanders to such 'shocks' will give an indication of the perceived level of change.

Part one begins with an historical overview of the Shetland economy, including agriculture, fishing and knitting, and the social relations arising from these. A discussion on the position of women is combined with demographic details from 1861 onwards, stressing the persistent imbalance in the sexes, and the importance of female labour in the island economy. The core-periphery debate is analysed in the context of these remote islands, to consider whether it offers a useful framework for understanding Shetland's history. It also looks at 'outsiders' views of Shetland, and the assumption held by them that a traditional economic base will automatically lead to social peripherality, as expressed in the notion that patterns of life are unchanging and that there are attachments to ancient conventions.

Distance from the main areas of military production, and the traditional nature of the Shetland economy, ensured that Shetland's war experience was different from mainland Britain's, and different in each war. Chapter two addresses the economic impact of World War One. It outlines the military contribution, the effects of losing manpower, especially important in a labour-intensive economy, and the disruptions of war upon production. War increased demand for the home production of food, and quantitative sources will be used to see whether agriculture in Shetland was

able to respond to this additional stimulus, and maintain output in the absence of a large proportion of its work force. The importance of women in agriculture, and the island economy generally, will be assessed. Fishing was particularly vulnerable to the impact of war, and its fate under wartime disruption is explored to stress the paradoxical effects of restricted activity combined with high prices.

In contrast, knitting, like agriculture, was stimulated by war. It is possible to assess knitters' response to the additional demand, and whether the nature of production was altered by war; although quantitative information is less readily available because of the informal nature of the industry. A brief examination of the effects of naval and shipping activity, especially in Lerwick, will be followed by a general discussion on the overall economic consequences of war for individual households. Finally, using census material, the effects of war on the occupational structure is analysed.

Chapter three, which relies more heavily on qualitative sources, examines the social implications of the loss of manpower, and presence of 'strangers' during the war. But, because it is not possible to study all aspects of the social impact of war, three areas have been selected. The assumption in much of the historiography is that the First World War reduced divisions between classes; the first section therefore considers whether war reduced social deference in Shetland. The second, and larger section, concerns women. Details of their activities during

peacetime provide a basis for comparison with their lives during the war. The extent to which Shetland women's work and responsibilities were altered by a war-stimulated economy and the absence of men are evaluated, together with the effects of the removal of a large proportion of the male population, and the presence of naval personnel. Particular attention will be given to the supposed 'loosening of morals' brought by the war, and the number of children born out of wedlock. Finally, oral sources provide evidence of the attitudes of Shetlanders towards war, and their assimilation into the war effort, since other types of sources do not effectively record these aspects of life.

Part two of the thesis begins with a short introductory section outlining the experience of the economy in the inter-war years. It provides details of long-term trends, such as economic depression and depopulation, with which to compare the direct effects of war. Chapter four analyses the economic impact of the Second World War, following a similar format to chapter two. The differing nature of warfare, and the fall of Norway into enemy hands, ensured that the scale of military activity was much greater for Shetland than in the previous war. The economic impact of war upon the traditional industries is compared with World War One, taking account of the influx of thousands of troops to protect Britain's northern approaches. Comparisons will be made between the response of the economy in both wars to the loss of man, and woman power, and the ability of the economy to meet additional internal, as well as external demand.

Chapter five outlines the social impact of World War Two, and material has been selected on similar lines to chapter three. Parallels will be drawn with the First World War to examine whether the impact of war changed power relations. In particular, the changing nature of warfare ensured greater female participation. Again using oral sources, it has been possible to investigate the effect of war on Shetland women, both at home and on the mainland. Demographic analysis indicates the extent to which women took advantage of the reversed imbalance in the sexes in Shetland, and found partners during the war. The issue of morality is also covered amidst fears that war, especially the presence of so many men, would 'loosen' moral behaviour.

The final section on the attitudes and ideas of islanders to war, also relies on qualitative sources, especially oral history. For obvious reasons, oral information was easier to collect than for the First War. Oral evidence offers an attractive way to flesh out rather impersonal material from other sources, but its deficiencies are well known: it cannot usually offer statistically significant material, as the numbers involved are too small. Much of the material in the thesis is based on statistical or 'official' sources, but oral history is one of the few available methods for testing subjective experiences. It has been particularly important because source material on Shetland women and their work during the war is limited, and adds to current arguments, which state that although their wartime participation in the economy

was short-lived, war altered the attitudes and experience of women.¹⁸ Shetland women were interviewed, providing information on war, and on the degree of change they perceived. These recordings captured the experiences of ordinary working women of Shetland, which would otherwise have been lost. Men were also interviewed, but because the majority left Shetland to fight for their country, they were unable to give much comment on Shetland during the war. Rather they provided information on the effects war had on their own attitudes, and their perceptions of Shetland on their return. The method of transcription used here is explained in a brief guide in the preface, and details of the oral project can be found in appendix one.

The third section starts with an introductory section on the state of the economy in the 1950s and 1960s. It outlines the economic recession suffered by the economy after the war, in contrast to national trends, and the continuing problem of depopulation. Changing circumstances in the 1960s, based on new developments in the economy helped the economy to recover, and shaped attitudes to the advent of oil. Chapter six provides an economic analysis of the impact of oil, and the mixed reaction to its arrival. The scale of oil-related activities is outlined, with particular reference to the construction era. Parallels are

18. Braybon, G., Women Workers in the First World War, (1981), Braybon, G., and Summerfield, P., Out of the Cage; Women's Experiences in Two World Wars, (1987), Summerfield, P., 'Women, War and Social Change: Women in Britain in World War II,' in A. Marwick(ed) Total War and Social Change, (1988) Sheridan, D., (ed) Wartime Women and Mass-Observation Anthology: The Experiences of Women at War, ([1]1990), and Sheridan, D., 'Ambivalent Memories: Women and the 1939-45 War in Britain,' in Oral History, Vol.18. 1990 ([2]1990).

made with war, especially the Second World War which shows the greatest similarities. There is an awareness that oil, like war, has a limited life span, although oil-related activities have a much longer time-scale and take place when other conditions are normal. The powers gained by the Shetland Islands Council to deal with oil raises questions on the 'passive' role of the periphery, and its supposed exploitation by the core. It also raises questions about the role of government, applicable to all of the shocks: for both World Wars and the oil boom were events in which government played a significant part. In the case of war the government held complete control, and, through local government, was involved in planning and preparing for the exploitation of oil reserves.

Oil, like war, stimulated the Shetland economy, and increased the demand for labour. In contrast to both wars, it did not remove local labour, so a greater proportion of the island population was able to benefit. Oil may not have brought the same disruptions as war, nor the same benefits to the traditional industries. The effects of oil upon agriculture, fishing, and knitting, as well as tourism will be examined, with special reference to competition for the vital resource, labour. The section on other oil-related activity is particularly important in analysing the true effects of oil upon the Shetland economy, and whether it improved the incomes of islanders. This thesis does not attempt to address the environmental issues in detail, for they represent a full and interesting subject in their own right. Rather, the feared environmental effects in relation

to the economy, especially on fishing and tourism, together with the influence of environmental concerns on planning for oil, have been considered where relevant.

Chapter seven, because of the nature of the social issues of the later twentieth century, follows a slightly different format to the previous social chapters. It concentrates on internal and external fears associated with the invasion of oil. Attention is focused on the presumed 'way of life', and its meanings constructed specifically during the oil boom. The major difference between both wars and the oil boom was the objectives of planning; no similar concern was expressed in response to the invasions of either war, yet there was an obsession with such matters during the oil era. The subsequent action taken by the Shetland Island Council, especially in containing the effects of the influx of temporary and semi-permanent workers is summarised, whilst the demographic consequences of such an influx of 'strangers', is charted for the construction period. Comparisons are made between the influx of oil-related workers and servicemen during the war. The lives of women are investigated to see whether oil, by offering paid employment outside the home and croft, affected their role more seriously than the wars had done. The chapter ends with a brief examination of the attitudes of islanders, when faced with the disruptions caused by oil. Parallels are drawn with the perceived changes associated with both war and oil, with most social problems associated with a modern society being attributed to the coming of oil.

The thesis aims to discuss whether it is realistic to compare the socio-economic impact of World War One, and World War Two with the construction era of oil. It attempts to re-interpret core-periphery relations in a modern context where social considerations as mediated by national and local government may influence economic forces.

CHAPTER ONE.

The Shetland Isles lie so far north from the rest of Britain that often they are not to be found at all on the map of the British Isles, and on any map of Scotland are invariably found as an inset, generally on a reduced scale. Hence the actual size and extent of the islands very often surprise visitors who have imagined themselves coming to a small island group like the Scilly or Channel Isles.¹

Illustration 1.1 A Question in the House: Members of Parliament Display their Knowledge and Interest in Shetland.



(Source: Walterson, F. S., Gat it Aff Cartoons. (1984) p.14)

1. Cluess, A. T., (ed) (1967) p.1.

Shetland, the most northerly of the British isles, lies almost equidistant from Aberdeen and Bergen, at a latitude of 60 degrees north, level with the southern tip of Greenland. Lerwick, the capital of the isles, is approximately 600 miles from London which is the equivalent of travelling from London to either Milan or Prague. The Shetland isles consist of over a hundred islands, covering 567 square miles. Fifteen of the islands are inhabited, the largest of which is the mainland, 378 square miles. An estimated 23,143 people live in Shetland, a high proportion of whom reside in Lerwick.²

The historic problem of distance from the main centres of population, manufacturing, industry, commerce and sources of capital has restricted development in Shetland. Limited internal markets, poor natural resources, and remoteness have made transporting goods to and from the isles expensive and problematic. This has always placed manufacturers at a competitive disadvantage, and thus discouraged expansion or diversification within the Shetland economy.³

Until recently, the economy was largely unmechanised and traditional in nature. It relied heavily upon agriculture, fishing and hand knitting, particularly hosiery. Agriculture suffered from a high predominance of peaty soil, and only a small portion of the total area was suitable for arable cultivation. Furthermore, the climate

2. Fenton, A., (1978) p.1, Coull, J. R., (ed) (1985) p.xii-xiii, and Shetland In Statistics 1995.

3. McDowall, S., and Begg., H., (1981) p.2, and p.50-51, and Nicolson, J. R., ([1]1972) p.16-17.

shortened the growing season. The slow rise of temperatures and wet ground meant crops were sown late. This, combined with the high incidence of cloud cover during summer, resulted in crops ripening slowly, and late harvests. Therefore, the rearing of livestock increasingly predominated over crop production, with grain being used for feeding stock.⁴

At the beginning of the twentieth century, agriculture consisted of small-scale units, producing for domestic consumption, and limited export to the mainland. Crofters organised the production, output and marketing of their own products. Barley, and oats, and to a lesser extent potatoes, turnips and cabbage were grown, while cattle and sheep constituted the main export. There was a heavy reliance upon the family as the unit of production, which allowed the 'head of household' to engage in other forms of wage-labour.

Fishing, amongst other seafaring activities, provided such alternative employment. Men spent long periods at the whaling, in the merchant services, or engaging in the summer herring fishing. Scottish fishermen, curers and groups of female workers arrived, and encouraged Shetlanders in their exploitation of herring stocks. Catches were bought by curers, processed using female labour, and then exported to Continental markets.⁵

4. Nicolson, J. R., ([1]1972) p.16-18, Howie, A., 'Agriculture in Shetland,' in The Scottish Journal of Agriculture, No.25, 1944-1946 p.87, Schie, L. K., and Moberg, G., The Shetland Story(1988) p.1, p.11, and p.15, and Coull, J. R., (ed)(1985) p.xii-xiii.

5. Gray, M., The Fishing Industries of Scotland, 1790-1914. A Study In Regional Adaptation.(1978) p.200-208, and Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.196-203.

The Shetland fleet at the turn of the century, remained dependent upon sailing boats, despite the introduction of steamships elsewhere. Local boats were owned by merchants, curers, or by fishermen on a half-catch, where the owner took a half share in the profits leaving the crew the other half. Scottish curers provided sufficient capital for some local fishermen to invest in vessels, as well as credit for equipment during the season. In return, curers had the right to purchase the entire catch of these vessels at a prearranged price. But debts often accumulated, leaving fishermen with very small settlement, if any, at the end of the season. Some local firms, such as Hay and Company, Garriock and Company, and certain local business men invested capital in boats.⁶

A few men also engaged in winter fishing, becoming year-round fishermen. They used rods or long-lines to capture mainly haddock, but also cod, ling, saithe and whiting. Winter fishing was undertaken in-shore in small vessels to the east and west of Shetland. The fish were exported fresh to markets on the mainland, but transportation problems and declining stocks caused this to decline until the Second World War.⁷

The hosiery industry added further value to the family income. It remained highly traditional, based on hand-production in the home. Women, by knitting in their 'spare-

6. Gray, M., (1978) p.204-208, Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.196 and p.202, and Thompson, P., Wailey, T., and Lummis, T., Living the Fishing, (1983) p.322-326.

7. Gray, M., (1978) p.204-205, and p.208-209, Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.218-223, and Thompson, P., Wailey, T., and Lummis, T., (1983) p.327-330.

time' produced shawls, spencers (vests), and gloves, and some specialised in the fine Shetland lace work. But the marketing of such goods was disorganised, and individual knitters were forced to engage in an uneven exchange with merchants, who gave goods or credit, not cash for their products. Hosiery was sold to markets on the British mainland and abroad, with merchants retaining their strangle-hold over knitters until the Second World War.⁸

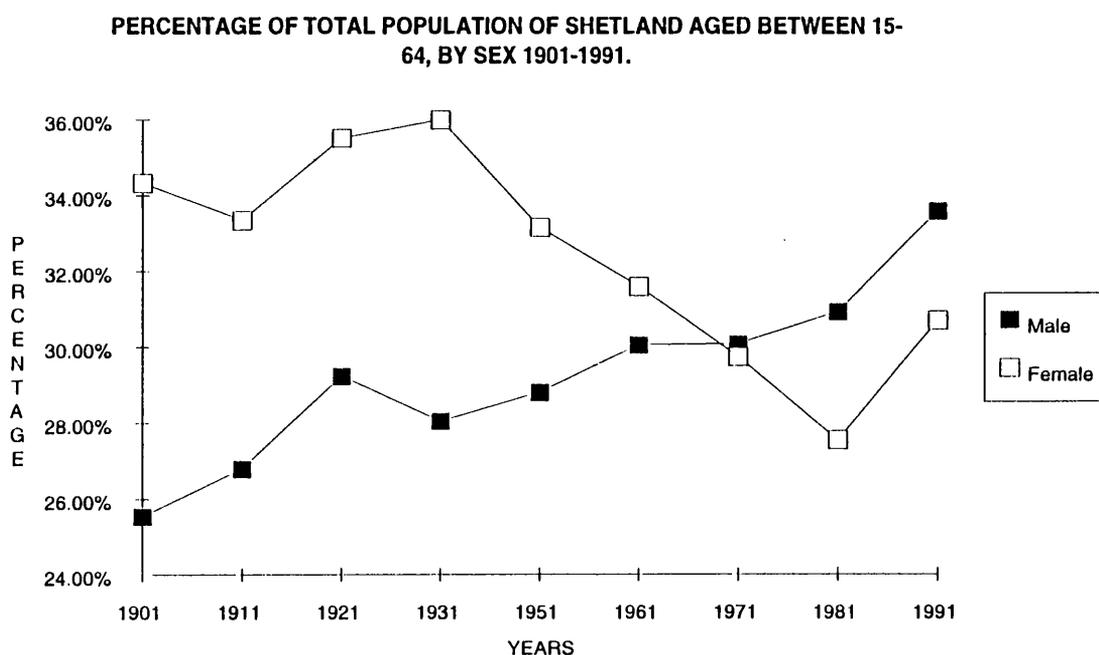
Merchants, and to a lesser extent lairds, dominated the island economy at the start of the century. Merchants organised the production, marketing and sale of fish and hosiery. In response, a growing concentration of merchants, businessmen and professionals appeared in Lerwick. Unlike the earlier period in Shetland history, or the history of the Scottish Highlands, there has been no substantive work on the role of lairds in twentieth century Shetland. The landholding records show that lairds continued to own land, but it would appear that they were increasingly absent. The power of this group had largely been removed by the Crofters Act of 1886, which gave crofters security of tenure. But crofters did not own the land, and still had to pay rent. Crofters did not necessarily pay the rents requested, especially as the economic conditions deteriorated after the First World War, and could contact the Land court if they felt rents were too high.⁹

8. Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.29-31, and Fryer, L. G., 'The Shetland Hand Knitting Industry 1790-1950; With Special Reference To Lace.' (MLitt thesis 1992).

9. Returns of Owners of Land 1873, Scotland and Ireland. (C.899) p.208-211, Department of Agriculture for Scotland, Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Crofting Conditions. (Cmd. 9091), Campbell, R. H., 'Landlords and Tenants in South-West Scotland in the late Nineteenth

Women, because men spent long periods away at sea, contributed extensively to the island economy. Added to this was the high proportion of women to men in the economically active age-group, as illustrated in figure 1.1.10

Figure 1.1



(Source: Census of Scotland)

Women provided an essential source of labour; since they, along with children and the elderly, constituted the main work force on the land. Moreover, daughters and wives of fishermen were expected to bait and sort lines, as well as mend nets. They were the labour force in the hosiery

Century,' in L. Leneman(ed) Perspectives in Scottish Social History.(1988) Campbell, R. H., 'Too Much on the Highlands? A Plea for Change,' in Scottish Economic and Social History Vol.14 1994, Collier, A., The Crofting Problem.(1953), Thompson, P., Wailey, T., and Lummis, T.,(1983) p.319, and Thompson, P., The Edwardians: The Remaking of British Society.(1977) p.120-121.

10. The 1981 census figure is the usually resident population, and does not include temporary construction workers.

industry, as well as for domestic tasks and child rearing. A small number pursued other paid employment, working in the summer herring fishing as gutters or packers, and in domestic service, but opportunities were limited.¹¹ The importance of women in the island economy was summed up by a male contemporary,

The women never got their heads up. They probably had a cradle on the floor and lines to bait and nets to mend, a croft to look after, cows to milk, bread to bake - women played a big part, a majority part in the whole thing. ... There was no other way a crofter-fishermen could survive, except you had a good wife.¹²

This family-based economy, in the first half of the twentieth century displayed certain similarities to a 'peasant' society. The majority of people lived on small rented holdings, starved of investment, and had only a partial relationship with the cash economy. Work on the land was combined with other activities to sustain the extended family unit. There was a heavy reliance on the labour of women and children, and in the absence of men, women acted as heads of households, whilst the relics of 'truck', the local barter system persisted, despite having been outlawed. Under such a scheme produce, mainly hosiery, was exchanged for goods or credit at the local merchants. Families were forced to trade in this fashion as they had

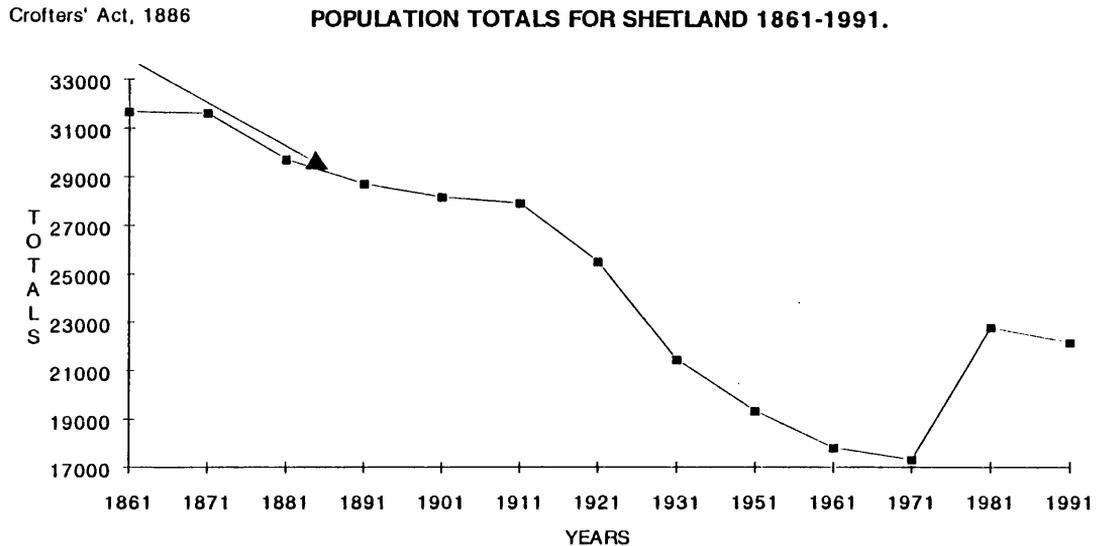
11. S.R.O., AF29/253 Lerwick Fishery Office (Shetland District), 1809-1971. Letter from the Fishery Office detailing the types of employment available to women in Shetland, 16 January 1914.

12. Thompson, P., Wailey, T., and Lummis, T., (1983) p.343.

no other market for their produce, and were able to get goods on credit.¹³

The island economy found it difficult to sustain its population, especially in the century after 1870.

Figure 1.2



(Source: as figure 1.1)

As figure 1.2 shows, the population decline began after 1871, mainly as a result of emigration.¹⁴ But greater security of tenure on land holdings, introduced by the Crofters' Act in 1886, the relative prosperity of the herring boom, and the demise of free passages to New Zealand helped to halt rapid out-migration.¹⁵

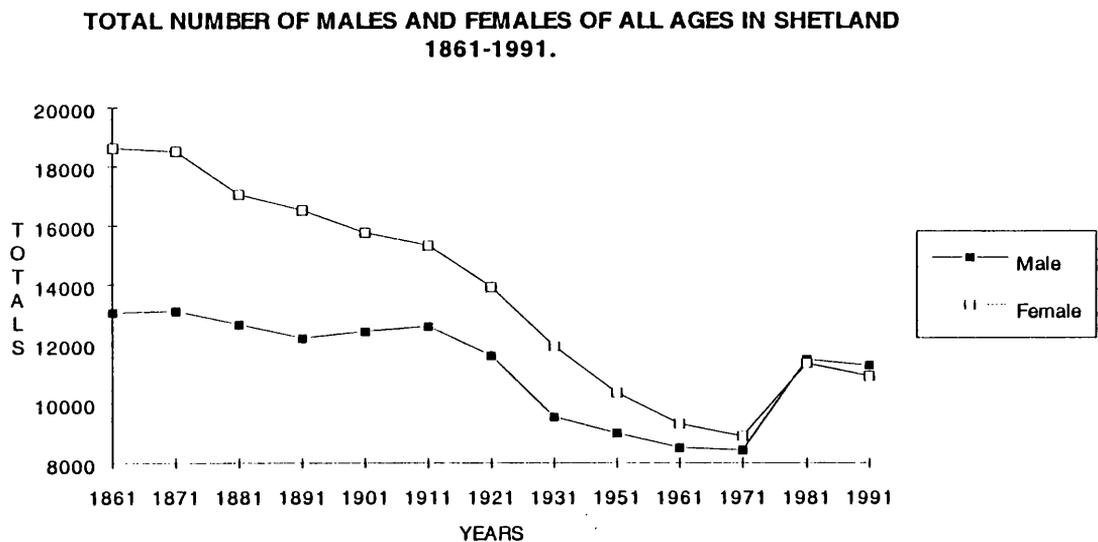
13. Smith, H., Introduction to reprint, Second Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the Truck System (Shetland), 1872. (C.555) (reprint 1978) p.v-viii.

14. The 1981 census figure of 22,768 used in figure 1.2 is the usually resident population, and does not include temporary construction workers. If temporary residents are included then 27,277 people were present in Shetland on the night of enumeration.

15. Thomson, W. P. L., 'Population And Depopulation,' in D. J. Wirthington(ed) (1983) p.165, and Thompson, P., Wailey, T., and Lummis, T., (1983) p.319.

But depopulation was particularly marked from 1921, which can partially be attributed to the effects of the First World War, when 524 men, 7% of the economically active male population were killed.¹⁶ Moreover, the post-war decline in herring fishing, due to loss of Russian and German markets, encouraged people to leave the isles. It was largely the youngest and most able men who migrated. This left a heavy imbalance in the sexes, which reduced the ability of a society to reproduce, made worse by the absence of a large number of the permanent male residents at sea.¹⁷

Figure 1.3



(Source: as figure 1.1)

Women, a relatively immobile group at the end of the nineteenth century, began to migrate in greater numbers by

16. Manson, T., (ed) Shetland's Role of Honour and Roll of Service. (1920), and calculation made on the number of men aged 15-64 in 1911.

17. The 1981 figures do not include the temporary construction workers.

the inter-war years. Previously they had been gainfully employed on the land and knitting, with the opportunity to earn money in domestic service and in the summer herring season. But economic depression meant small-holdings could no longer sustain the population, and alternative employment in Shetland was limited. Although their movements are extremely difficult to trace, it appears that single women moved to the mainland. The majority went to Edinburgh, with 1,166 Shetland women aged twenty years and over residing in Edinburgh in 1921. According to oral sources they moved to work in domestic service, with some later forced to return home to look after elderly relatives.¹⁸

Temporary relief was brought to the island economy during the Second World War, but was followed by further decline. Crofts began to fall into disrepair, with less land under cultivation and fewer animals kept. More houses lay empty and communities began to dwindle. Shetlanders were forced to the Antarctic fishing, while others emigrated to Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Relief only came in the late 1950s, with investment and subsequent expansion in the fishing and knitting industries. Employment opportunities improved which meant Shetlanders were under less pressure to leave the isles. But it took

18. S.A., SA4/398 Coull, J. R., 'A Comparison of Demographic Trends in the Faroe and Shetland Isles,' February 1966 p.159, and p.164, Thomson, W. P. L., (1983) p.165, and Black, B. A., 'The Role of Women in the Shetland Economy in the Inter-war Years,' (Dissertation 1989).

the advent of oil, from the early 1970s to reverse the demographic trends of the previous century.¹⁹

CORE-PERIPHERY DEBATE.

It is tempting to use the core-periphery debate in order to understand the history of Shetland in the twentieth century. The remoteness, the traditional nature of the economy, and the assumed 'backwardness' of Shetland, makes it a seductive theoretical framework. Furthermore, there has been a resurgent interest in this debate in relation to the impact of North Sea oil on the North East of Scotland. The sociologist Robert Moore noted,

A settler arriving in Northern Scotland in 1970 would have recognised social features that would have reminded him of life in a colony or an ex-colony. When, therefore, the multi-nationals arrived in the pursuit of oil, and property speculators in pursuit of instant profit, rapidly followed by American anthropologists - the surest sign of under-developed status - it was to be expected that sociologists would turn to the literature on development and underdevelopment in an attempt to understand the events that were taking place around them.²⁰

Historians do not, as yet, have a systematic theory or set of meanings for the concepts of 'core' and 'periphery'. Instead they draw upon the work of various social scientists, including Marxists, whose theories of exploitation greatly influenced the subject. The debate has developed in a series of diminishing perspectives. The theory began at an international level, as an explanation for global trends, and was successively narrowed to a

19. Barclay, R. S., 'Population Changes in Shetland During the Past Two Centuries,' series of articles in SN, March and April 1954, Jamieson, P., Letters on Shetland, (1949) p.41-44, and S.A., SA4/398 Coull, J. R., (1966) p.163, and Thomson, W. P. L., (1983) p.162-169.

20. Moore, R., (1978-1979) p.22.

national, and then regional basis. Among the most influential international theorists was Immanuel Wallerstein.²¹

Wallerstein sees capitalism as a world system dating back to as early as the sixteenth century. It is held together by the international division of labour, and a tendency to universalise market exchange relations. This 'world' system involves 'national' entities which, where they exist, are structured in a power hierarchy between the strong 'core' and weak 'peripheral' states. The hierarchy acts to ensure and maintain an 'unequal exchange' of

21. Wallerstein, I., Modern World System.(1974), Wallerstein, I.,(ed) World Inequality: Origins and Perspectives on the World System.(1975), Wallerstein, I., The Capitalist World-Economy: Essays.(1979), Wallerstein, I., The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century.(1976), Wallerstein, I., The Modern World-System Two: Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World Economy, 1600-1750.(1980), Wallerstein, I., The Modern World-System Three: The Second Era of Great Expansion of the Capitalist World-Economy, 1730-1840's.(c.1989), Wallerstein, I., and Hopkins, T. K.,(ed) Processes of the World-System.(c.1980), Wallerstein, I., The Politics of the World-Economy the States, the Movements and the Civilization Essays.(1984). Others who take an international perspective are Frank, A. G., Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical Studies of Chile and Brazil(1969), Frank, A. G., Sociology of Underdevelopment and the Underdevelopment of Sociology.(1971), Sweezy, P., 'The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism,' in R. Hilton(ed) The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism.(1978), and Hirschman, A. D., Strategy of Economic Development.(1966). National and regional perspectives are provided by, Myrdal, G., Economic Theory and Underdeveloped Regions.(1957), Williamson, J. G., 'Regional Inequality and the Process of National Development: A Description of the Patterns,' in Economic Development and Cultural Change, XIII, 1965, William, N., and Yuill, D., 'Regional Problems and Policy,' in A. Boltho(ed) The European Economy: Growth and Crisis.(1982), Simpson, D. R. F.,(ed) Island and Coastal Communities Economic and Social Opportunities.(1980), Smout, T. C., 'Scotland and England: Is Dependency a Symptom or a Cause of Underdevelopment?', in Review, III, 4, Spring 1980, ([1]1980) Smout, T. C., 'Centre and Periphery in History; With Some Thoughts on Scotland as a Case Study' in Journal of Common Market Studies, Volume XVIII No.3, March 1980, ([2]1980) Hetcher, M., Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536-1966.(1975), and Carter, I., 'The Highlands of Scotland as an Underdeveloped Region,' in E. D. Kadt and G. Williams(ed) Sociology of Development.(1974).

commodities to the advantage of the core states. Thus for Wallerstein capitalism involves not only appropriation of surplus value by an owner from a labourer, but also an appropriation of surplus of the whole world economy by core areas.²²

For Wallerstein, the core represents the centre of industrial production and wealth and is characterised by a capitalist mode of production. In contrast, the periphery is made up of much poorer regions producing primary products to be exchanged for the manufacturing goods of the core. The core dominates over the periphery forcing it to remain in a pre-capitalist economy, or the core even 'de-industrialises' the backward regions.²³ Underdevelopment theorists, such as Wallerstein, believe that the capitalist system is such that it will ensure the continued pre-capitalist nature of production of the peripheral regions by extracting sufficient surplus to prevent capitalist relations of production to emerge. This therefore ensures that the periphery remains 'dependent' upon the core and 'underdeveloped'. Despite this, Wallerstein does admit that the locations of the 'core' and 'periphery' can change over time, but does not outline how or why this takes place.²⁴

From the international argument has arisen a national core-periphery debate, which looks at backward regions within a country. Certain writers have argued that Scotland was, and is, a peripheral region within Britain based on

22. Wallerstein, I., (1974) p.401.

23. Smout, T. C., ([1]1980) p.602.

24. For further criticism of Wallerstein's theory see Smout, T. C., ([1]1980.) p.603, and Smout, T. C., ([2]1980) p.258

various economic, social political and geographic criteria, and it has been labelled underdeveloped and dependent. Some have gone as far as to see it as an internal colony of the United Kingdom.²⁵ This is not only the case for Scotland as, some economic observers claim that any part of Britain north of Manchester is peripheral to the centre of Europe.²⁶

Smout shows how Scotland, from a West European perspective, has been classed as peripheral. He locates the notion and problems of peripherality in the act of Union in 1707, when Scotland was joined with a much wealthier country. But if one takes an international perspective, then Scotland should be seen thereafter to be part of the core. Peripherality, dependency and underdevelopment are not necessarily synonymous nor is the relationship always a negative one.²⁷

Moving on to an even narrower perspective, the Highlands and Islands of Scotland are areas which fit more closely with the notions of peripherality and the problems of dependency and underdevelopment, though not necessarily within any of the frameworks outlined above. Geographically, the Highlands and Islands are marginal and arguably peripheral to the Scottish economy as well as the larger economic systems which Scotland inhabits. The Highlands and Islands have, and to a large extent still do, exemplify many of the classic characteristics of a peripheral location. They lack resources and supplies of

25. Hetchter, M., (1975).

26. William, N., and Yuill, D., (1982) p.410.

27. Smout, T. C., ([2]1980) p.256.

capital, and have been given government intervention to redress the balance, notably through the Highlands and Islands Development Board, established in 1965. Production and output is limited and made up of mainly primary products with much of the limited innovation and technology used coming from elsewhere. The mode of production tends to be domestically based with a high reliance on occupational dualism, between crofting and fishing. They lose large numbers of their key workers to the more prosperous locations, either on a seasonal or permanent basis through migration or emigration. From this it would seem that the Highlands and Islands are almost pre-capitalist, depending upon one's definition of capitalism, or experiencing various modes of production simultaneously.²⁸

The history of the Highlands and Islands suggests that their present situation has arisen as a result of incorporation into the British capitalist system, and that the location must be seen in terms of an 'underdeveloped' region rather than 'undeveloped'.²⁹ But, this underdevelopment is obviously not comparable to the third world. They have a more advanced infra-structure, access to an extensive pool of highly skilled workers, and there has been a conscious effort to address the imbalances through preferential funding provided by the H.I.D.B., so

28. Mewett, P. G., 'The Emergence and Persistence of Peripheral Areas in Relation to the Processes of Development and Underdevelopment, With Particular Reference to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland,' in J. Sewel (ed) The Promise and the Reality-Large Scale Developments in Marginal Regions. (1979) p.142, Hetherington, A., (ed) Highlands and Islands: A Generation of Progress. (1990), and Mewett, P. G., 'Occupational Pluralism in Crofting', Scottish Journal of Sociology, 2 1977-78.

29. Carter, I., (1974).

'dependency' is not necessarily harmful. Moreover, the Highlands and Islands are an integrated region within a highly advanced country.³⁰

At the microscopic level, can the core-periphery debate really be applied to Shetland, even if it is in the British context a geographically isolated location? The Shetland economy in the first two-thirds of the twentieth century certainly displayed characteristics attributed to peripheral locations, including, remoteness from the main centres of population and industry, a heavy reliance on primary production, the persistence of traditional economic and social relations, and a society plagued by population loss. But, assumptions made about Shetland based on these characteristics are misleading, as historically Shetland has had wider links with the outside world, and a relatively mobile population.

Shetland, despite displaying certain similarities to the Highlands and more remote islands of Scotland, is very different. Firstly, it has strong historical links with Norway, which has encouraged the creation of Scandinavian traditions, though some may question their substance.³¹ This highlights a major flaw in the core-periphery debate, whereby it is difficult to focus on a single centre, and the situation is rather one of concentric circles. Secondly, the economic history of the isles displays much

30. Moore, R., 'Urban Development on the Periphery of Industrialised Societies' in M. Harloe New Perspectives in Urban Change and Conflict. (1981) ([2]1981) p.142, and Carter, I., (1974) p.281-283.

31. Shetland and Orkney have been part of Scotland only since 1469, when given by the Dano-Norwegian King, as part of his daughters wedding dowry. Baldwin, J. R., (ed) Scandinavian Shetland: An Ongoing Tradition. (1978), and Nicolson, J. R., ([1]1972) p.11.

great dynamism in the earlier centuries than is apparent in the modern period.

Shetland was located at the centre of the mercantile path between Germany, Britain, Scandinavia and North Atlantic sea routes. As such, it was a fairly commercial region with extensive trading links, which brought visiting fleets from Scandinavia and elsewhere. A number of academics have studied these movements.³² The first of these was Hance Smith, whose Shetland Life And Trade 1550-1914 sees trade as the economic dynamic in the history of Shetland, and outlines the changing role groups played in this from the mid-sixteenth century.

A second thesis by Richard Smith, 'Shetland In The World Economy: A Sociological History Of The 18th And 19th Centuries,' focused upon Hance Smith's interpretation. Richard Smith looked at the development of Shetland in the

32. Smith, H., 'The Historical Geography of Shetland's Trade, 1550-1914,' (PhD thesis 1969) published as Shetland Life and Trade, 1550-1914, (1984), Goodlad, C. A., whose thesis was published as Shetland Fishing Saga, (1971), Wills, J., 'Laird and Tenant: A Study of the Social and Economic Geography of Shetland in the 18th and Early 19th Centuries, Based on the Garth and Gardie Estate Manuscripts,' (PhD thesis 1975), Shaw, F., whose thesis was published as The Northern and Western Isles of Scotland: Their Economy and Society in The Seventeenth Century, (1980), Smith, R. J., 'Shetland in the World Economy: A Sociological History of the 18th And 19th Centuries.' (PhD thesis 1986), and Fryer, L. G., 'The Shetland Hand Knitting Industry 1790-1950; With Special Reference to Lace,' (Mlitt thesis 1992) recently published as, Knitting By the Fireside and on the Hillside. A History of the Shetland Handknitting Industry c.1600-1950, (1995). Also the work of Brian Smith which includes Smith, B., 'Shetland Archives and Sources of History,' in History Workshop, Vol.1 No.4 1977, Smith, B., '"Lairds" and "Improvement"', in Shetland in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,' in T. M. Devine(ed) Lairds and Improvement in the Scottish Enlightenment, (1979), Smith, B., 'What is Scattald? Rural Communities in Shetland 1400-1900,' B. Crawford(ed) Essays in Shetland History, (1984), Smith, B., 'Shetland, Scotland and Scandinavia, 1400-1700: The Changing Nature of Contact,' in G. Simpson(ed) Scotland and Scandinavia, (1990), and Smith, B., 'Adam Smith's Rents from the Sea: Maritime Sharecropping in Shetland,' in T. C. Smout(ed) Scotland and The Sea, (1992).

18th and 19th centuries, and highlighted the importance of 'external' and 'internal' forces. He agreed with Hance Smith, based upon an 'externalist' view, that trade was important in Shetland, but did not see this as adequate.³³ Rather, he looked to the internal social relations of production and more especially at the role of an influential family of entrepreneurs in Shetland.

Despite their differences, both emphasise Shetland's dependence on the world economy, and Richard Smith particularly stresses Shetland's dependence on the capitalist world economy.

Shetland presents us with a fascinating history that appears at first to be that of the creation of an insular isolated community, but soon reveals itself to be formed through the Islanders' relationship with the external world. ... the history of Shetland is not one of isolation from the external world and the lack of a relationship with capitalism, but it is the history of the very nature of relationships with the capitalist world system. Shetland has been integrated into the world system longer than many areas of 'developed' capitalist states, the so-called 'core'.³⁴

Finally, Brian Smith, Shetland's archivist, has commented on and added to these works.³⁵

According to Brian Smith, Shetland was involved in trade and commerce as early as the 'High Middle Ages', when trade between Norway and Shetland was undertaken by groups

33. Smith, H., (1984).

34. Smith, R., 'Shetland in the World Economy: A Sociological Perspective,' in D. McCrone, S. Kendrick and P. Straw(ed) The Making of Scotland: National, Cultural and Social Changes, (1989) p.105-106, and p.92.

35. Brian Smith believes Richard Smith, contrary to his title, shows Shetland fishing tenures as a closed, local 'system'. He also disputes the notion of 'systems', and believes Shetland society has special elements, but does not constitute a 'system' in its own right. Smith, B., (1992) p.111, and personal discussion on the subject.

of small merchants.³⁶ The arrival of German merchants in the fifteenth century, cited by Richard Smith as the 'integration of Shetland into the world economy,' ended the reliance upon such traditional trade. The German merchants encouraged the development of the distant hand-line fishing, the *haaf* fishing, in Shetland, by providing annual advances and a market for the summer catches of ling, cod and some tusk. As a result, stockfish formed, from at least the sixteenth century, the basis of an export trade to Europe, along with butter and oil. In return, items such as salt, hooks and lines, hemp, tar, rye meal, brandy wine, beer, tobacco, linen cloth, soap and shoes were imported.³⁷

There was some trade with Scotland and England in this period, but on a small scale. Moreover, the Dutch herring fishery to the east of Shetland brought trade with fishermen throughout the seventeenth century. This involved a series of small transactions between the crews of as many as 500 vessels, and local residents, at organised fairs. Shetlanders traded fresh produce, woollen stockings and mittens for brandy, tobacco, shoes, boots, and most importantly, money. Such income has been cited as providing sufficient money to pay rents and buy goods for the less well off.³⁸

Changes in local government and administration, coupled with several decades of famines and fevers in the seventeenth century, made Shetland less attractive to

36. Smith, B., (1992) p.98-99.

37. Smith, R. J., (1989) p.94-96, Smith, B., (1992) p.98-99, Smith H., (1984) p.7-8, and p.10-20, and Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.66-78.

38. Smith H., (1984) p.20-28, and Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.79-87.

foreign traders. Moreover, the burning of the Dutch fleet by the French in 1703 in Shetland waters, and the Salt Tax introduced in 1712, meant German merchants and Dutch fishermen were replaced by a new class of local 'merchant-lairds'.³⁹ They bought and leased bankrupt estates in Shetland, and took over the fishing-trade. Under this new management, a system of fishing tenures was devised in which tenants were forced to fish for the laird as part of the unwritten tenure agreement.⁴⁰

Fish remained an important export, with markets centred on the western Mediterranean instead of Hamburg.⁴¹ This tradition continued during the cod and herring fisheries at the start of the nineteenth century, and when herring replaced the *haaf* fishing in the late-1870s. Scottish merchants controlled, and organised the export of cured herring to continental markets in this later period.⁴² Therefore despite the change in the relations of production, trade and contact with the outside world continued, and as Brian Smith notes,

The Shetlanders, then, knew about the world of commerce and money from a very early date.⁴³

39. Hance Smith believes that there is a difference in class relations in Shetland in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, when 'fish-exporting landlords', were replaced by 'fish-exporting merchants', or 'Shetland Traders', as he calls them. Brian Smith disagrees, arguing no such distinction can be made. Smith, B., (1992) p.101-102.

40. Smith, B., (1992) p.99, Smith, R. J., (1989) p.96, Smith H., (1984) p.35-45, and p.46-92, and Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.95-102, and p.118-123.

41. Smith, B., (1992) p.99.

42. Smith, R. J., (1989) p.102-105, and Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.129-159, and p.171-203.

43. Smith, B., (1992) p.99.

Similarly, this economy was used to sending its young men to sea for lengthy periods. At the end of the eighteenth century, Shetland became a source of labour for the Greenland whalers, and for the Royal Navy, especially in the Napoleonic Wars. Many Shetland men served in the Merchant Navy, from at least the nineteenth century, travelling to various ports around the world. Moreover, a number of Shetlanders emigrated, and with the advent of penny post, information about other parts of the world filtered back to Shetland. Such mobility, aided by the first regular steam service to the Scottish mainland in 1832, created an open and permeable society.⁴⁴ In fact Shetland and Shetlanders have never been as isolated as outsiders may think, unlike more genuinely remote western islands of Scotland.⁴⁵

Isolation and remoteness are relative concepts, however, and in terms of the ebb and flow and intermixture of culture, these islands have been more like busy cross-roads than remote backwater areas.⁴⁶

Moreover, the nature of Lerwick as a major seaport on trade routes and as a centre of population can be contrasted with smaller population centres of other islands, except Orkney. In 1911, 4,664 people lived in Lerwick, which represented 16.8% of the total population. By 1971, almost 35% of the total population resided in

44. Thomson, W. P. L., (1983) p.162-164, Smith, R. J., (1989) p.100-102, S.A., SA4/398 Coull, J. R., (1966) p.161-162, Smith H., (1984) p.88-89, Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.118, and Macleod, I., (ed) To the Greenland Whaling: Alexander Trotter's Journal of the Voyage of the 'Enterprise' in 1856 from Fraserburgh and Lerwick. (1979).

45. Nicolson, J. R., ([1]1972) p.11, Baldwin, J. R., (1978), Smith, R. J., (1986), and Smith, H., (1984), Fenton, A., (1978) p.1-2, Heineberg, H., (1973) p.17, Mewett, P. G., (1979) p.142.

46. Fenton, A., (1978) p.1.

Lerwick. The through movement of foreign fishermen, merchants and seamen, ensured that Shetland was in contact with the outside world independent of its trading links. The Dutch had used Lerwick as base for centuries. Moreover, fishermen came from East Anglia, North-east Scotland, Ireland and the Isle of Man to participate in the herring boom from 1875 onwards.⁴⁷ One observer noted early in the twentieth century,

During the summer months Lerwick is a busy little town, invaded by an army of fish-curiers and fish-workers, male and female, who crowd into every available hotel and lodging-house at their disposal. Most of the fisher-lassies are accommodated in wooden huts, close to the yards where they work. Herring-drifters from England, Scotland, Holland, Sweden, Germany and even France turn up.⁴⁸

The size and nature of Lerwick does not sit easily with the notions of 'peripherality.'

Furthermore, writers have incorrectly assumed that economic peripherality will lead to a peripheral society. As a result, it is presumed that Shetland, because of its remoteness, has an inward looking, static, and impermeable society, with population mobility only in emigration. The charm and mystery of the islands to outsiders has made Shetland, and Shetlanders appear to display certain unique and 'quaint' characteristics: for the special language and cultural habits of Shetlanders have made them seem more 'traditional' to outside observers than they really are. This in turn has created a romantic and sentimentalised

47. Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.178.

48. Anson, P. F., Harbour Head, Maritime Memories, (1945) p.89.

view of island life, illustrated below by a quote from The Observer Magazine, in 1980.

The Shetlands are inset islands. They are much, much further away than most people suppose. They are much more foreign places, much harder, odder and more distinct. The remote and arcane nature is the compelling interest of the Shetlands, which are different in kind from Orkney, the Hebrides and the other British islands of the north: but it is compounded by another immense abstraction- the impact of the international oil industry, which has fallen upon these innocent outposts with all its fateful implications of change and disillusion. Like an invasion from another planet, the gigantic force has affected every aspect of life in the islands, and has made them a disturbing allegory of our times, where profound dilemmas of human aspiration are enacted, floodlit upon a windy stage. Somehow, though, this portentous intrusion makes the Shetlands feel more isolated still. They feel all on their own, like survivors from some frightful catastrophe. It is as though the Shetlanders, subjects of some dark experiment, have been deliberately insulated among their terrible seas, exposed to new irradiations for a trial of values.⁴⁹

Therefore, the application of the core-periphery theory to Shetland is highly problematic. It will be kept in sight in what follows, though certain limitations must be accepted. Firstly, with a history of such extensive international trade links and mobility it is difficult to see where the main forces of control and influence came from for the isles, for was Norway, Edinburgh or London the main centre for Shetland? Secondly, it is a static debate, which does not allow for changing circumstances, as Smout points out,

A provincial town may be a local centre while remaining distinctly peripheral to some continental or international

49. 'Shetland Island Britain Series,' Observer Magazine, 20th July 1980, p.1 and 3.

centre. Scotland is a periphery to south-east England, but Shetland is a periphery to an Edinburgh- Glasgow Scottish core, and the outer isles of Shetland, Whalsay and Unst, a periphery to its capital at Lerwick.⁵⁰

Nor does it take account of sudden alterations in circumstances, such as the greater strategic importance of Shetland during both world wars, and the advent of North Sea oil, which are the subject of the chapters which follow. Furthermore, superimposed upon this argument is the explanation of exploitation, which arises only in particular circumstances, so is not subject to the general theory. As will be seen, being in the periphery does not necessarily involve exploitation by the core, nor will the core always hold the position of exploiter.

50. Smout, T. C., ([2]1980) p.263.

SECTION ONE: 1900-1919.

CHAPTER TWO: THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF WORLD WAR ONE.

Shetland has been exposed to three major external shocks this century. The first, and possibly the least disruptive, was World War One. Nevertheless, it still had a considerable impact on this apparently 'remote' region. Because of its geographic location, Shetland became the site of naval operations, with Lerwick acting as an examination base, port of call for neutral shipping and a convoy port. The Northern Patrol Force was also based at Lerwick, and it became a station for North Russian operations. The movement of these vessels placed additional service requirements upon the island economy. Above all, Shetland contributed manpower, a resource particularly important in this labour-intensive war, and with an immediate effect on the island economy, which was itself heavily labour-intensive. This chapter, using largely quantitative sources, looks at the ways in which the three traditional industries of agriculture, fishing and hosiery adapted to a combination of loss of labour and higher demand caused by war. It also considers the effects of other war-related activity, and the presence of numerous incomers upon the economy. The next chapter moves to qualitative evidence to examine the social implications of the loss of manpower, and the presence of 'strangers'. To this extent World War One is an early example of some of the economic and social disruptions later associated with the oil boom.

NAVAL AND MILITARY CONTRIBUTION.

The scale of Shetland's participation in military service emphasises the extent of loss of civilian manpower and the disruptive effects on the economy. These remote islands contributed heavily from their main resource, labour. According to Shetland's Roll of Honour and Roll of Service, 1,135 men served in the Navy, a high proportion of whom were in the Merchant Services rather than the Royal Navy. Admittedly, many of these men had been in the Merchant Navy prior to war, and continued in this less regimented work, though they were not able to combine it with crofting as easily as before. In addition, 1,479 served in the Royal Naval Reserves, and 330 in the Shetland Section of the R.N.R.¹

A further 1,322 Shetland men served in the army.² Before the war, the 7th Volunteer Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders reorganised in Shetland, and contributed two companies to the 4th (Aberdeen) Battalion on the outbreak of war. The Shetland companies were actively involved in France. But heavy casualties at the Battle of the River Ancre made the regrouping of special Shetland companies impossible and undesirable, and the men served in other Scottish divisions.³ The total figure of Shetland men who had some form of service reached 4,332 by 1918. But 501 of these, although still regarded as Shetlanders, were not resident, which meant that 3,831 permanent residents of

1. Figures calculated from Manson, T., (ed) (1920).

2. Figures calculated from Manson, T., (ed) (1920).

3. Rollo, D., The History of the Orkney and Shetland Volunteers and Territorials 1793-1958. (1958) p.27.

Shetland had served over the four years of the First World War; this may be compared to a total island population of 7,482 men aged between 15 and 64 in 1911. A small number of Shetland women were also engaged in military service.⁴ Combined, this was bound to affect the economic activity of Shetland in terms of both productivity and output.

Shetland was not as strategically important in this war as in World War Two. Nevertheless, positioned between the North Sea and the Atlantic, it provided a land mass from which to 'police' northern waters. Naval operations were established in Lerwick, and it became an examination port for neutral shipping and a base for auxiliary patrol vessels.⁵ Fishing trawlers travelling to and from Iceland and Faroe called at Lerwick for instructions, while neutral vessels were directed into the harbour for examination.⁶ Lerwick was, therefore, showing in war, as it had already shown in peace, that it was an important port of call, with links with the wider-world.

In the same way in March 1917, Lerwick became a convoy port in response to the German submarine offensive. Merchant ships from various countries were escorted from the British mainland to Lerwick, and then across the North

4. Figures calculated from Manson, T., (ed) (1920) which gives specific details of individuals in every service, and is not an exaggeration, 1911 Census, and Mouat, L., 'With the W.R.N.S. 1914-18,' in The New Shetlander No.107 1974.

5. S.R.O., HH31/2. World War One files. Instructions sent by the Admiralty to close British Ports to Neutral Fishing Vessels, 28 September 1914 and 2 December 1914. S.A., D34 Nicolson Papers, Book listing naval vessels seen from Fetlar by Vera V. Nicolson between July and October 1916. S.A., SA3/1/33 Oral Material.

6. Manson, T., (ed) (1920) p.276, and SN, 11 December 1919. Lerwick Harbour Trust Journal, 1913-1917 gives details of the vessels inspected, including the port of registration and cargo.

Sea by armed trawlers and destroyers.⁷ The convoy scheme operated from Shetland for ten months, when 4,500 vessels of approximately 5,000,000 net tons passed through Lerwick, compared with 615 merchant vessels of 41,492 tons in 1915 and 1,619 ships of 484,472 tons in 1916. The Northern Patrol Force was subsequently established and the harbour used as a base for North Russian operations.⁸ Swaabacks Minn in Brae became a naval base for the 10th Cruiser Squadron.⁹ This consisted of armed liners and cruisers which patrolled the seas from Ireland to north of Iceland. A seaplane station, a Kite Balloon Station and a wireless station were also established.¹⁰

In response to naval security, the North Sea became a restricted area, and travel to and from Shetland was controlled.¹¹ Protection of the isles was left to local territorials and reservists who kept watch for the enemy.¹² The Territorials, and later Royal Naval Volunteer Reserves

7. Ships convoyed under the scheme were mainly British, Norwegian, Danish, and Swedish SN, 11 December 1919, and Lerwick Harbour Trust Journal, 1913-1917.

8. Manson, T., (ed) (1920) p.276-277, and SN, 11 and 18 December 1919, and S.A., D11/67 Shetland Library Collection. Typescript of Alston, Captain H. G., Lecture on 'Shetland in the Last War,' reprinted in the SN, 14, 21 and 28 December 1939. Interview Mr L. R. (b.1905)

9. S.A., D1/43/2 Small Gifts and Deposits. Oldham, A. A., 'On the Viking Path or Rambles in the Shetlands.' S.A., SA3/1/33 and SA3/302-3 Oral interviews.

10. SN, 11 December 1919, Gunn, S., 'The Catfirth Flying Boat Station,' in The New Shetlander No.139 and No.140 1982 p.12-14, and p.27-29, S.A., D34 Nicolson Papers, Letter to Sir A. Nicolson from War Office and Ministry of Munitions, 24 April 1918. S.A., D6/263/5 Reid Tait Collection. Auction Booklet of building material from the Kite Balloon Station, 15 December 1919. Manson, T., (ed) (1920) p.276-278, and S.A., D11/67 Alston, Captain H. G.,.

11. S.R.O.. HH31/2 Article from the Scotsman, HH31/14 Number 25478/3810 Letter from Admiral S. C. Colville, 9 May 1915, and HH31/14 Number 25478/5179 Order issued by Whitehall, 14 October 1916.

12. Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.199. S.A., D34 Nicolson Papers Shetland Islands Watch Huts, Stations Nos. 10, 11, 35 and 36 Lease agreements, 1917.

over military age, manned lookout huts around the coastline. They kept watch over Lerwick and Swaarbacks Minn which were defended ports, with the entrances protected by boom defences. In 1917, 350 local men were on patrol and lookout duties in Shetland. Guns were positioned at a number of vantage points, but were not required.¹³

Dae caad dem 'da blind hundred,' but dat wis not dir proper name, aulder (older) men who wir, ... dae wir a Home Guard. ... Dae wir Home Defence, I think dae caad dem.¹⁴

Shetland was never under threat of attack during the First World War, but its strategic location had economic consequences as the presence of naval personnel brought additional expenditure, although this is difficult to quantify. Business was said to be particularly good in 1917, partly because of the increased requirements of the 'strangers' stationed in Shetland.¹⁵ Vessels directed to Lerwick brought trade, and increased demand for administrative services.¹⁶

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF WAR.

Shetland, as already stated, relied heavily upon three traditional industries, agriculture, fishing and knitting. The scope and extent of these remained limited, even during the war. This meant that the economic effects of war on Shetland were somewhat different from those on the U.K. as a whole. There was no large scale industrial production: no

13. SN, 11 December 1919, Gunn, S., (1982) p.28, Manson, T., (ed) (1920) p.278, S.A., D11/67 Alston, Captain H. G.

14. Interview Mr L. R. (b.1905)

15. SN, 3 January 1918 p.4.

16. Manson, T., (ed) (1920) p.278.

munitions factories, or heavy industries to bring expansion to the economy. Therefore, war brought changing circumstances and stimulus to the traditional industries of Shetland, rather than any new areas of growth in war-related production: yet production in agriculture was maintained despite the loss of manpower.

AGRICULTURE.

Wartime demand for home produce stimulated agriculture even in the Northern Isles. The Government insisted that additional land be brought under cultivation at the expense of meat and milk production, especially after the poor harvest in 1916, when supplies of foodstuffs became increasingly scarce.¹⁷ The Zetland County Council, in response to a directive from the Board of Agriculture for Scotland, set up a District Agricultural Executive Committee in February 1917, and further local sub-committees were formed. The purpose of the main committee was to co-ordinate increased food production in the county.¹⁸ A shortage of labour and horsepower made it difficult for crofters to comply, but a certain amount of land was recovered, illustrated below by the agricultural returns.¹⁹

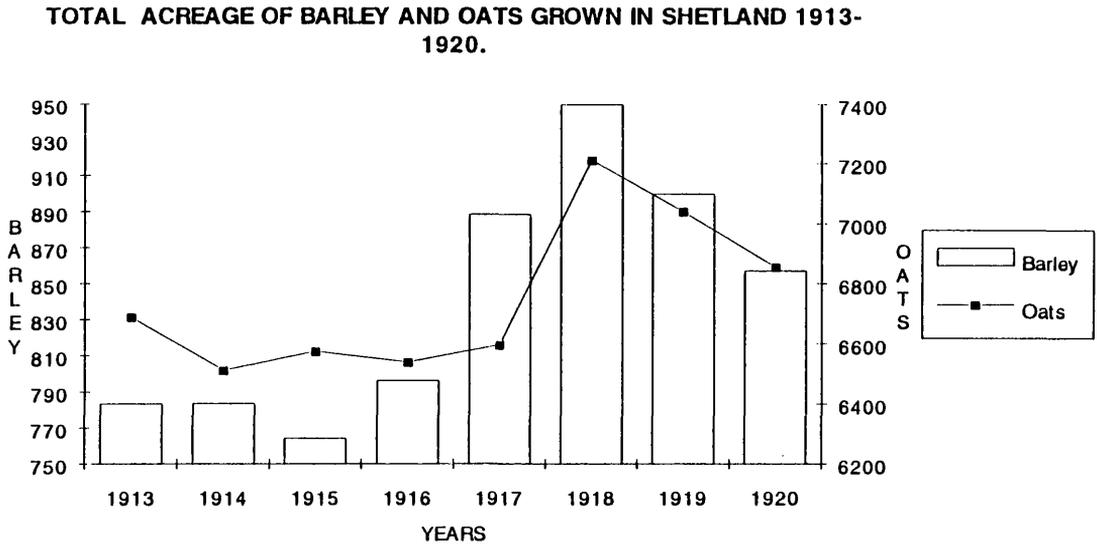
17. Pollard, S., The Development of the British Economy 1914-1980, (1983) p.28, and Jones, D. T., (ed) Rural Scotland During the War, (1926)

18. S.A., CO3/1/7 County Clerks Department, Minutes of Meetings of the Zetland County Council Committees, 1890-1975. Minutes of meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 15 February 1917. S.A., D34 Nicolson Papers box of WW1 papers. Two sheets with details of the formation of the local committees, and a list of their duties.

19. S.A., CO3/1/8 Minutes of Adjourned General Meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 25 April 1918, SN, 22 March 1917 p.2, SN, 14 February 1918 p.4, SN, 21 February 1918 p.1-2, SN, 8

The acreage of barley and oats grown in Shetland increased slightly.

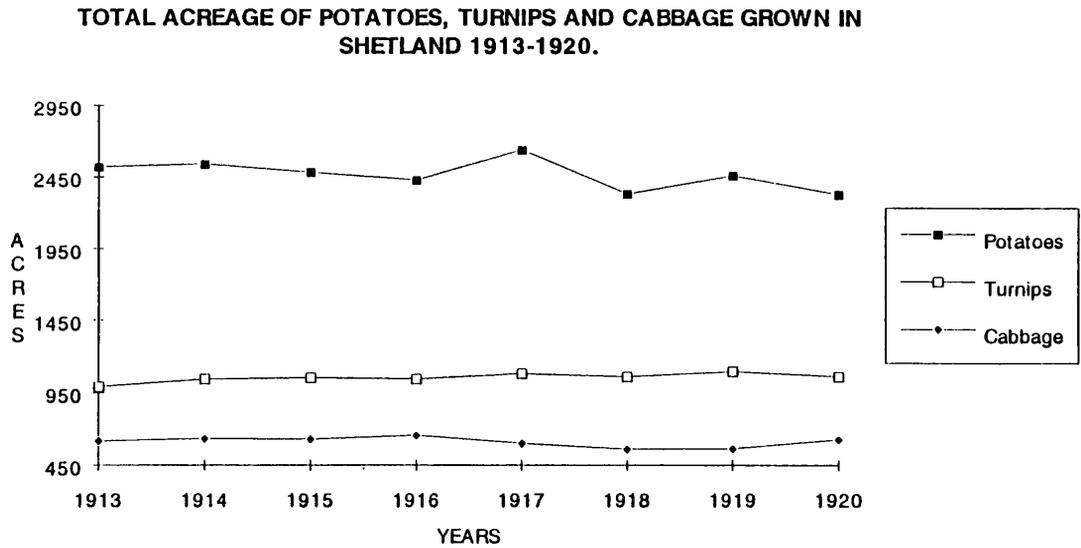
Figure 2.1



(Source: Board Of Agriculture For Scotland Agricultural Statistics, 1913-1920.)

The amount of land used to produce potatoes, turnips and cabbage remained small, but important, given the calorific value of potatoes.

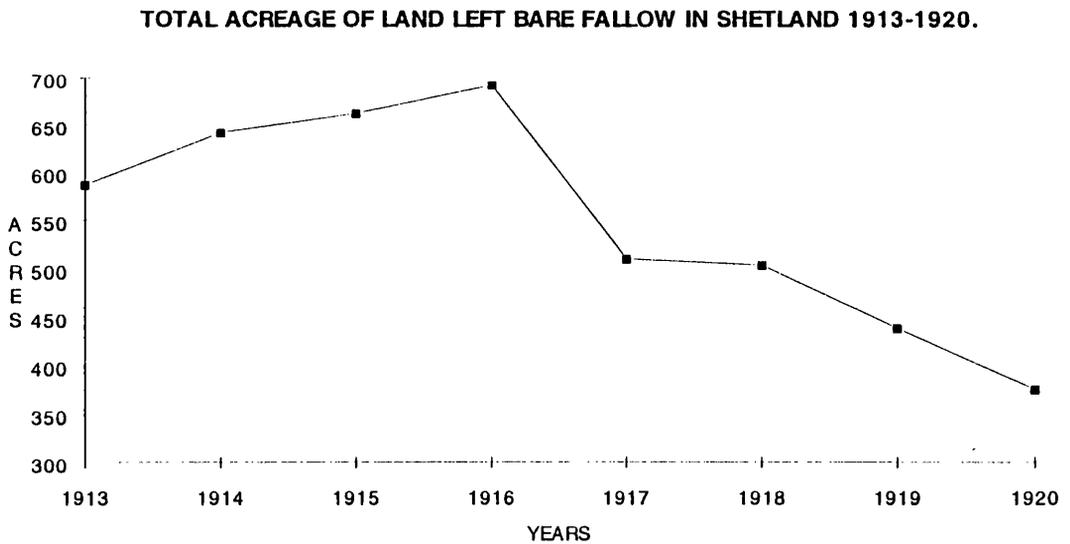
Figure 2.2



(Source: as Figure 2.1)

The amount of land left fallow showed a substantial downturn.

Figure 2.3

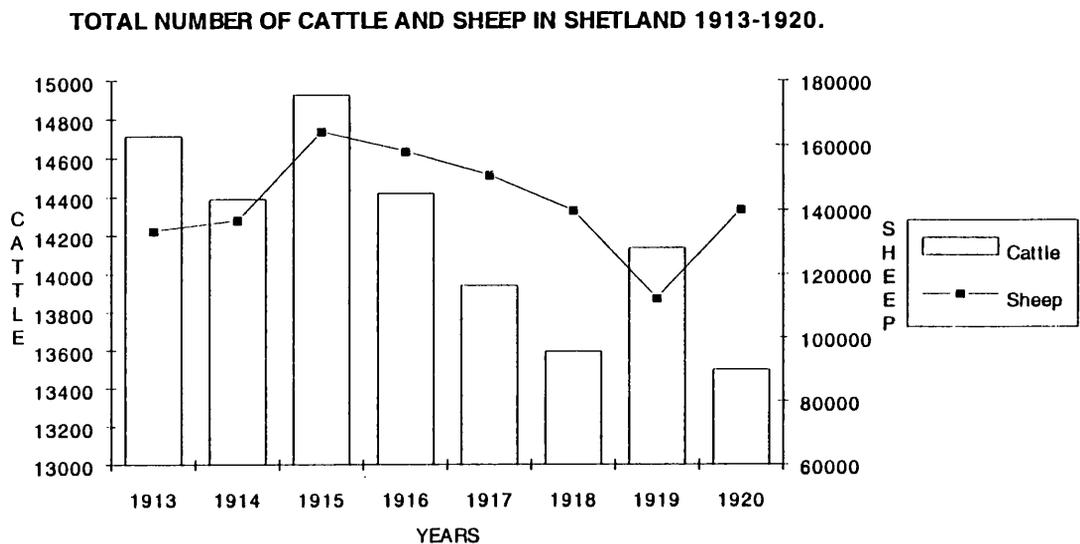


(Source: as Figure 2.1)

Nevertheless, Shetland contributed to the nation's supply of livestock, although in line with Government

policy to increase the acreage of grain and vegetables, the numbers of cattle and sheep fell from 1916. The trend is illustrated in figure 2.4. The numbers of pigs and horses in Shetland also dropped. This was probably due to the need for horses in the war effort, a reduction in the amounts of fodder available for winter feed, and the fall in the price and market for Shetland ponies.²⁰

Figure 2.4



(Source: as Figure 2.1)

Crofts in Shetland were, therefore, able to maintain, and slightly increase arable production and output, despite the loss of male labour. But unlike certain arable areas in Britain, no improved methods of farming or mechanisation were introduced to compensate for this loss.²¹ Rather, the

20. S.R.O., AF40/ Agricultural Census Summaries by Parish, 1913-1920 second series, Board of Agriculture for Scotland Agricultural Census 1913-1920. For details of agriculture in Scotland during the war see Jones, D. T., (ed) (1926) Appendix IV p.9 and p.185. Also Conacher, H. M., 'Agriculture with Special Reference to Food Production,' in D. T. Jones (ed) (1926).

21. Pollard, S., (1983) p.28. Two reapers were available for hire in Shetland by September 1918. SN, 5 September 1918 p.1.

work load of women, children and the elderly, already labouring on the land in peacetime, intensified, reinforcing the work practices of the 'peripheral' economy. Men were released for short periods from service, but not to the extent of their return from 'sailing' during peacetime.²² Some were exempt from military service, and crofting communities continued to work collectively during cultivation and harvest.²³

Rising prices also acted as an incentive upon output for the family-based system. Lambs sold in Lerwick for 8d and 9d a pound in 1915, compared with 3½d and 5d in 1914.²⁴ In 1917, cattle reached a top price of £34/5/-, compared with between £3 and £16/10/- in 1915.²⁵ These 'record' prices continued into 1918, because young cattle and milking cows were scarce. Shetland sheep also retained their price, for, unlike all other fat stock, their slaughter remained uncontrolled.²⁶

These factors were important, but not sufficient, to compensate for the loss of labour during war. Arguably, the crisis of war exposed the large amount of surplus labour normally present in the economy. During the war agriculture worked much closer to capacity, and productivity improved. However, it is not possible to calculate the productivity per worker, as the returns of the Board of Agriculture

22. This was mainly men based in Lerwick in the R.N.R., until call up.

23. S.A., CO3/1/8 Minutes of the Adjourned General Meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 15 August 1918, SN, 3 April 1915 p.4, SN, 4 May 1916 p.5, SN, 15 August 1918, p.4, SN, 14 February 1918 p.4, SN, 27 February 1915 p.8, and SN, 20 April 1916 p.2.

24. SN, 30 December 1915 p.4, and SN, 4 January 1917 p.2.

25. SN, 7 June 1917 p.2, and SN, 5 June 1915 p.4.

26. SN, 26 December 1918 p.4.

record only the acreage grown, not the output for each worker per acre.

Permanent improvements in agriculture were impaired, as increased demand and high prices did not continue after the war.²⁷ Furthermore, the Land Re-settlement Programme introduced in 1919, undermined potential gains made in productivity. The scheme provided ex-servicemen with crofts, at the expense of other occupiers. In effect, this increased numbers on the land and reduced the size of holdings. The scheme therefore undermined the efficient wartime use of land, which had been achieved by reducing the work force and consolidating holdings. Moreover, many of the newly created holdings were too small to provide a livelihood for the tenants, a problem not peculiar to Shetland.²⁸

THE FISHING INDUSTRY.

Before the war, the fishing industry had ensured that Shetland was not isolated from other areas, but this vital link was fractured as soon as war began. Fishing in Britain underwent a period of dislocation, collapse and unemployment at the onset of hostilities. War was declared

27. SN. 30 December 1919 p.4. Deflation of the British currency in 1922 acted as a drag on agriculture throughout the country. Jamieson, J., (c.1972) and McGillivray, J. W., 'Agriculture in Shetland,' in The Scottish Journal of Agriculture No.3. 1920. p.414-429.

28. S.A., CO3/1/8 Minutes of Adjourned General Meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 21 March 1918, Eighth Report of the Board of Agriculture for Scotland being for the Year Ended 31st December 1919, (Cmd 773) Appendix 1, p.2. Twenty-Seventh Report of the Board of Agriculture for Scotland being for the Year Ended 31st December 1938, (Cmd 5968), Chapter III and Appendix 22. Jamieson, J., (c. 1972), Scott, J. C., 'Scottish Land Settlement,' in D. T. Jones (ed) (1926) p.247-266, O'Dell, A. C., (1939) p.57, Heineberg, H., (1973) p.83 and 84, Leneman, L., Fit for Heroes? Land Settlement in Scotland after World War One. (1989) p.88-91.

just as the herring season had reached its peak, and fishing was halted in Shetland as a result. All those involved in fish processing were made redundant, and fishermen, especially boat owners, and curers were badly hit. Fishermen's earnings fell from between £25 and £55 per man in 1913, to between £5 and £15 in 1914.²⁹ War blocked the Continental and Russian markets, which left curers with herring awaiting export, and shipments lay unsold in German ports.³⁰

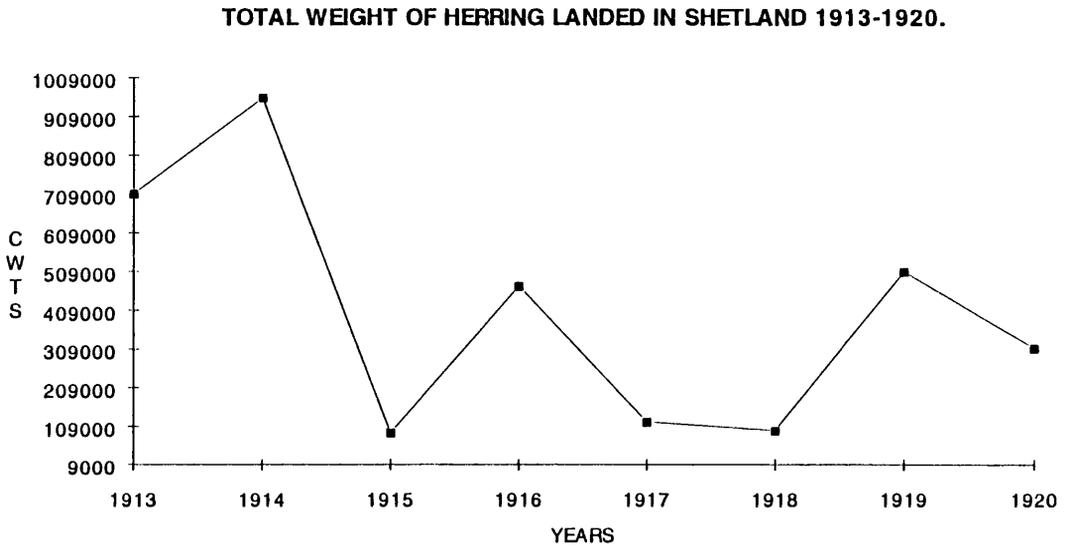
The fishing industry continued to suffer from a loss of markets, men, boats and fishing grounds. Figures 2.5 and 2.6 below illustrate the reduced and erratic catches for both Shetland and Scotland, as a result.³¹

29. S.A., D31/7/74., Hay and Company Papers, Hay and Co. (Lerwick, Shetland) Whalsay Ledger 1912-23.

30. Thirty-Third Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland being for the Year 1914. (Cd.7976), and S.R.O., AF29/253 Letter Book 1911-1915 p.689 Letter to the Fishery Board for Scotland from the Lerwick Fishery Office.

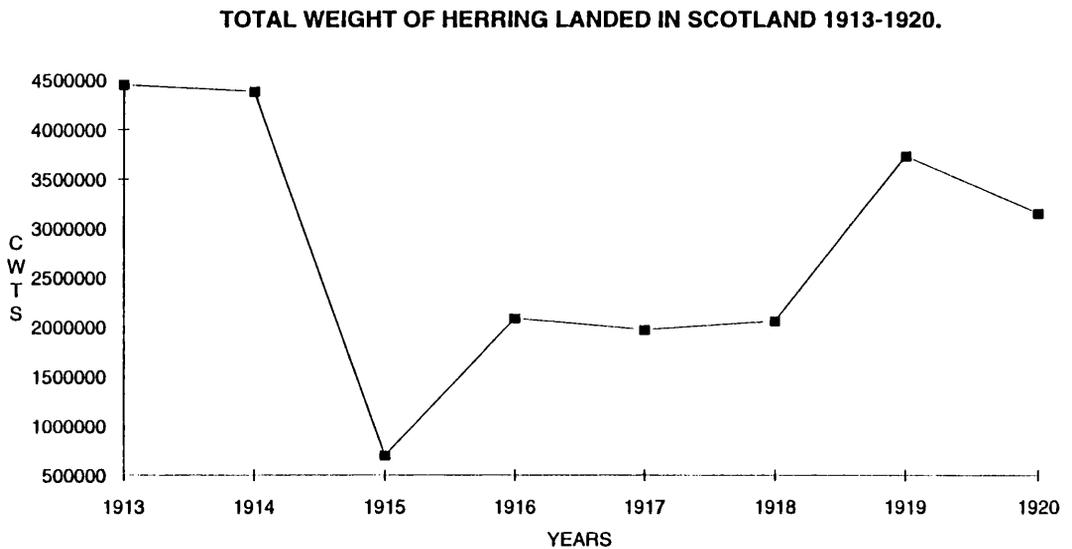
31. Annual Reports of the Fishery Board for Scotland 1913-1920. and Jones, D. T., 'Scottish Fisheries During the War,' in D. T. Jones (ed) (1926).

Figure 2.5



(Source: Annual Reports Of The Fishery Board For Scotland 1913-1920.)

Figure 2.6



(Source: as figure 2.5)

The loss of labour to the war effort was more serious than in agriculture as women and children were not traditionally involved in fish capture. In 1915, for example, 1,073 people previously connected with the fishing

industry in Shetland had moved into war-related activity.³² The total number of people employed in all aspects of the fishing industry in Shetland fell from 10,218 in 1913 to 2,365 by 1915, and had not risen from this level by 1918.³³ War not only removed men, but took a number of boats. The Admiralty engaged local fishing vessels to help with the auxiliary patrols, mine-sweeping and other general duties. The number of vessels taken over was small, but they were the most efficient and modern boats in the fleet.³⁴

The industry was further hampered by restrictions on movement in the North Sea. These were introduced in the interests of safety, with little consideration for fishing. The Fishery Board for Scotland were aware of the detrimental effects upon Shetlanders, especially those who fished in small vessels on local grounds during the winter. As a result, permits were issued to fish around the shores of Shetland.³⁵ But the restrictions took little account of favoured fishing grounds, nor did they eliminate the danger of attack from enemy submarines.

Da fishin boats, every time at dat men geed aff, away nort tae da fishin, dey might never come back, dat Burra Isle men. Wisna dat some tocht (thought) on da families at had

32. S.R.O., AF29/194 Lerwick Fishery office (Shetland District) Circulars 1916-1919 p.78.

33. Thirty-Second Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland being for the Year 1913.(Cd.7399), Thirty-Fourth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland being for the Year 1915.(Cd.8281), and Thirty-Seventh Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland being for the Year 1918.(Cmd. 231).

34. S.R.O., AF29/194 Lerwick Fishery office (Shetland District) Circulars 1916-1919 p.72 Return of the Fishing vessels taken over by Admiralty up to 11 September 1915 for Shetland District. Letter from the Lerwick Fishery Officer to the Fishery Board for Scotland, 11 September 1916.

35. S.R.O., HH31/2 Number 25478/1268 Relating to the North Sea becoming a military area, 6 November 1914, and Jones, D. T., (ed) (1926) p.86-87 Appendix IV Map of restricted fishing grounds.

peerie bairns an dir wives? An dey had tae keep goin tae mak a livin. Dats da men dat had da worries in da wartime. An dey couldna put on dir boat's lights, even in da dark. Dey had tae hae lowered lights on for fishin boats. An comin intae da piers sometimes, dey tocht at dey might crash in tae da piers, you ken....³⁶

In the summer of 1915, German submarines attacked the Lerwick fleet and 16 vessels were sunk. No casualties resulted because crews were allowed to abandon ships, but fishing was suspended.³⁷ After the raid, many Shetland fishermen were unwilling to return to sea. Confidence was restored in 1916, when the Admiralty offered patrols, using commandeered fishing boats, to protect local vessels. This scheme provided added security, but reduced the choice of fishing grounds further, as the fleet had to decide upon a location and fish collectively.³⁸ The patrols did not eliminate enemy attack.

Dats Lerwick, we joost geed oot an we got a peerie square leak dat, dat du had tae set in a side. (the allotted fishing grounds) An dey wir four drifters ... dat patrolled around wis, (us) ... We wir set aff, dey wir three sail boats an two drifters oot here aff o da Noss. One o da drifters wis da .. *Hamnavoe*, and da *Springwell*, dats da two drifters. Da *Research*, da *Masma*, an da *Springwell*, dats da five dat wir aff. Now war struck wis, da submarine came up an he sank da two drifters. But he gave dem leave tae go in da boat, [Crews were allowed to escape to smaller vessels] an go awye fae da sunk drifters ... He let da men go i (in) da smaa boat an win (get) awaa³⁹

Steps were taken to alleviate the effects of war's demands for labour upon the fishing industry. Older members of the community and those too young for service were called upon to make up crews.

36. S.A., SA3/157/2 Oral Interview.

37. S.R.O., AF29/253 p.996 of Letter Book. Shetland District Annual Report of the Fishing Industry 1915, SN, 26 June 1915 p.4, and SN, 18 December 1919.

38. S.R.O., AF29/254 p.157 of Letter Book. Shetland District Annual Report of the Fishing Industry 1916.

39. Interview Mr J. A. (b.1901)

Oh man, aa da men wir awye fae da fishin, it wis aa da navy, an da army. It wis joost boys, ... an auld men at wis at da fishing. ... Dats how I geed i (in) da *Research i (in) seventeen (1917)*. Dey cam seekin me tae go i (in) da *Research fur Charlie Arthur*, he wis called-up ...⁴⁰

They were also requested to take up fishing to release men of military age for service.⁴¹

Markets were found for the smaller wartime catches. Some herring was exported to America but at a much reduced price. Russia purchased small amounts via Scandinavia, and France imported herring.⁴² More importantly, the home market expanded because of food shortages and better marketing. It helped to save the industry and demand outpaced supply as the war progressed. Prices and profits, especially for fresh fish, were high as a result.⁴³ But Shetland fishermen were not able to exploit fully new markets for fresh fish, because of transportation problems, nor were they able to follow the shoals of fish to East Anglia as usual. Getting goods to the mainland had always been a problem, and war exacerbated this. Ferry crossings were irregular and many buyers were not prepared to purchase fish unless a ferry was ready to leave for Aberdeen. Stocks of fish often stood in Lerwick, and this reduced their quality before shipment. If this happened,

40. Interview Mr J. A. (b.1901), S.A., D31/7/74., Hay and Co. (Lerwick, Shetland) Whalsay Ledger 1912-23, p.208.

41. S.R.O., AF29/193 Lerwick Fishery Office (Shetland District) Circulars 1915-1916.p.93 Letter to the Shetland Fishery Office from The Fishery Board for Scotland, 24 December. 1915.

42. S.R.O., AF29/328 The Export Book for Shetland 1899-1923.

43. See Annual Reports of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the war years. High profits were made, despite the high risks involved, because of the increased demand for reduced catches.

the price dropped, and in some cases fish had to be dumped.⁴⁴

Shetland boats, therefore, did not do generally as well as Scottish vessels fishing for herring, and were hit by the disruptions in world trade brought by war.⁴⁵ Fishing, and hence earnings, were erratic during the war. For example, the crew of the *Ocean Spray* earned £22/2/4 per man in 1913, £8/16/5 in 1914, did not fish in 1915 because of the threat of enemy action, and in 1916 realised £80/6/5 per man. Earnings dropped to £14/6/4 in 1917 and up to £26/2/1 by 1918. The crew of the *Princess of Thule*, earned £35/15/4 per man in 1913, falling to £12/14/- per man in 1914. The boat did not fish in 1915, and in 1916 each man earned £98/8/6, dropping to £20/17/3 in 1917. Earnings recovered in 1918 to £34/9/9 per man.⁴⁶ The annual reports of the Fishery Board for Scotland indicated that higher profits were made by white fish at the end, and in the immediate post-war period. Unfortunately there are no equivalent record of earnings for individual white fishermen, although it was noted that haddock prices were high, and most crews made good earnings in 1916.⁴⁷ Figure

44. S.R.O., AF29/253 p.998 Letter Book, 8 January 1916, S.A., CO3/1/8, Minutes of the General Statutory Meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 16 May 1918, and Thirty-Seventh Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland being for the Year 1918.(Cmd. 231) p.61.

45. See Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland 1913-1920. for amounts and value of herring landed in Scotland and Shetland.

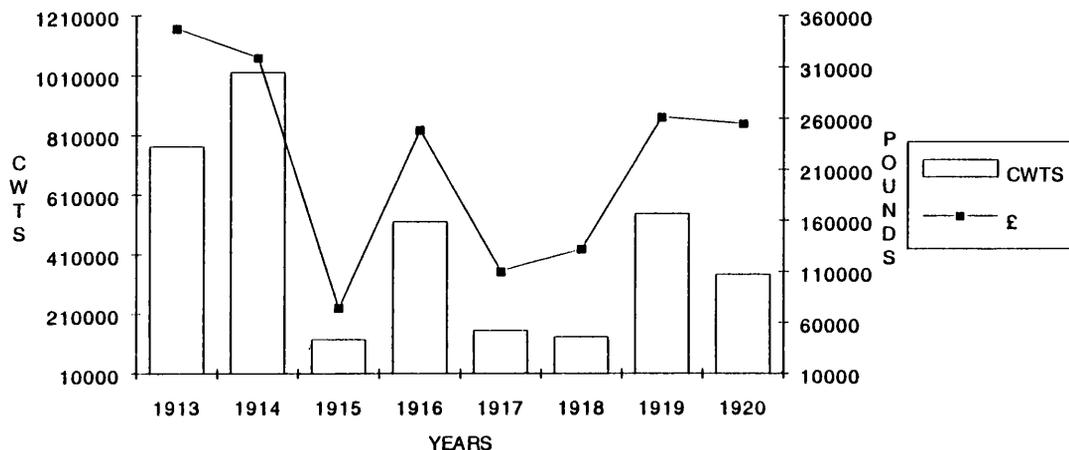
46. S.A., D31/7/74., Hay and Co. (Lerwick, Shetland) Whalsay Ledger 1912-23, p.163-164 and p.193-194. SN, 2 November 1916 p.2.

47. Thirty-Seventh Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland being for the Year 1918.(Cmd. 231) p.61-62, and S.R.O., AF29/253 Letter Book, 8 January 1916. p.998 SN, 4 January 1917 p.2, Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.208-9 and p.220, and Irvine, J. W., (1987) p.165.

2.7 illustrates the increased values, and hence profits made on reduced quantities of white fish.

Figure 2.7

TOTAL WEIGHT AND VALUE OF WHITE FISH LANDED IN SHETLAND 1913-1920.



(Source: as Figure 2.5)

Confidence was restored in the middle of 1919, when the government guaranteed a price for all herring cured. But this did not solve the long-term problem of loss of markets as a result of hostilities. White fishing increased briefly after the war, but remained secondary to herring. Therefore, fishing in Shetland continued in a similar, though somewhat depleted state after the First World War. The shift from sail to motor propulsion increased after the war, whilst the Scottish fleet became dominated by steam drifters, vessels too expensive for Shetland crews.⁴⁸

48. Thirty-Eighth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland being for the Year 1919. (Cmd. 833) p.11-12 and p.44-46, Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.208-209, Heineberg, H., (1973) p.94 and p.98,

THE KNITWEAR INDUSTRY.

The third major activity in the isles, knitting, was also affected by war. This was a home-based industry usually undertaken by women in their spare time or during the winter months. War caused rising demand for articles made out of Shetland wool.⁴⁹ Garments were required for the troops and for domestic clothing because cheap underclothing and items usually imported from abroad, were not available. Demand in Shetland was especially good for haps (large shawls), spencers (vests), and gloves, though less so for lace work. It was suggested that demand in the last few months of 1915 was unprecedented.⁵⁰ The industry continued to do well in 1916 when it had an 'extremely' good year. Demand and prices rose continuously, although the increased price of wool acted as a constraint.⁵¹ Shetland wool had been exempted from the wool order placed by the Government in 1916 to ensure supplies for local knitters. But it encouraged profiteering, and hence massive rises in the price of wool. This helped farmers, but not local knitters who were either unable to obtain, or afford, supplies of wool.⁵²

Problems associated with price and supplies of wool continued in 1918. All types of hosiery produced in Shetland were in demand, with supplies rarely keeping pace, particularly in the summer and autumn months when women were busy working in the fields.⁵³ The years of prosperity

49. SN, 26 December 1914 p.4.

50. SN, 30 December 1915 p.4.

51. SN, 4 January 1917 p.2.

52. SN, 20 July 1916 p.2, and SN, 3 January 1918 p.4.

53. SN, 26 December 1918 p.4.

ended abruptly in 1920, when world depression hit the trade. From October 1920, firms bought only for their immediate needs, and cheap machine-made imports were available once again.⁵⁴

The Shetland hosiery trade experienced similar trends to those of the national textile industry, in that war brought inflated demand and prosperity to an already declining industry. This was followed, inevitably, by contraction and depression.⁵⁵ It is difficult to assess whether the merchant or knitter benefited from the short-lived hosiery boom in Shetland. Fryer has argued that war reduced 'truck' and so aided knitters.⁵⁶ But evidence suggests merchants, not knitters, benefited during the war. A Lerwick knitter wrote in 1915,

I have been told, on good authority, that this class of dealers (Hosiery Merchants) can not meet the orders they have been, and are, receiving for nearly all sorts of hosiery, which no doubt means that they have been getting an advanced price for these goods. Still, we poor knitters have not received one half-penny increase on the hosiery we have sold to them. But when we purchase goods in exchange for our hosiery we are charged a much more advanced price on these goods than we were charged before the war. Alas! What a very patriotic class of people we seem to be from the business man's stand point.⁵⁷

This point was further reinforced,

There has never been in the time of man, such a demand in the south for Shetland wool or the knitted article, as at present, and why should not the knitter get some benefit from this, as well as the merchant. Knitters remain very poorly paid.⁵⁸

54. SN, 30 December 1919 p.4.

55. Lenman, B., An Economic History of Modern Scotland 1660-1976. (1977) p.209.

56. Fryer, L., (1992) p.76.

57. SN, 2 December 1915 p.8.

58. SN, 31 January 1918 p.8.

The increased price of goods in shops, and the shortage and high price of wool made it difficult for the knitter. In contrast, merchants benefited from the cessation of cheap machine-made imports, enabling them to exploit home markets.

Production in Shetland was constrained by a lack of wool, not labour. But, as in agriculture, war-related stimulus did not induce structural change. The hosiery industry had surplus capacity and responded in the manner of a flexible 'peasant' society. Moreover, war diverted demand back to products which, under conditions of peace could no longer be profitably produced in Shetland, or for which demand no longer existed. Depression was more indicative of change, for it forced the industry to diversify into machine-made products in order to survive.

OTHER WAR-RELATED ACTIVITY.

War also brought short-term expansion to a number of local firms. Hay and Company, a Lerwick based family firm, saw growth in its subsidiary business. The company was an agent for Lloyd's shipping insurance, the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Society, and such steam companies as Hellyers Steam Fishing Company of Hull and the Standard Fishing Company of Grimsby. The examination of vessels in Lerwick brought additional handling work. Hay and Company also repaired naval vessels at Freefield. Patrol and Torpedo boats were sent for repairs along with fishing boats taken over by the Admiralty.⁵⁹

59. Nicolson, J. R., (1982) p.156-160.

J. W. Robertson, a local entrepreneur, expanded his business during the war, acquiring the iron-working business at Freefield, and running it in conjunction with the Malakoff repair shop. His coaling business was commandeered by the Admiralty, but he continued to manage it on their behalf.

Dey wir repairing boats, an hauling dem up The navy commandeered a lot of steam drifters ..., dey wir using dem for duty boats, an all dat kind o thing. An dey all needed repairs, an dey needed coal, ... big quantities of coal, an dat had tae be brought here ... Oh dey wir very busy, very busy.⁶⁰

Mr Robertson was also involved in marine salvage. Among his achievements was the refloating of a 4,000 ton steamer the 'Margarita', and a 5,000 ton Rumanian steamer 'Juil'.⁶¹

In da First War dare wis a big ship a big steamer ('Juil') ... She wis ... filled we coke, an shu wis goin oot tae Russia. An shu struck a mine oot side da harbour here, an dey started tae drag her in but shu plumped yunder (over there) at da Widows homes. An ... shu lay dare for long, da funnel, middle place, an da bridge wis up, and da cokes, ... an da rest o it wis under water. He (Mr J. W. Robertson) ... lifted her, an brought her along side. Dae took aa da coke oot, selt (sold) it locally, an sorted her up so at she wis tight and she went awye tae da, I think it wis tae da Tyne ... And was rebuilt, and back in service again.⁶²

Additional business brought by war helped to generate, and improve conditions of employment in Shetland. Wages rose because labour was scarce, and men worked longer hours.⁶³ Opportunities were not as extensive as on the

60. Interview Mr L. R. (b.1905)

61. Nicolson, J. R., (1977) p.100-101, Schei, L. K., and Moberg, G., (1988) p.51-52, and Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.221-222.

62. Interview Mr L. R. (b.1905)

63. Nicolson, J. R., (1982) p.159, and Letter requesting an increase of wages in view of extra work entailed by the number of trawlers calling at Lerwick. Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Lerwick Harbour Trust, 19th January 1919, in Minute Book of the Lerwick Harbour Trust 19th July 1910 to 23rd July 1918 p.386.

mainland, but Shetlanders did improve their financial position during the war.

Improved prices and demand for agricultural produce, fish and to a lesser extent knitted garments, meant the incomes of many families rose.⁶⁴ Added to this were regular pay and allowances from the Forces, greater than the majority earned in peacetime.⁶⁵ In the annual report for 1914 it was noted that,

the establishment of the Shetland Section of the R.N.R. and the larger number of men who have joined it, has proved a great boon to the isles, and the bulk of their earnings is being circulated in the town and country, to the profit of everyone in the isles.⁶⁶

Dr Saxby, the local general practitioner, stated in 1917 that in the island of Unst,

As to general economic conditions, I have made a rough calculation, certainly an underestimate, and find that since the war started not less than £20,000 per annum is coming to the people belonging to the island in the way of old age pensions, separation allowances, pay to men employed in the forces, etc., and this calculation is not taking into account sums realised by the sale of stock, which must amount to two or three thousand pounds at least.⁶⁷

Combined, there was an increase in the circulation of 'ready cash' in the Shetland economy, and improved trade for local shops and businesses.⁶⁸

Earnings were sufficient to cover rises in the cost of living for all, except those in non-war-related

64. SN, 12 July 1917 p.5.

65. SN, 21 October 1915 p.4.

66. SN, 26 December 1914 p.4.

67. S.A., SA2/62 Collection of Various Photocopies and Off-prints, MacKenzie, W. L., 'Scottish Mothers and Children,' Report on Physical Welfare of Mothers and Children. Carnegie U.K. Trust Report Vol.3. Scotland 1917. p.486.

68. An estimated £150,000 was earned each year from military service, the most of which remained in the island economy. SN, 30 December 1915 p.4, and SN, 4 January 1917 p.2.

employment.⁶⁹ This group suffered from rising prices, though wages were eventually increased to compensate.⁷⁰ By 1918 it was noted that the cost of living continued to be very high, but was felt less in Shetland than other areas.⁷¹ In Shetland because of the nature of production and subsistence, the income of the family unit, not an individual's wage was important. Accurate data on this is impossible to obtain, but from the work above it would seem that the incomes of most families increased.

Rural Shetland is without doubt better off financially just now than ever before. Business in the town has also been good, there being an augmented population which has added materially to the trade of nearly all classes of shops.⁷²

The records of the Commercial Bank illustrate the prosperity brought by war, and as outlined in figure 2.8, though the rise in prices meant that the increase in real terms was less dramatic.

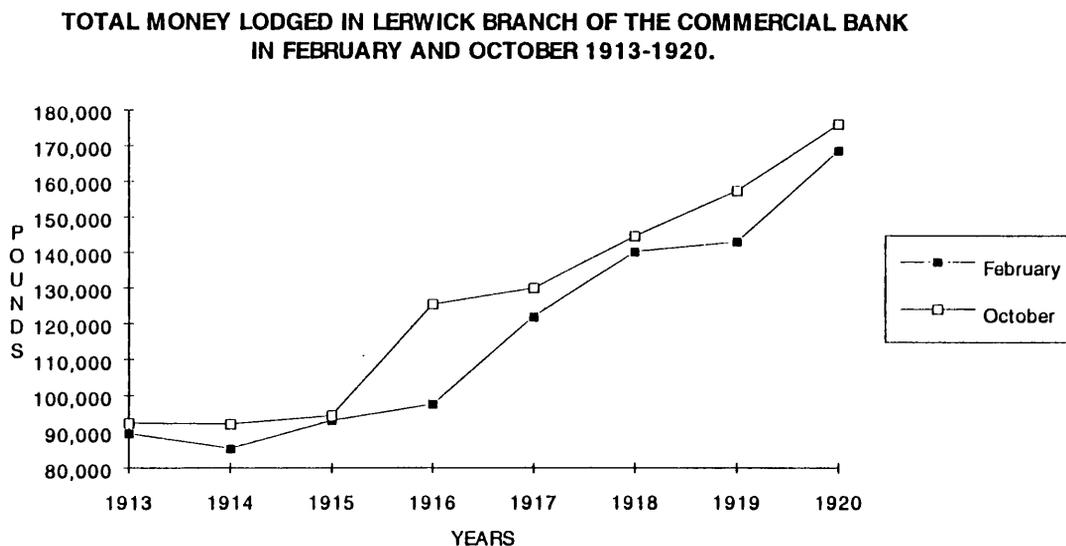
69. SN, 30th December 1915 p.4, SN, 29 June 1916 p.2, SN, 3 January 1918 p.4, Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.202, and Irvine, J. W., (1987) p.65.

70. SN, 30 December 1915 p.4. At the monthly meeting of the Lerwick Town Council, the Council agreed to increase wages in the light of the increased cost of living. SN, 6 July 1916 p.5.

71. SN, 26 December 1918 p.4.

72. SN, 4 January 1917 p.2.

Figure 2.8



(Source: Royal Bank of Scotland Archives, CS/169/8-10 Monthly Agency Balance Books.)

The new-found affluence, like that of the rest of the nation, did not continue into the post-war period, when the three main industries contracted and alternative employment became even more limited.⁷³

Shetland might have been affected by the high death toll, for 524 resident islanders were killed.⁷⁴ This equalled 7% of the 1911 census of active male population in Shetland.⁷⁵ The social implications of these losses were more serious for Shetland than the economic effects. War levelled out the imbalances in the economy. It brought welcome additional demand to the traditional sectors, while removing a great deal of surplus labour. This resulted in more efficient production. Shetland was not able to sustain

73. Black B. A., (1989).

74. Manson, T., (ed) (1920).

75. Figure calculated from the number of men aged between 15 and 64 in 1911.

its population in the inter-war years, which suggested it still had surplus labour.⁷⁶ Therefore, in purely economic terms the loss of manpower was not detrimental.

THE OVERALL STRUCTURE OF THE ECONOMY.

Finally, it is necessary to see whether war brought any long term change to the overall structure, and hence economic nature, of the isles. The employment structure has already been outlined, but it is necessary to look at the period relating to the First World War in more detail. For this purpose the census, although a problematic source, for 1911, 1921 and 1931 has been taken and is outlined in table 2:1. This gives some indication of the occupational structure before and after the war.⁷⁷

76. See figure 1.2 in chapter one.

77. Problems with the census are outlined in Higgs, E., Making Sense of the Census: The Manuscript Returns for England and Wales, 1801-1901, (1989)

Table 2.1

OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE OF SHETLAND BY SEX, 1911, 1921 AND 1931.

	1911		1921		1931	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Fishing	3732	34	3452	0	1643	0
Crofterfishermen	720	4	278	0	233	0
Agriculture	4722	4290	4858	2283	4095	1122
Metals	172	1	125	1	94	0
Textiles	250	3029	123	2749	91	2513
Food Drink	434	330	217	795	112	288
Tobacco						
Wood Furniture	242	0	452	20	338	0
Construction	498	0	298	0	268	0
Transport	1107	3	1439	40	1137	29
Communications						
Commerce Finance	129	42	484	197	534	234
Insurance						
Professional	205	133	170	169	159	180
Occupations						
Personal Services	30	451	42	516	43	490
Domestic Service	8	425	10	434	3	399
Clerk Draughtsmen	0	0	78	77	82	123
Typist						

(Source: Census of Scotland, 1911, 1921 and 1931.)

From this table, it can be seen that the three main sectors, fishing, agriculture and knitting, remained important after the war, although the numbers employed in these had fallen slightly by 1921. The figures for agriculture included sons and daughters of crofters, which might explain their initial size. The numbers employed in other sectors, including the food, drink and tobacco trades the wood and furniture trades, and in commerce and finance rose, though the numbers were very small. The overall work force in the tertiary sector showed some increase, though again numbers involved are very small.

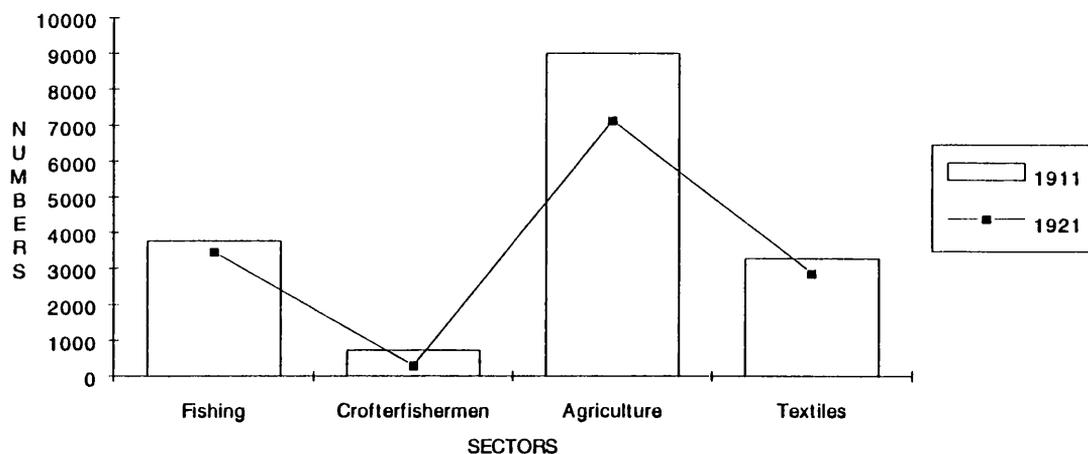
Similar trends were experienced in female employment, with the numbers employed in the food, drink and tobacco

trades, commerce, finance and insurance and the professions increasing. Domestic service did not follow the national trend of decline, but grew until the 1930s. The traditional nature of the Shetland economy and the very limited employment opportunities for women in the isles provides a partial explanation for this. Finally, there was a growth in those engaged as clerks, draughtsmen and typists. These increases, however small, suggest an improvement in opportunities for women, despite being persistently in the traditionally female-based sectors of the economy.

Both the totals, and the figures relating to female employment, suggest that Shetland's economy experienced some structural change between 1911, 1921 and 1931, though to what extent this was a result of the war, or part of a wider trend towards change, needs further investigation. It would seem that Shetland's 'peasant' economy, despite its resilience to change, was being affected by a more general shift to a service-based economy. But despite these changes, and the impact of such a major external shock as war, agriculture, fishing and knitting remained important throughout the inter-war years, as illustrated in figure 2.9.

Figure 2.9

**TOTAL NUMBER EMPLOYED IN THE THREE MAIN SECTORS IN SHETLAND
1911 AND 1921.**



(Source: as Table 2.1)

CONCLUSION.

The first external shock of this century, World War One, reached Shetland, despite its geographic location in relation to the rest of Britain. Lerwick continued its historic role, and acted as an important port for international shipping during the war. The international disruption in trade affected the three traditional industries, for war stimulated both agriculture and knitting, yet severely contracted fishing. These consequences illustrate Shetland's vulnerable position within the international economy, and like other locations, its economy underwent a short-lived boom, followed by contraction. The degree of social change brought by the First World War will be the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE: THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF WORLD WAR ONE.

It would be difficult to examine all aspects of the social consequences of war, and so historians tend to select areas for special treatment. Within the broad context of the social consequences of war, this chapter will focus on three areas of particular concern to social historians of war: these topics have been chosen to see whether Shetland fits into, or diverges from the national pattern. The first section is on social relations. This section is short, because evidence is limited, and the main changes in class relationships, as will be shown, were already underway before the war, which makes it difficult to separate the effects of war from long-term events. The second, and largest section concerns the impact on the lives of women, who have been given particular attention because of their importance in the national literature of war, and, as has been shown, in the Shetland economy. The final section is on the attitudes and ideas of islanders towards war, which relies mainly on oral interviews. This chapter depends largely on qualitative sources, which produce a more subjective discussion than the quantitative material used in the previous chapter, and oral material is inevitably more limited than for the Second World War, because of the age of the interviewees.

WAR AND CHANGE - THE DEBATE.

A great deal has been written on the impact of 'total war' upon British society. This work is divided between those who believe war brought major and permanent change, and those who stress its limited impact. The main proponent of the former view is Arthur Marwick.¹ He believes that both World Wars brought major social change to Britain. Amongst other things, he highlights the effects of World War One upon democracy and the position of women, since the participation of the masses in the war economy, including women, was to lead to the extension of the franchise. During the war women were drawn into the economy as labour was in short supply. For many this meant entering the labour market for the first time, or returning to work despite family responsibilities. But, these changes were generally short-lived, and Marwick accepts that most women were pushed out of employment by the 1920s. He also believes that the attitudes and aspirations of women changed during war, but the sexual division of labour within the home remained similar to pre-war conditions, as did the traditional format of the family.²

The 'psychological' aspects of change brought by war are also of interest, and include high and popular culture, customs, behaviour and mentalities. The expansion and circulation of newspapers, and the increased popularity of

1. Marwick, A., 'The Impact of the First World War on British Society,' in Journal of Contemporary History No.3 1968., Marwick, A., War and Social Change in Twentieth Century: A Comparative Study of Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the United States.(1974), Marwick, A., (ed) Total War and Social Change(1988), Marwick, A., The Deluge: British Society and the First World War.(1991).

2. Marwick, A., (1991) p.12, and p.29-33.

the cinema (and later the radio) helped the growth of a mass society and culture. In addition, the 'psychological' effects of war are linked to its destructive elements. Social scientists have questioned whether natural disasters should be seen as a means by which people are spurred into replacing and repairing the damage experienced, or even as encouraging improvement upon what has gone before.³ This, in itself, is part of the process of social change. The pressures of war also highlight existing social problems, such as the poor state of housing stock, and increase demand for social reform amongst a population who believe they are fighting for a better future.⁴

Other writers, who do not necessarily agree with Marwick, believe war brought major change.⁵ Henry Pelling and Angus Calder, both writing on the Second World War, believe that war brought little positive social change to Britain.⁶ This view has also been put forward in more recent work, by the 'new school of historians' who, according to Harold Smith, do not believe war brought any substantial long-term change to society.⁷ For example, Marwick has been highly criticised for arguing that war

3. As cited by Marwick, A., (1988) p.45 Sorokin, P. A., Man and Society in Calamity. (1943), Barker, G. W., and Chapman D. D., (ed) Man and Society in Disaster. (1962), Barton, A. H., Social Organisation Under Stress. (1963), and Ikle, F. C., The Social Impact of Bomb Destruction. (1958).

4. Marwick, A., (1991) p.20, and p.34.

5. These include the work of Noel Whiteside writing in Turner, J., (ed) Britain and the First World War. (1988), Winter, J. M., The Great War and the British People. (1985) and selection of articles in Wall, R., and Winter, J., (ed) The Upheaval of War: Family Work and Welfare in Europe, 1914-1918. (1988).

6. Pelling, H., Britain And The Second World War. (1970), and Calder, A., The People's War: Britain 1939-1945. (1969).

7. Smith, H., (ed) War and Social Change: British Society in the Second World War. (1986)

improved the position of women.⁸ Marwick, in response to Smith and other critics, argues that the evidence used by these writers in various spheres illustrates areas where social change did take place.⁹

Marwick also disagrees with those critics he terms the 'revisionists'.¹⁰ 'Marxists', he argues, place too much emphasis upon long-term structural changes and 'revolutions', to see war as causing major change. But there is a real problem with perspective, as it is very difficult to separate the short-term effects of war from long-term structural change.¹¹ This problem is evident when looking at the effects of any of the three 'shocks' on Shetland, a location not always exposed to the same forces of change as the industrial core. Finally, a number of Marwick's critics concentrate on a single topic and, as a result, overlook the complex interactions that take place within a society at war.¹²

For the purposes of this present analysis, the most important question arising from the debate is its relevance in applying it to Shetland. This was a location distanced from the centre of military activity and much of the war-related economy; where the economic and social relations were different from those of industrial Britain. Is it possible to apply the work Marwick and the general debate

8. Smith, H., 'The Effects of the War on the Status of Women,' in H. Smith(ed) (1986), p.208-229, Summerfield, P., (1988) p.95-114, and Braybon, G., (1981)

9. Marwick, A., (1991) p.22.

10. Marwick, A., (1988) p.xvii-xviii.

11. This issue is addressed by Marwick, A., (1988) p.xi and p.xiii, and Stevenson, J., British Society 1914-1945, (1984) p.46.

12. Marwick, A., (1988) p.xviii.

on war and social change, to Shetland? If so, his work will act as a useful framework. If not, then this will say something of the nature of peripheral economies and the lack of homogeneity even in a highly developed country, such as the U.K.

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE.

Historians have argued that war reduced deference between the classes, without radically altering the social structure.¹³ To what extent Shetland followed this trend is difficult to assess, for it had already undergone a period of major social change at the turn of the century. Between 1870 and 1910 crofters were emancipated and the so-called 'Shetland Method' began to crumble.¹⁴ Prior to 1870, Shetland society had consisted of two 'classes' as the lairds and a growing number of merchants held power over the majority of crofters.¹⁵ This society was not purely capitalist in nature, for the labour on which the lairds and merchants depended, was not 'free' wage labour in the true Marxist sense. Rather the capitalist merchants and lairds depended upon unfree labour from which to extract sufficient surplus to realise a profit. It is on the basis

13. Taylor, A. J. P., English History 1914-1945. (1965) p.172-177, Marwick, A., (1991) p.340-345, and Waites, B., A Class Society At War: England 1914-1918. (1987)

14. Smith, H., (1984), Smith, H., (1977), Smith, B., (1977), S.A., Smith, B., 'The Amazing Social History of Shetland,' (1973) in B. Smith., Gesamtausgabe. (c.1971-1992) p.31-38, and Smith, B., (1991).

15. Merchants appeared in Shetland between 1760 and 1790 acting as agents for the landowners. Smith, H., (1977) p.24.

of such an articulation of modes of production that the Shetland Method was founded.¹⁶

Initially, in the 18th Century lairds, and latterly in the 19th Century merchants, who worked in alliance with the landed classes, developed a system whereby the tenants were not only obliged to pay high rents, but were compelled to fish for the laird under an unwritten agreement of fishing tenure. The scheme ensured a work force for the lairds, and a supply of fish which merchants marketed. It encouraged the lairds to extend the number of tenants on their land, without providing security of tenure, making it increasingly difficult for the tenants to subsist. The result was growing indebtedness, intensified by a system whereby tenants were compelled to buy goods at the laird's shop, and where women were forced to sell knitwear through the laird or local merchant. The knitted garments were exchanged for goods, often of the merchant's choice, and if cash was requested a much lower value of exchange was given. Combined, these agreements formed 'truck', which lay at the heart of the Shetland Method.¹⁷

The method was thus based upon relations of dependency and debt-bondage. Tenants were heavily indebted to the laird, and if they complained were thrown off the land, whilst the lairds and merchants required compulsion to

16. Smith R. J., (1986), and Miles, R., Capitalism and Unfree Labour: Anomaly or Necessity. (1987)

17. Smith R. J., (1986) p.44-45, and Smith, B., (1977) p.208 refer to Lerwick women being well dressed in 1872, yet starving, because merchants exchanged knitwear for goods of their choice, not always what the knitter required. S.A., SA4/289 Special Report of Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into The Truck System (Shetland) Together with Minutes of Evidence, 1872.

ensure a source of labour. Development was not easy under such a restrictive system. But, change came between 1870 and 1910, with the truck inquiry of 1872, followed by the Napier Commission. These led to the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act 1886, under which crofters were given security of tenure and released from their fishing obligations, which enabled them to engage in wage-labour. Parallel to these events was a decline in the traditional fisheries, and the growth of the Scottish herring industry, an area in which Shetland became heavily involved.¹⁸

A new society emerged in Shetland, whereby lairds, with reduced power and influence, were often absent. Merchants, although important in rural areas, lost their strangle-hold. A growing business class and professional elite working under capitalist 'free' wage-labour conditions emerged, reflected in the growth of Lerwick. Large firms, curers and others ran the economy with 'enterprise'.¹⁹ A group of mobile crofters and fishermen appeared, operating under market forces. But, exchange, not cash, remained at the root of economic relations for the majority, based upon indebtedness. It took until World War Two for truck to be removed completely.²⁰

18. Smith, R. J., (1986) p.45, Wills, J., 'The Zetland Method,' in B. Crawford(ed) Essays in Shetland History.(1984), and Smith, B., (1977) p.211-212.

19. Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress 1910. Minutes of evidence June 1907. (Cd 4978) p.604. Smith, B., (1977) p.212, Smith, H., (1977) p.58, and Manson, T., Lerwick in the Last Half Century, 1867-1917. (2nd ed 1991).

20. Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress 1910. Minutes of evidence June 1907. (Cd 4978) p.604 and p.609, and the Departmental Committee on the Truck Acts, Minutes of evidence 1908, Vol II, and VIII. (Cd 4443) and (Cd 4444). A number of merchants continued to be charged for using truck including, Mr Pole Hoseason in

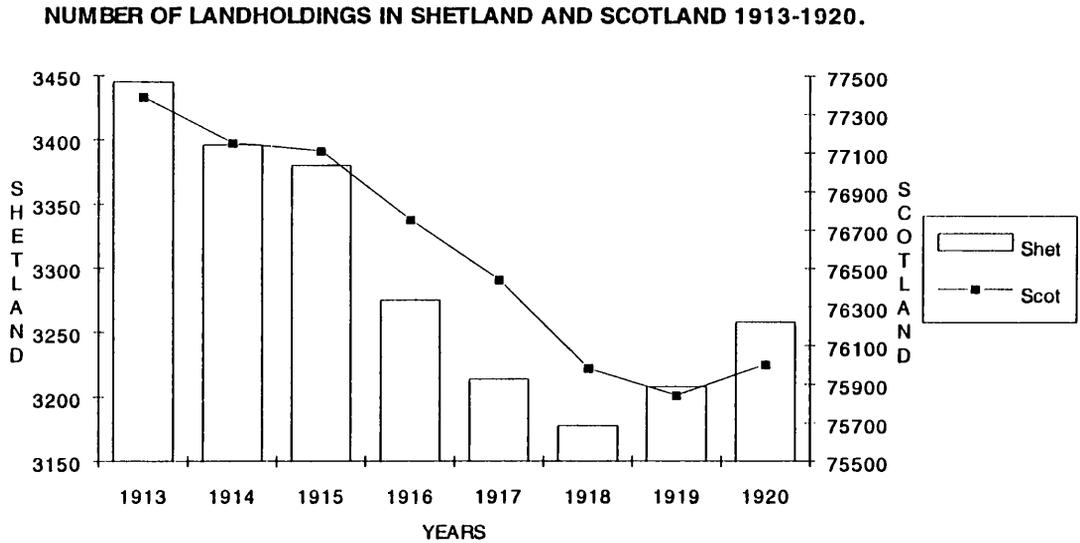
R. H. Campbell shows how records of land ownership and holdings can be used to investigate the social structure of agrarian society. He argues that a new social structure appeared in Scotland after 1918, whereby owner-occupiers replaced the substantial landed classes. He saw this development as a 'silent revolution in the countryside', founded on events prior to 1914. The social and political power of landowners had become outdated, as agriculture was an unstable economic pursuit. Some estates were also affected by First World War mortality through heavy death duties. Moreover, the challenge of the growing industrial class left the landed in a vulnerable position.²¹

Similar circumstances arose in Shetland, but a growth in owner occupation did not follow. The First World War saw the total number of land holdings drop, but small crofts, that is between 1-50 acres, persisted. The number of land holdings in Shetland fell marginally from 3,445 in 1913 to 3,208 by 1920, and further to 3,185 by 1939. In Scotland a similar decline took place from 77,388 holdings in 1913, to 74,291 by 1939.

1908, and Mr Robert Leask in 1910, *ST*, 5 March 1910. Smith, B., (c.1971-1992) p.33.

21. Campbell, R. H., Owners and Occupiers: Changes in Rural Society in South-West Scotland before 1914. (1991) p.xiii- xiv, and p.85.

Figure 3.1

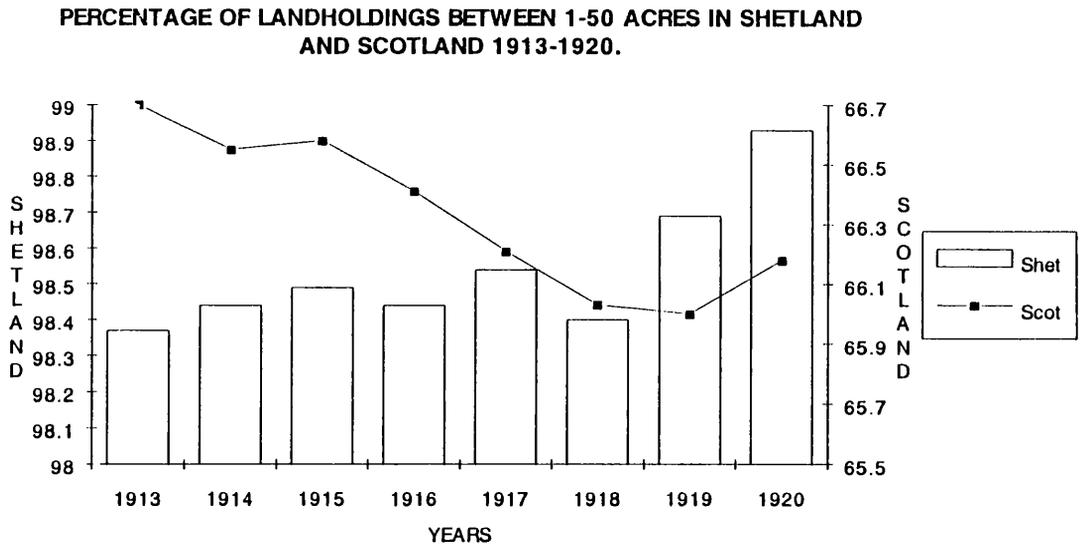


(Source: Annual Reports Of Board Of Agriculture For Scotland Agricultural Statistics, Part I Acreage And Livestock Returns Of Scotland, 1913-1920.)

But the size of holdings in Shetland remained very small in relation to Scotland. In 1913, 99.37% of land holdings measured between 1 and 50 acres in Shetland, compared with 66.7% in Scotland. By 1939, the figure stood at 98.7% in Shetland, with the majority of small holdings being rented.²²

²². Annual Reports of Board of Agriculture for Scotland Agricultural Statistics, Part I Acreage and Livestock Returns of Scotland, 1913-1920, and Campbell, R. H., (1991) p.xiii.

Figure 3.2



(Source: as Figure 3.1)

In 1913, 4% of the total number of land holdings were owned by crofters, as opposed to rented, in Shetland, compared with 7.3% in Scotland. By 1939 the figure had risen to 10% in Shetland, compared with 24% in Scotland.²³

Land ownership and size of holdings remained unaltered by the war and absentee landlords continued to be part of Shetland's social structure. To what extent the power and politics of other groups were affected is difficult to assess. The structure of both the Town and County Councils remained almost unaltered by war. The County Council consisted of an amalgamation of general merchants, fish traders and curers, representatives of the landed classes, a small group of farmers, and businessmen with various interests. The Town Council was more heavily dominated by the businessmen and traders of Lerwick. This was in line

23. Annual Reports of Board of Agriculture for Scotland Agricultural Statistics, Part I Acreage and Livestock Returns of Scotland, 1913, 1920 and 1939, S.R.O., AF40/ Agricultural Census Summaries by Parish, 1913-1920, and Campbell, R. H., (1991) p.xiii.

with other local areas, whereby local councils were dominated by business interests because the nature of their employment allowed the time and resources to engage in such pursuits. They were also keen to control and influence the environment in which they operated. What is possibly unusual is the level of labour/socialist interest in Lerwick, and its representation on the council before and after the war.²⁴

Furthermore, there appears to have been little change in class attitudes, unlike other areas during the war. The 'new' social system of the late 19th Century had already reduced divisions between the social classes, and generated a greater degree of political consciousness among the 'working-class'. A Lerwick Working Men's Association had been set up before the war and was influenced by the Social Democratic Federation. Legal papers, such as Sheriff Court records, also highlight the hostility between landlords and tenants, and the lack of paternalistic relations. Crofters showed little respect for the landed classes or professionals, and acknowledged them through avoidance.²⁵

The overall structure of the agrarian sector, therefore, remained unaffected by the First World War. Rather, as was shown in the previous chapter, it served to perpetuate the 'new' society which had emerged by 1910. The war, by bringing additional stimulus to the local economy, helped 'new' businessmen through increased trade. The recently 'freed' crofter-fishermen benefited from increased

24. See appendix 2.

25. Smith B., (1977) p.212, and Thompson, P., (1977) p.120.

demand for agricultural produce, and the high price paid for fish. This in turn strengthened their position in society. The remunerative payments from those serving at war also brought welcome relief to an economy starved of cash.²⁶

THE ROLE OF WOMEN

The majority of women in Shetland lived in rural districts, and along with children were left to undertake much of the routine work on the croft.²⁷

Maggie, shu wis aye at da milkin .. creamin da milk an aa dat, an dan I kirned. We had peats i (in) da hill tae raise an we had hard wark you ken. Daddy awye at da fishin, me midder cooldna du it aa .. An Maggie (sister) tae, .. me in her had tae raise aa wir peats .. an hurle dem up da road .. We both bed (stayed) hime .. I bigged (built) aa da corn apon da rigs an Maggie shu baled dem (throw the corn sheaves) aa up tae me.²⁸

Weel we got up i (in) da mornin if we wir settin tatties, ... Me (my) bridder wid plough, an we'd set some tatties afore we gud (went) tae da school. .. An dan at night we had different things tae du. We had da lambs tae put in da lambs hoose, an geed (gave) dem dir feed. An you had water tae fetch fae da wal (well). Da wal wis a good piece aff, .. awye our (over) da hill.²⁹

Men usually returned to do the heavier work of cultivation and harvest, though some women were also engaged in the most arduous labour of the land.³⁰ Moreover,

26. SN, 30 December 1915 p.4.

27. In 1913 84.2% of the total female population lived in rural areas, and S.R.O., AF29/253 Letter from the Fishery Officer of Lerwick, 16 January 1914. Graham, L., (ed) Shetland Crofters: A Hundred Years of Island Crofting. (1986) p.25, and Mitchell, I., Ahint Da Daeks. (1987) p.13. Interview Mrs T. L. (b.1910) 1989.

28. Interview Mrs B. M. (b.1907) 1989.

29. Interview Mrs J. S. (b.1904) 1989.

30. Black, B. A., (1989.) Interviews with Mrs G. L. (b.1902), Mrs C. B. (b.1903), Miss L. S. (b.1905), and Mrs A. I. (b.1910) 1989. Mitchell, I., (1987), Mitchell, I., Johnson A., and Coghill I., Living Memory. (1986) and Graham, L., (ed) (1986).

the burden of domestic tasks and the home were the sole responsibility of women, even when women were also working alongside men.³¹ Leisure pursuits, such as reading, were often denied to women.

I used tae think it wis awful dis, ... we joost got da Shetland Times, an da People's Journal, an dan you see me (my) brothers, dey coold sit aa night and look at da People's Journal, an I wid love tae, but I had tae knit. ... Dis day we wir wirkin in da corn, an midder said, 'Jessie, you don't hae much tae knit on your jumper, so you could go up.' I could leave the corn field an go up an knit. ... so I goes up an ... got on me (my) knitting belt, got me knittin here, sees da People's Journal, an thinks I'll have a look at it, so I wis sittin lookin at da People's Journal, had me knittin here aa ready. I niver knew till da door opened, I flung him (the People's Journal), an I wis sittin knittin. An me (my) younger bridder looks an he says, 'Whit wir you doin?' I said, 'I'm knittin ... , cause I hae tae get dis jumper ready.' ... 'Dats aa right,' he shut da door an went.³²

31. Graham, L., (ed) (1986) p.25, and Mitchell, I Johnson A and Coghill. I, (1986) p.21.

32. Interview Mrs J. S. (b.1904) 1989.

Illustration 3.1 Men and Women Working Together Cutting Corn.



(Source: Shetland Library Photographic Collection)

Women's work and responsibilities did not stop with the land. They engaged in the domestic based hosiery industry. By knitting in their 'spare time', women ensured that every minute of their day was gainfully employed. Not only did they knit when daily house and croft duties had been completed, but whilst doing these. For example, many women knitted when carrying peats home, maximising output and adding value to the family economy. This was not always appreciated by their male counterparts, 'Call that work, why, it is only a pastime!'³³

33. Report of the Board of Agriculture for Scotland on Home Industries in the Highlands and Islands 1914. (Cd 7564) p.88-89. Statement made by a Shetland crofter.

Illustration 3.2 A Peat Carrier Knitting as She Walks.



(Source: Shetland Museum Photographic Collection)

Alternative employment within the isles was limited, and unlike men, Shetland women were a relatively immobile group before World War One.³⁴ Thus, for a great majority their working lives revolved around croft work and knitting. Some young girls did engage in wage labour but it tended to be seasonal, or only for a short time. The herring industry, with women working as either gutters or packers, and domestic service were the two main forms of paid employment within Shetland.³⁵

Domestic service provided an escape from the drudgery of croft life, although it left little time, or money, to enjoy such 'freedom'. The herring industry also offered, depending upon the season, lucrative summer employment for women. Many girls did not favour such work as it was considered dirty, dangerous, unhealthy, and involved long hours for poor rates of pay. At the height of summer in Lerwick women were often expected to work from six o'clock in the morning till midnight.³⁶ Yet companionship, independence, and opportunity to travel, as well as the entertainment may have compensated for the labour involved.³⁷

34. Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress 1910. Minutes of evidence June 1907. (Cd 4978) p.567.

35. Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress 1910. Minutes of evidence June 1907. (Cd 4978), and p.604, Mitchell, I Johnson A and Coghill. I., (1986) p.24.

36. Black, B. A., (1989). Women were reported to earning one pound a week at the gutting, and if had no dependants were able to save a small amount. Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress 1910. Minutes of evidence 1907. (Cd 4978) p.567, and p.609. Interview Miss L. S. (b.1905), and Mrs T. L. (b.1910) 1989.

37. Interviews Miss L. S. (b.1905), Mrs E. R. (b.1911), Mrs M. M. (b.1907), and Mrs T. L. (b.1910) 1989.

Weel we had dis auld ... gramophones .. we had dis about da nights. We got dis goin an .. da boys cam alang an we danced. Yea, we had some good nights .. If it wisna fur dat, (the fun in the evenings) it wid o been an awful lot o wark. It passed it. An we'd danced an carried on til awye da smaa hours i (in) da mornin, an dan you had tae rise i (in) da morning.³⁸

Illustration 3.3 Women Gutting Fish in Lerwick.



(Source: Shetland Museum Photographic Collection.)

38. Interview Mrs M. M. (b.1907) 1989.

In contrast, there were a small group of women in Lerwick, the wives and daughters of the growing business class, who lived under different economic and social conditions. They did not have the same pressures of work, and were able to afford domestic help.³⁹ The remainder of town women lived by knitting, working in the herring fishing or in domestic and personal services. A number were full-time knitters earning a very poor living, or simply exchanged their knitted garments for food and clothing.⁴⁰

The extent to which women undertook paid employment is difficult to calculate. The census only acts as a partial indicator, for it under-records, or omits, seasonal and part-time workers, as well as those who participated in dual occupations. It does not provide information on women who worked outside the isles, a phenomenon which grew after the First World War.⁴¹

Therefore women played an important and active role in the economy in peacetime. Their experience, as a result of the family nature of production, was very different from that of the majority in Britain. War, arguably, disrupted and changed the position of women in Britain, as it brought a different set of economic and social relations calling

39. Mitchell, I., Johnson A., and Coghill. I., (1986) p.24, S.A., D1/32 Minute book of the Shetland Women's Suffrage Society, and Manson, T., (2nd ed 1991).

40. Report of the Board of Agriculture for Scotland on Home Industries in the Highlands and Islands 1914. (Cd 7564) p.89, and Departmental Committee on the Truck Acts Vol III Minute of Evidence (Days 38-66) 1908. (Cd 4444) p.292.

41. Higgs, E., (1989) and Report of the Board of Agriculture for Scotland on Home Industries in the Highlands and Islands 1914. (Cd 7564) p.201-203. According to the census 23.7% of women 20 years and over born in Shetland lived on the Scottish mainland in 1911 increasing to 27% by 1921.

upon them to participate more fully in the economy.⁴² Of interest here, is the extent to which war reached women in a geographically isolated and peripheral location such as Shetland, and whether women in the isles experienced war in a similar way to those on the British mainland.

WOMEN AND WAR

Initially the First World War brought dislocation and unemployment in Shetland as in the whole of the country.⁴³ Shetland women were thrown out of work; and girls engaged in the summer herring industry were sent home with little alternative employment. Unlike women on the mainland, no additional war-related work was available, and because of the immobile nature of this group, few moved to engage in munitions, or join the services. Thus the girls of Shetland were forced back to crofts and to take up knitting.⁴⁴

War brought little change for those labouring on the land. Their work patterns remained unaltered although the amount of labour required intensified. For example, the burden of increasing, or at best maintaining, agricultural production fell upon women as they constituted the main work force. This was made worse by the absence of men

42. Summerfield, P., (1988) outlines the debate.

43. Braybon, G., and Summerfield, P., (1987) p.32. Marwick, A., Women at War 1914-1918, (1977), and Thom, D., 'Women and Work in Wartime Britain,' in R. Wall and J. Winter (ed) (1988)

44. Thirty-Third Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland being for the Year 1914 (Cd 7976), Manson, T., (ed) (1920) p.278, SN, 25 January 1917 p.2, correspondence with Brian Smith, Shetland's archivist, and S.R.O., AF29/253 1911-1915 Letter book. p.681.

during the 'voar' (cultivation) and 'harist' (harvest), leaving women solely responsible.⁴⁵

Dey joost had tae cope. Shu (my mother) had two sisters, an dey joost aa worked tagidder, helpit wan anidder. It wis aa dey could do, cause dey wir few men left home. Dey used ta dell (dig) dan (then).. And I can mind dem yet, carrying da seaweed on dir back, an da manure .. tae put on da rigs.⁴⁶

In da First War me fedder (father) got a cart horse an a cart, an I sat an I carted da peats tae da neighbours, an onybody at asked me. ... I'd been thirteen to fourteen dan. .. Half a crown a day, dat wis my share o it, ... a ten hour day. I left hame at seven i (in) da mornin, an I cam back at seven, comin tae eight at night. ... I carted mesel (myself) we (with) da cart, but dey awye tried tae hae a filler wee (with) me, tae fill da peats.⁴⁷

World War One, despite initial opposition from farmers, encouraged women throughout the country back to the land through the British Land Army. It was seen to be novel, and women were given credit for taking over the heavy work on the land. This was reflected in the war memories of the Prime Minister himself,

Of the various labour resources applied to agriculture during the War- ... the land girl was certainly the most picturesque figure, and perhaps in some ways the most valuable. Breeched, booted and cropped, she broke with startling effect upon the sleepy tradition of the English countryside.⁴⁸

But the extra efforts of Shetland women received little acknowledgement, as they were simply an extension of their normal tasks. Nor did it make such a dramatic impact

45. Letter to the editor from J. A. Henry, o/c Tynes-Tees, S.S. co., Newcastle-on-Tyne: 'National Registration - Position Of Shetland Women - An Interesting Suggestion', which stated the importance of women on the land, and urged they be left to work crofts in Shetland, as they were already materially helping the country. SN, 31 July 1915 p.5. SN, 25 January 1917 p.2, and SN, 14 March 1918 p.8.

46. Graham, L., (ed) (1986) p.29.

47. Interview Mrs J. R. (b.1898) 1989.

48. George, D. L., War Memoirs of David Lloyd George, Volume One, (London c.1938) p.773. Also see Marwick, A., (1977) p.101-105.

because women continued to wearing skirts despite the nature of their work.

In addition to their land work, women were called upon to knit more, to supply the growing demands for hosiery. Pressure to increase output also came as a result of the rising cost of living. As costs rose, more garments, the local 'currency', were required to obtain the same amount of goods. Women had to ensure sufficient output, along with other work commitments, to sustain the family.⁴⁹

It is the women by their knitting that keep the house in tea and other food-stuffs. As all the food-stuffs are so high in price, however it makes the women knit as fast as they can in order to keep in time. We old men can enjoy ourselves by the fireside. We can make a kishie, (straw basket) and do any little thing that can help the women.⁵⁰

Furthermore, the Board of Agriculture in a bid to relieve unemployment, implemented a scheme whereby women in Shetland were engaged to knit socks and other garments for the army. This was organised by the Highland Home Industries who, by May 1915, had paid over £2,300 to individual knitters.⁵¹

But the working women of Shetland were, arguably, less affected by war than others. For many women in Britain, war work left little time for domestic tasks such as shopping and house work. Mothers found child care and providing for their families, under the restrictions of war, a difficult

49. SN, 29 June 1916.p.5, SN, 16 December 1915. p.4, and SN, 14 March 1918.p.8.

50. SN, 16 December 1915 p.4.

51. The government was concerned about the high levels of female unemployment throughout the country. Marwick, A., (1977) p.37. Fourth Report of the Board of Agriculture for Scotland 1916. (Cd 8282) p.lviii and lix.

task.⁵² In contrast, Shetland women already played an active role in the economy, and the nature of work during the war was similar to that of peacetime. Secondly, Shetland men had always spent a large part of the year away from home leaving women to act as 'heads of households', so war simply perpetuated previous practices. This was also the case for the financial burden, as women, through knitting and subsistence crofting, already provided much of the family's needs. Finally, war shortages were less of a problem as produce from crofts meant that a supply of potatoes, meat, milk and eggs was generally available.⁵³

Therefore Shetland women, despite their arduous labour and responsibilities during the war, were not affected by its worst hardships. But work and domestic duties were not the sole experience of this group; they were also involved in voluntary activities. Such pursuits were organised by women with time and resources at their disposal, suggesting it was those of the 'new' town of Lerwick and better-off members of the rural community; the group who already engaged in public and charitable works. For example, the Shetland Women's Suffragette Society decided to follow the lead of Mrs Emmeline Pankhurst and support the Government against the common enemy. The Shetland society set up an Emergency Helpers' scheme to make resources available for the nursing department in the event of attack. The Lerwick Emergency Helpers held first aid classes and meetings to prepare dressings as well as knit comforts for the troops.

52. Braybon, G. and Summerfield, P., (1987) p.97-107.

53. S.A., SA3/157/2, Katie Inkster, SA3/231/2, Jessie Moar, and SN, 17 January 1918.p.4.

Its members ran a church hut used by servicemen and those rescued by the Northern Patrol from torpedoed or mined vessels of Shetland.⁵⁴ Mrs Hood recalls helping in the Red Cross canteen.

I wis in dat canteen... da Red Cross., and (served).. coffee, cocoa, ovaltine ... pies an things o dat kind .., you see, dere wis two o wis on every night, fae six, maybe til ten.⁵⁵

A Shetland Branch of the Queen Mary's Needlework Guild was established in September 1914. Organisers were appointed in each district and local committees were formed. These representatives were responsible for collecting knitted and sewn garments, which were sent on to soldiers and sailors.⁵⁶ Meetings were held where women knitted comforts in the company of others, as well as in their homes,⁵⁷

Knittin' Fir Da Boys

Bi a cloddy fire dey sit
Lokkin' ower some maps,
While dir busy fingers knit
Jersey, stocking, belt or mitt,
Fir da sodjier chaps,

'Here', says Jenie, 'is da place
Whar wir boys da Germans face.
O! dat sic a wicked race
Might dis battle rue.'

.....

I' dis wark some Shetlan' lasses
Every oor employs;
Nae mater what dir creed, dir class is;
Da best wie die time ta pass is

54. Marwick, A., (1977) p.128, and p.36-51 for national experience, SN, 8 August 1914 p.5, and Manson, T., (ed) (1920) p.273.

55. S.A., SA3/142/1, Harriet Hood.

56. Manson, T., (ed) (1920) p.273-274, and Scotsman, 25 December 1916.

57. SN, 19 September 1914 p.4.

Knittin' fir day boys.'⁵⁸

Moreover, a scheme was organised to supply eggs to the wounded. Sphagnum moss was also collected and sent to treat the wounded.⁵⁹

Weel, we gaddered moss we (with) Auntie Maggie .. Yea, at da back o da hill here. An dried it oot on whit we caad da drunnie yunder ... An dan you spread it aa oot upo da ground dare an pickit it aa ower, du kens an cleaned it.. Wash (washed) it. An dan put it in bags... For da wounds, dressing. Yea, dey had dat little dressings, du sees o cotton oo (wool) or anything.⁶⁰

A small number of Shetland women also took up military service.⁶¹ These tended to be members of the wealthier classes, for the working women of Shetland were already fully occupied. Thirty-one women joined the uniformed ranks, the majority of whom served in the W.R.N.S., and worked at the naval base in Lerwick as clerical and administrative staff, as well as in communications. Miss Lena Mouat began, in April 1915, as a Secretary to the Senior Naval Officer, transferring to the rank of officer on the formation of the W.R.N.S.⁶² Mrs Adie, keen to help in the war effort took a post in communications.

58. SN, 6 February 1915 p.8.

59. SN, 22 May 1915 p.4., and SN, 16 September 1915 p.4. Shetland Museum war collection, two letters sent to Shetland girls to thank them for knitting socks and eggs. SN, 21 August 1915 p.4, SN, 16 August 1917 p.4, and S.A., CO3/1/8, Minutes of the Adjourned General Meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 25 April 1918.

60. S.A., SA3/313 and 314, Mary and Bertha Sandison.

61. Marwick, A., (1977) See Chap. 4, 'Women In Uniform', and Crosthwait, E., 'The Girl Behind the Man Behind the Gun': The Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, 1914-18,' in L. Davidoff and B. Westover (ed) Our Work, Our Lives, Our Words. Women's History and Women's Work. (1986).

62. Manson, T., (ed) (1920), S.A., D1/43/4 Shetland Wrens. A scrap book of the activities of the Wrens written by Arthur Oldham in 1919, and Mouat, L., (1974) p.23-25.

Well, I'd been anxious to do something you see and then the Admiral's secretary wrote and said that there would be a place for a telephonist, would I like that? And so with my parents' permission I jumped at it We manned the signals department ... must have been about twelve in the signals office to give the three watches ... Well, we had in one room we had the place where the plugs were, you know, for plugging through. And then we either had to connect one to the other with the number he was asking for, or if it was for the signal room we had to switch it where the girls were waiting to take messages for distribution you see. And then we had two or three sea-scouts that ran with messages to places we were not connected to.⁶³

Women who served in the army worked away from home, mainly as nurses. The four girls attached to the W.R.A.F were also stationed outwith the isles.⁶⁴

The extent to which Shetland women were affected by the First World War appears limited. For the majority, war involved no more than a continuation of previous work patterns and responsibilities. It did not bring 'freedom', friendship, new found confidence or self worth, changes associated with those employed on the mainland. For the minority, in line with women of similar social standing in Britain, war brought an opportunity to undertake worthwhile work, for the first time. Similarly, those in uniform gained new experiences associated with their war service including increased companionship.⁶⁵

The impact of war was possibly more universal through the influx of 'strangers'. Although not on the scale of the Second World War, the First War brought a number of naval personnel to Shetland. The majority were based in Lerwick,

63. S.A., SA3/30, Mrs Adie.

64. One nurse, Martha Aitken of Lerwick, was stationed with the 7th Casualty Clearing Station British Expeditionary Force at the front line. *SN*, 6 March 1915 p.4, and Manson, T., (ed) (1920).

65. Braybon, G., and Summerfield, P., (1987). p.65-70, and S.A., SA3/30 interview with Mrs Adie.

although a number were stationed in barrack huts in Nesting.⁶⁶

In Busta Voe. It wis a busy time dan, da whole place here wis full o liners an battleships an patrol boats an everything ... dey wir coal hulks up here, weel, dey wir colliers, dey cam up here an lay in Brae Voe for coalin dem. An dan da old station, dey wir a lock (a lot) o navy men stationed up in da old Olna station, whaur da whalin station used ta be, livin ashore dare.⁶⁷

Added to these were men of various nationalities from vessels passing through Lerwick.⁶⁸ As before, these men brought connections with the wider world, and provided a valuable source of potential partners for the surplus female population.⁶⁹ The extent of contact is difficult to tell, but dances, entertainment and voluntary pursuits brought a degree of interaction between the two groups.

Dey wir two boats stationed here. Da *Brilliant* lay aff in da harbour da whole time. ... An da *Brilliant* men wir well known in da toon,⁷⁰

An dan whin da navy men, da place filled wi navy men in da harbour, ... Whinever da boats cam in dan dey wir dances arranged fur da navy men comin in. An we, all wis young lasses used ta go.⁷¹

To what extent this caused the classes to come together remains questionable.

I wis in dat canteen (organised by the Red Cross). Do you know it was a most interestin thing durin that war. You met the most remarkable people in da canteen. Dey wir a man at used ta come... He always used ta read good magazines an I wis kinda intrigued wi this man. I wis married then an he, I got spaekin to him an my sister used tae come doon an meet me an come because everything wis dark, you see, an we wid go up an dis man took an awful fancy tae my sister. An

66. S.A., D1/43/2 Oldham, A. A., 'On the Viking Path or Rambles in the Shetlands,' and Gunn, S., (1982) p.28.

67. S.A., SA3/1/23 Peter Blance.

68. Manson, T., (ed) (1920) p.276-277.

69. See figure 1.3 for the imbalances in the sex ratio.

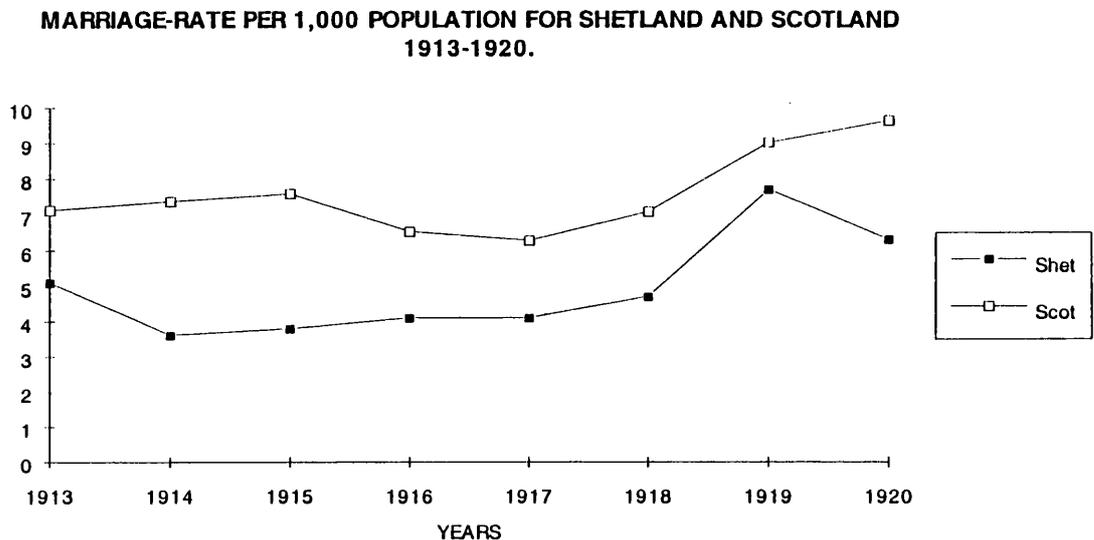
70. S.A., SA3/231/2 Jessie Moar.

71. S.A., SA3/231/2 Jessie Moar.

so he notched on tae me ... An dan he wis a banker. Very high up in banking in Birmingham ... he wis just an ordinary seaman .. Just seemed everything wis reversed kinda wye.⁷²

A number of local girls did find husbands as a result.⁷³ Although the marriage rate in Shetland was always lower than Scotland as a whole, the gap appeared to lessen, with an upturn in 1919, though this mainly reflects demobilisation.⁷⁴

Figure 3.3



(Source: Annual Reports Of The Registrar-General For Scotland, 1913-1920.)

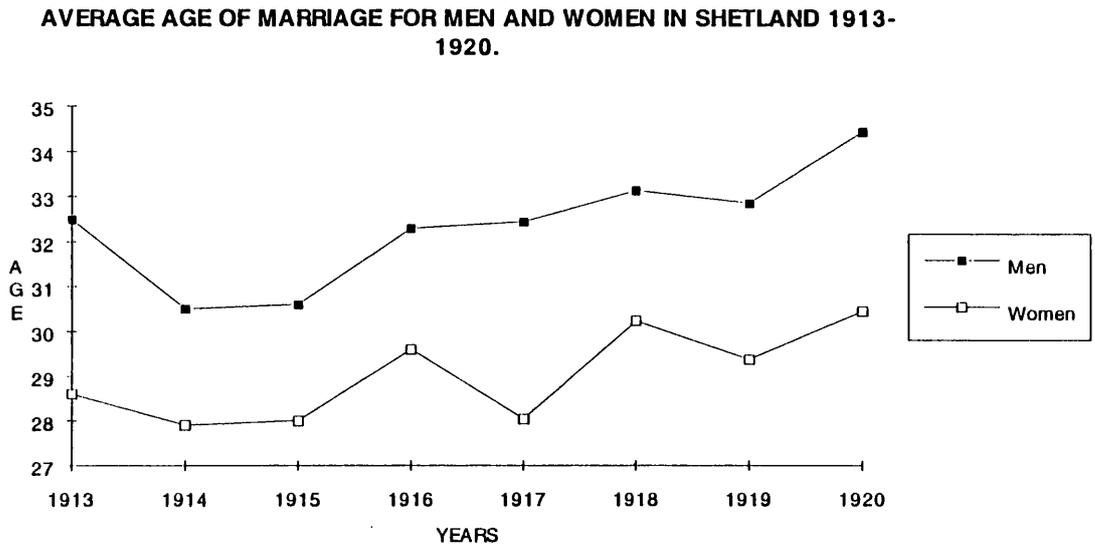
The age at which men and women married remained practically unaltered, with Shetlanders continuing to marry later in life than the Scottish average.

72. S.A., SA3/142/1 and 2 Harriet Hood.

73. S.A., SA3/231/2 Jessie Moar, S.A., SC12/6 Sheriff Court Records, September 1919. Irvine, J. W., (1991) p.2.

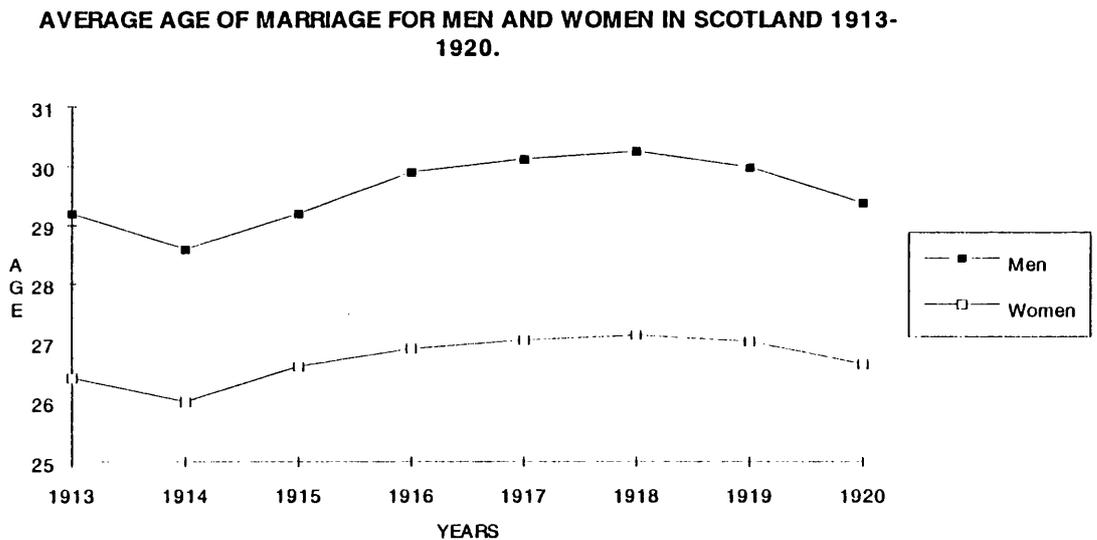
74. Marwick, A., (1977) p.118. The national marriage rate rose until 1916, as couples married in greater numbers before men left for service.

Figure 3.4



(Source: as Figure 3.3)

Figure 3.5

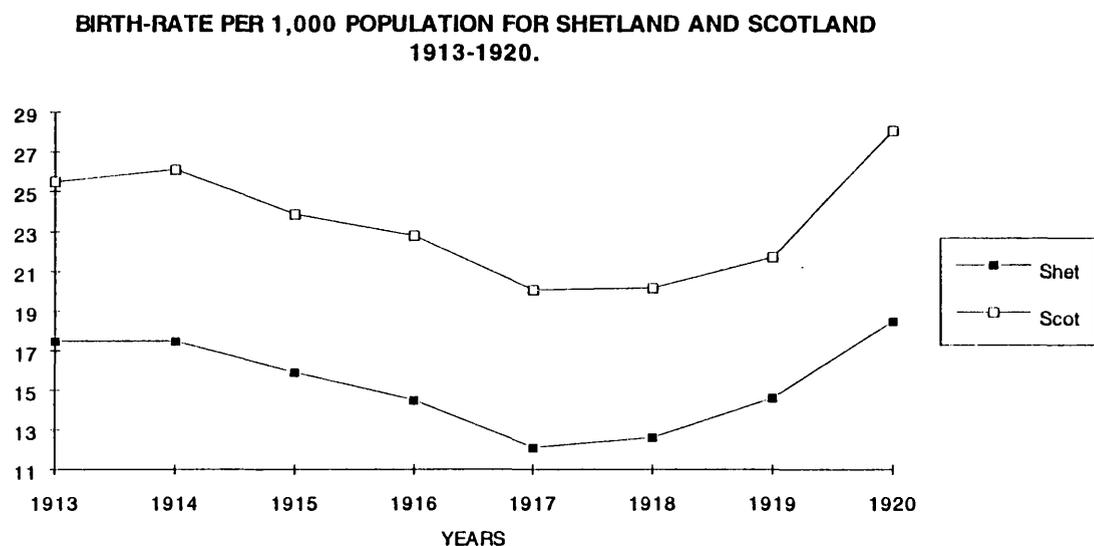


(Source: as Figure 3.3)

Linked to marriage rates were those of births. The birth-rate, that is the total number of births per 1,000 of the population, followed a similar pattern to marriages during the war. The birth rate had been falling before 1914, as part of a wider trend taking place in most developed countries. In Shetland, the high imbalance in the

sexes intensified this, as it led to fewer marriages, and hence births. As with marriages, war caused the number of births in Shetland to decline, recovering to above pre-war levels by 1920. In Scotland similar trends took place, but at a much higher level.⁷⁵

Figure 3.6



(Source: as Figure 3.3)

War also brought a temporary rise in the percentage of children born out of wedlock. Fears were expressed nationally over the morals of working class women, and a possible rise in illegitimacy.⁷⁶ Similar circumstances arose in Shetland, especially with the presence of strangers. It was not clear whether women's police patrols, set up to prevent 'immoral' conduct on the British mainland, were established in Shetland, although the Chief

75. Barclay, R. S., in *SN*, 13 April 1954 p.2. and Flinn, M. (ed), *Scottish Population History from the 17thC to the 1930s.* (1977) p.303-304, and p.316-348.

76. Braybon, G., and Summerfield, P., (1987) p.107-110.

Constable of the burgh of Lerwick Mr G. Emslie wrote in reply to a circular on Women Patrols' that,

There are a good number of these loose girls and women here, and the police will be pleased to co-operate in the manner indicated with these Women Patrols should any be sent to this district. I am sure Women Patrols will do much good.⁷⁷

The Shetland Women's Suffrage Society in a statement on women's responsibilities during the war also issued a warning,

An appeal is made to all young women and girls to remember that the honour of their country is as much in the keeping of women as of men, and to give no occasion for the charge of light, careless, or loose behaviour to be made against them in this national crisis.⁷⁸

Moreover, a widow, Mrs Annie Laurenson, or Mouat, was accused of running a brothel in Lerwick in 1917. It was reported that a number of women were seen taking men back to her house. In response, the accused said they did washing for the men and the case went unproven.⁷⁹

It is difficult to assess the extent to which girls maintained the 'moral' standards of the time. Many probably came into contact with these strangers simply enjoying the company, in the absence of their own men folk.

Well, durin da war we had, oh, we had about half a dozen servicemen at came tae da house, you see, there was four daughters. But everything wis very well conducted, I can tell you, my word, yes. But we had lots o funs (laughs) ... we had an organ an we had a piano, an we had lovely singsongs.⁸⁰

77. S.R.O., HH31/16, No.25478/1712a Letter from Chief Constable of the burgh of Lerwick to the Scottish Office, 9 December 1914.

78. SN, 6 February 1915 p.4.

79. SN, 12 July 1917 p.4.

80. S.A., SA3/142/2 Harriet Hood.

But if illegitimate births act as an indicator, there was a slight 'loosening' of moral conduct during the war.⁸¹

Historically, Shetland had one of the lowest illegitimacy rates in Scotland, in marked contrast to the North-East and South-West.⁸² According to Smout, 'bundling' was practised in Shetland, where partners went to bed, but remained fully clad with a barrier between them. Couples engaged in heavy petting, but sexual intercourse did not necessarily follow, despite the lack of parental knowledge or supervision in such exploits. The reason for this lay in the structure of family-based societies and their close tight-knit communities. Because everyone was known, if a girl became pregnant it was difficult for the father to escape his responsibilities. Furthermore in such economies resources were limited and an illegitimate child placed a burden on the family, discouraging such practices.⁸³

Circumstances changed during the war, and the proportion of illegitimate births to total births in Shetland briefly rose above that of Scotland.⁸⁴

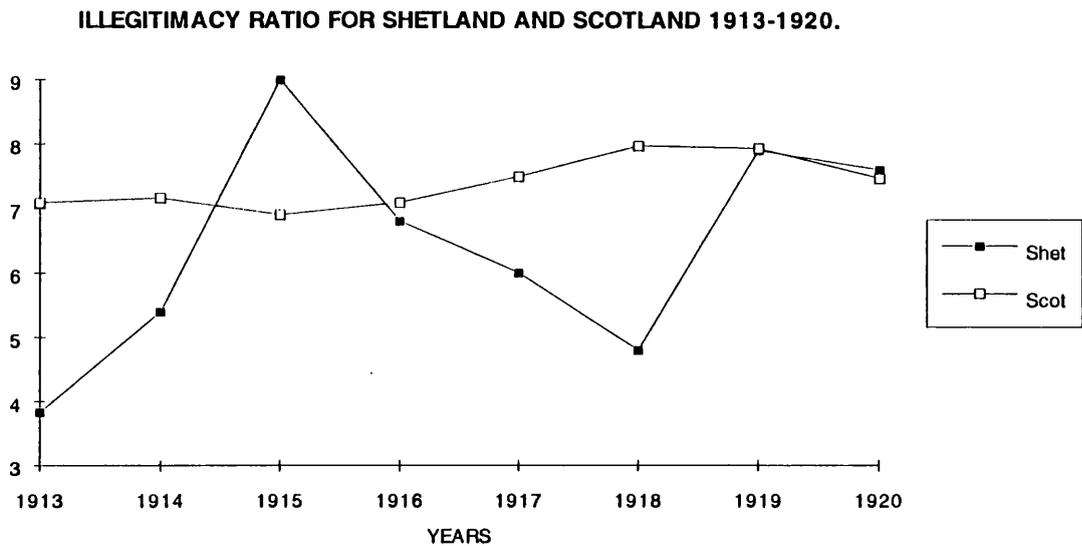
81. See Figures 3.7 and 3.8.

82. Smout, T. C., 'Aspects of Sexual Behaviour in Nineteenth Century Scotland,' in A. A. MacLaren(ed) Social Class in Scotland: Past and Present, (1976) p.63.

83. Smout, T. C., (1976) p.75-76, Flinn, M., (ed) (1977) p.364, and Thompson, P., Wailey, T., and Lummis, T., (1983) p.346-347.

84. Carter, I., 'Illegitimate Births and Illegitimate Inferences,' in Scottish Journal of Sociology No.1, 1976-1977. p.125.

Figure 3.7



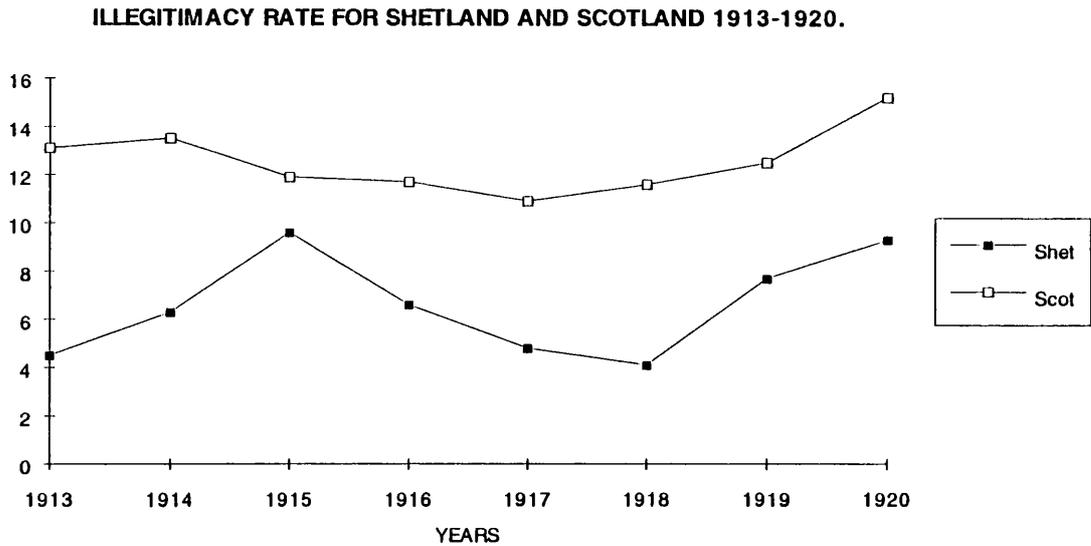
(Source: as Figure 3.3)

But this is deceptive in that the actual numbers of illegitimate births were very small, reaching only 38 in 1915, compared with 7,875 in Scotland.⁸⁵ The illegitimacy rate, that is the number of illegitimate births per 1,000 unmarried, divorced or widowed women between the ages of 15 and 45, provides a more accurate gauge, with the rate remaining consistently below that of Scotland's, despite the rise at the start of the war.⁸⁶

85. Flinn. M., (1977) p.350-351.

86. Carter, I. (1977) p.125 and Petersen, P., and Petersen, R., Dictionary of Demography Terms, Concepts, and Institutions Vol.1. (1986) p.407.

Figure 3.8



(Source: as Figure 3.3)

There are a number of possible explanations for the illegitimacy trends in Shetland. Besides the general shift of Shetland's ratios towards those of Scotland, the war disrupted 'bridal pregnancies', as men left for military service before marital arrangements could be made. It also gave an opportunity to avoid responsibility, if so desired. Secondly, war was said to loosen 'moral' conduct in Britain encouraging girls to indulge in sexual intercourse with partners who might never return.⁸⁷ Such 'liberal' sexual practices possibly reached Shetland, although there is no firm evidence. Finally, the presence of men in uniform and strangers may have acted as a temptation for young girls. These men were not accustomed to the practice of 'bundling', and because of their mobility were not subject to the social constraints placed upon local men. But because the numbers are so small it would only have taken a

87. Flinn, M., (1977). p.350-351, and Marwick, A., (1977). p.119.

few girls to 'stray' for the illegitimacy rate or ratio to rise. Such practices, combined with the return of the troops may explain the rise in the immediate post-war period. However, in a closely controlled society, it did not take much to arouse adverse comment.

Therefore the marriage-rate fell from 1913 levels, with Shetland moving closer to the Scottish rate, especially in 1919. The birth rate for Shetland and Scotland fell from 1913 levels, and then rose above pre-war levels by 1919. In addition, the numbers of illegitimate births increased overall. The rise in marriages and births suggests that war served to perpetuate the traditional role of women, despite the 'freedom' given to them in the absence of men. It did not liberate them from this position, though Marwick believes women were more aware and less prepared to accept poor conditions within the domestic sphere as a result of their war experiences.⁸⁸ For women in Shetland it is unlikely that war brought any change other than exacerbating the shortage of marriage partners in the long-term.

ATTITUDES AND IDEAS OF ISLANDERS.

Despite Shetland's geographic location, islanders were aware of, and kept in touch with, the events of war. Telegraph and sea provided the main means of communication. Telegraphic links allowed messages to be 'wired' from the mainland, as well as between locations in Shetland.

88. Reid, A., 'World War One and the British Working Class in Britain,' in A. Marwick(ed) (1988) p.18-19, and Marwick, A., (1977). p.163.

Telephone lines were laid during the war to isolated locations without the telegraph, and some portable wireless sets were installed.⁸⁹

Ferry services between Shetland and the mainland carried mail and national newspapers.⁹⁰ The local press acted as a vehicle for national and local news, with a daily war sheet. In Lerwick telegrams were posted in the reading room.⁹¹

In Scalloway ... once a week on Sundays, at da Post Office here ... Mrs Morrison (the Post mistress) had a board at she pinned it up ... An all day on Sunday dey wir just a troop o people gyann (going) doon tae read da telegrams .. An dat wis da interest dey showed in it.⁹²

On the island of Unst communication was a problem and people waited anxiously to hear news of the war.

When the *Earl* comes in sight, on Fridays and Saturdays, the pier may be seen lined with people, come to hear what fresh news Mr Garriock has brought.⁹³

The reaction to the outbreak of war was horror and distress. But most people felt it their duty to help in the war effort, despite not necessarily agreeing with it.

There is only one topic of conversation at present in the parish, the war, ... There are men who realise that there are greater things than the territorial expansion, that even above patriotism stand the claims of blended in one great Brotherhood, irrespective of race, colour, or speech.⁹⁴

89. Nicolson, J. R., ([1]1972) p.98-106 and p.112. Shetland was connected by telegraph to the mainland in 1885 and the first internally link took place in 1870. Manson, T., (ed) (1920) p.278.

90. Interview Mrs C. C. (b.1902), and Interview Mr J. A. (b.1901)

91. S.A., SA3/194/2 William Cheyne, and Interview Mr J. M. (b.1909)

92. S.A., SA3/456/1 Clement Williamson.

93. SN, 12 September 1914 p.5.

94. SN, 12 September 1914.p.8.

There appears to be little evidence of conscientious objectors in Shetland.

In some wyes you had sympathy for dem, in idder wyes you thocht (thought) it wis coardly ... I ken we lookit at some o da conchies, (conscientious objectors) ..., we, sometimes sympathy an sometimes scorn, because if da man felt at he really couldna geen oot an kill onybody, weel, hit wis his ain (own) belief wisna it? But I dunna think at dey wir dat many o dem here.⁹⁵

Members of the Lerwick branch of the Social Democratic Federation, like most Socialists in Britain and elsewhere supported the war effort.⁹⁶

The level of interest varied, with the elderly, parents and wives more aware of the horrors of war than children and the young.⁹⁷

Wis young lasses .. we wir a hertless lot, surely, it didna seem tae sink in a destroyer maybe lost. .. An we just kyerried (carried) on dancin. Funny thing, you never seemed ta gae it a thowt until it cam back ta your ain.⁹⁸

For those with relatives in the war it brought much concern, and sorrow through bereavement.⁹⁹ Five hundred and twenty-four male Shetlanders never returned.¹⁰⁰

Mrs Morrison (the Post mistress had a plan about this death telegram comin She used tae phone or send to the minister o that church an say to him, I think it would be advisable to be in da Williamson's house or da Leask's house at say, three o'clock. An he would just come, a call, an he would be in when the .. telegram came.¹⁰¹

95. S.A., SA3/231/2 Jessie Moar.

96. Smith, B., 'The History of Socialism in Shetland to 1945,' in B. Smith, (c.1971-1992) p.105.

97. Interview Mr L. R. (b.1905)

98. S.A., SA3/231/2 Jessie Moar.

99. S.A., SA3/456/1 Clement Williamson, and Interview Mrs D. H. (b.1904)

100. Manson, T. (ed) (1920). This figure was for those normally resident Shetlanders only. For estimates of total British war dead see Winter, J. M., (1985) p.68.

101. S.A., SA3/456/1 Clement Williamson.

Thus, the people of Shetland were aware of the events of war, but their everyday lives remained practically unaltered. On the whole, restrictions on travel and food were minimal, and people in Shetland were better off under the conditions of war than most in Britain.

Da most vivid memory I hae o it (the First World War) wis da bread we got. It wis baked we (with) totties, it wis horrible black. .. It wisna bread at all. But we had plenty o wir own, so we wir niver near starvation or onything. We had plenty food.¹⁰²

CONCLUSION.

To what extent war changed the attitudes, ideas and outlook of the population is impossible to quantify. Arguably for the majority on the home front there was little change. Contact with outsiders, such as the naval personnel, may have helped to introduce different ideas and ways of life. But, with the influx of fish workers each summer, the migrant nature of the male population, and letters sent back from those in Canada and America, the people of Shetland already had substantial contact with the outside world.

In conclusion, the First World War seems to have brought minimal social change to Shetland. The social structure remained intact with the 'shock' of war only serving to perpetuate and strengthen the position of the various groups. This was also the case for women. They majority did not experience the 'liberating' effects suggested by Marwick. Rather the burden of their workload increased, and their subservient position continued, with

102. Interview Mrs A. M. B. (b.1907)

no alteration in work practices. Demographically Shetland experienced similar trends to those of Scotland, but consequences were not long-term. The experience of the first major shock of the twentieth century on Shetland shows that a society can be subjected to a substantial economic disruption, without experiencing consequent social upheaval or change.

SECTION TWO: 1919-1945.

THE INTER-WAR YEARS.

To understand the impact of the Second World War on Shetland, it is necessary to look briefly at the inter-war years, highlighting long-term structural changes and the effects of depression. The inter-war years in Shetland were, as elsewhere, characterised by recession and unemployment. This is noted in the local press annual reports,

Little that is good can be written of the year that passes (1925) ... It has proved in almost all branches of industry in Shetland a lean year. ... Perhaps the worst feature of the year is the great rise in the number of unemployed now on a register at the Lerwick Labour Exchange ... and that is a general indication of the state of Shetland's prosperity in the lean year of 1925.¹

During the year 1930, which is now drawing to a close, the general trade depression experienced throughout the British Empire has been more or less felt in Shetland, and coupled with that the principal local industries have been less productive than for several years back, the result being that the year has been a somewhat unfortunate one for the majority of people.²

The herring industry was hit badly by loss of markets, poor prices, and the mechanisation of the Scottish fleet. As a result, the landings, number of vessels and people employed in the industry declined. In response, the Herring Industry Board was established in 1935, but its first recommendation was to reduce the fleet in line with declining markets. Catches of white fish also dropped, and were not to recover until the introduction of seine-netting, a new method of

1. SN, 2 January 1926 p.4.

2. SN, 25 December 1930 p.4.

fishing during the Second World War, and had helped to 'revolutionise' the industry. Operations became increasingly centralised in Lerwick, with limited activity in Whalsay, Outer Skerries, and Burra Isle.³

Redundant fishermen were forced to return to the land, or leave the islands. Agriculture did not offer a lucrative alternative, for it too was hit by poor prices and diminishing returns, especially after 1922 when Government-guaranteed wartime prices ended. Crofts which had previously been worked on a part-time basis became, as a temporary measure, the sole occupation for many. But the size of holdings was often too small to sustain families.⁴ Livestock rearing, mainly sheep, replaced arable farming, though the increased value of wool, and its importance in the cottage industry, helped to alleviate the worst effects of falling prices. Improvements in transport also aided local crofters in that steam freightage meant animals could be shipped to the mainland alive, and attempts were made to improve breeding techniques. The Department of Agriculture and North of Scotland College of Agriculture lent animals for breeding, and provided free advice. The Shetland Flock Book Society was set up in 1926, and aimed to improve the pure Shetland sheep through selective breeding. The

3. Black, B. A., (1989), Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.207-211, Nicolson, J. R., 'Shetland's Fishing Industry: A Century of Change,' The Shetland Times, 1872-1972, ([2]c.1972), Heineberg, H., (1973) p.95-99. Catches of white fish remained secondary to herring.

4. ST, 2 January 1926, Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.213-214, Jamieson, J., (c.1972), Heineberg, H., (1973) p.101-102, Jones, D. T., (ed) (1926) chapter 11, The Twenty-Seventh Report of the Department of Agriculture, 1938, (Cmd.5968) chapter three and appendix 22 for details. Also Lenman, L., (1989) p.88-91, and Thomson, W. P. L., (1983) p.168.

Department of Agriculture also tried to stimulate the growth of vegetables, introduce new methods of hay-making, and educate crofters in better use of seed mixtures and techniques. Mowers replaced scythes, and reapers (a machine used to cut grain), as well as threshing machines were introduced in a drive towards limited mechanisation.⁵ Despite these attempts, the sector remained in an unfavourable position, illustrated by the fall in the acreage under crop, with the hosiery industry acting as a safety-net for the island population.⁶

Knitting, although usually considered marginal, grew in significance as fishing and crofting contracted. For example, it was estimated by the Russell Report that 9,000 women in 1932-33 were knitting: this represented 75% of the whole female population.⁷ Fortunately, hosiery was less affected by recession, maintaining markets even after the post-war boom, mainly due to the advent of Fair-Isle patterned garments. As a result, knitters sustained rural communities, and this 'pastime' became recognised as an essential secondary occupation for the island economy. Women, by knitting, cushioned the worst effects of the recession. This was especially the case in remoter areas such as Unst, Sandness, Walls and Papa Stour where herring stations closed and there was no alternative male employment.

5. Heineberg, H., (1973) p.101-2, O'Dell, A. C., (1939) p.66, p.70-80, 91 and 105, and Irvine, J. W., (1987) p.70-71.

6. See table 4.1 for changing structure of agriculture.

7. S.R.O. DD16/18, Highland Development Files. The Russell Report 1932/1933, p.56.

Prior to World War One, large firms on the mainland had started to produce underwear and other garments much faster and cheaper, of better quality, and of regular design, than hand knitters could. This placed pressure on the Shetland hand knit industry. But the introduction of Fair Isle patterns in the 1920s provided a new and profitable growth area, especially important as demand for certain hand knits, because of changing fashion, had declined.⁸ Attempts were made to improve the marketing of products, and the Shetland Woollen Industries Association was established in 1921. It aimed to protect the various garments on the market, and set up a spinning mill. Although unable to meet all its objectives, the association secured a registered trade-mark in 1925, depicting the various types of goods manufactured. But the S.W.I.A. did not gain the support of the most powerful merchants, and the industry suffered from a deterioration in the quality of wool, inadequate marketing of goods, careless poor quality work which was harmful to the reputation of the industry, increasing competition from machines, and almost no demand for lace products.⁹

The hosiery industry in Shetland did not escape the age of mass production, where suppliers required a certain number of goods of standardised quality, size, and shape.

8. Blance, T., 'The Economy of Shetland 1930-1952', (M.A. thesis 1953) p.43, Heineberg, H., (1973) p.111, Fryer, L., (1992) p.128, Wheeler, P. T., 'The Island of Unst, Shetland.' Geographical Field Group Regional Studies, No.11, Nottingham 1964 p.26, Tulloch, A. T. H., 'Shetland', The Name for Knitwear,' The Shetland Times, 1872-1972, (c.1972), O'Dell, A. C., (1939) p.155 and 162, and oral sources.

9. O'Dell, A. C., (1939) p.161, S.R.O. DD16/18. The Russell Report 1932/1933, p.56, and Fryer, L., (1992) p.160-161.

Hand knitters found complying with such demands difficult, and as a result American markets were lost to Border firms. In response, hosiery merchants introduced hand-operated machines. For example, in 1933 there were 13 knitting machines on the mainland of Shetland. By 1938 six firms had established 'knitting units', with almost one hundred full-time female workers. This brought valuable cash incomes to sustain families, at a time when male employment was scarce. But women distrusted machinery and factory employment, as it threatened traditional hand knitting and the unique nature of products. More importantly, it involved less flexible work patterns than home production, where domestic and crofting duties were combined with knitting.¹⁰

Fears for the hand knit industry were unfounded, because machines could not manufacture Fair-Isle patterns, and instead concentrated on plain jumpers of uniform size and style. Even when fashions changed to Fair-Isle borders only, the pattern section had to be knitted, and the item finished by hand. Unmarried women were the main source of factory labour in the inter-war years as they had least domestic commitments, and hand knitting continued amongst all age-groups of women in the home. The two methods of

10. S.R.O. DD16/18. The Russell Report 1932/1933, p.57, Blance, T., (1953) p.45-46. But by the 1930s the knitwear industry had managed to establish markets in America for machine made goods. Heineberg, H., (1973) p.111-112. Nicolson, J. R., ([2]c.1972) p.145. States the first knitting machine was probably introduced to Shetland by Mr Pole Hoseason of Mossbank around 1925.

production worked in conjunction, rather than competition, as Shetland knitwear increasingly became a luxury item.¹¹

Illustration 1 Two Shetland Men Clad in Fair-Isle Garments.



(Source: Mrs C. Cheyne, Scousburgh, Shetland)

11. Blance, T., (1953) p.45-46. Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.214, and Heineberg, H., (1973) p.111.

Despite the efforts of the knitters to sustain rural communities, a large number of people moved to the mainland, or overseas.¹² The rate of depopulation accelerated, with the population falling by 2,391 between 1911 and 1921, and by 4,009 between 1921 and 1931.¹³ Fishermen from Shetland found alternative employment in the salmon and herring fisheries of British Columbia and Alaska, or in the hand-line fishing of West Australia, or New Zealand. Men left crofts and small-holdings to emigrate to the colonies in search of work, whilst women migrated to the mainland to work in domestic service.¹⁴

Lerwick also suffered in the inter-war years. In 1911, 4,664 people lived in the town, representing 16.8% of the total population. By 1931, this figure had fallen to 4,221 which represented 19.8%.¹⁵ With a world recession, it is not surprising that a town dependent on passing trade contracted. But Lerwick did not decline as fast as other parts of Shetland, sustained in part by the service sector.¹⁶ Moreover, it is possible, because emigration had

12. According to the Census for Scotland, in 1911 4,472, or 15% of those born in Shetland lived elsewhere in Scotland, rising to 4,915, or 17.9% in 1921, and 4,579 representing 18.7% by 1931. O'Dell, A. C., 'The Urbanization of the Shetland Islands,' The Geographical Journal 81. 1933 p.509.

13. The extent of depopulation between 1921 and 1931 was probably exaggerated as the 1921 census was taken in June, when a large number of seasonal fish workers were resident in Shetland.

14. Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.214, Heineberg, H., (1973) p.83 and 102, Black, B. A., (1989), and Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.199 and p.206-208.

15. Figures taken from the Census Returns of 1911 and 1931.

16. Electricity was supplied to the town in 1932, and a mechanical filtration system for water in 1933. Transport and communications were also improved, with an increase in motor traffic, a daily flight from Shetland from 1936, and the introduction of radio. O'Dell, A. C., (1939) p.204, Moar, J. P., 'Roads in the Shetlands,' Journal of the Highways Engineers, 1962 p.246, Smith, H., (1977) p.63, and Nicolson, J. R., ([1]1972) p.112-113, and p.194.

become increasingly difficult from 1929 onwards, that people living in Lerwick were increasingly forced onto the dole. As table 1 shows, unlike the national pattern, the numbers of unemployed did not fall after 1934.

Table 1.

NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED PERSONS ON THE REGISTER AT THE LERWICK
LABOUR EXCHANGE, 1922-1938.

1922	301	
1923	603	
1924	489	
1925	461	
1926	427	
1927	455	
1928	522	
1929	374	
1930	655	
1931	875	
1932	652	
1933	638	
1934	768	
1935	843	
1936	872	(Numbers in receipt of unemployment benefit)
1937	1156	
1938	1196	

(Source: S.A., D21/3 Series of annual review articles by W. F. Clark on Shetland in Scotsman, 1919-1939.)

It should be noted that these figures are for the number of unemployed registered at the only Labour exchange in

Shetland, so will included those from country districts. Grants were obtained from the Unemployment Grants Committee, and housing programmes undertaken by the Town Council provided some relief, with 300 new homes built in Lerwick by 1936. Government projects, including road improvements, aided men from town and country.¹⁷

THE ROLE OF WOMEN.

Rationalisation and restructuring in the inter-war years had implications for the position of women in Shetland. The decline in herring fishing, the main seasonal employer for women, restricting their opportunities. This was partly cushioned by the rising fortunes of knitting, whereby women became full-time knitters, either in the home or in the small number of newly forming factory units. Some women found winter employment baiting lines, but this was geographically specific. Women continued to be important on the land, though, as a result of recession, less labour was required to run crofts.¹⁸

Single women, under such circumstances, had little alternative but to leave the isles. The extent of out-migration is difficult to trace, though in 1911 2,591 women born in Shetland lived in other parts of Scotland; in 1921 the number was 2,705. In other words, for every six woman in Shetland in 1911, one Shetland-born women lived elsewhere in Scotland; in 1921 the proportion was 5:1.

17. S.A., D21/3 Scotsman, 24 December 1921, Heineberg, H., (1973) p.119, and Black, B. A., (1989) p.12-13.

18. Goodlad, C. A., (1971) p.214, Heinberg, H., (1973) p.102, and oral sources.

Improvements in communications and transport, and a growing network of emigrant Shetlanders aided the movement of young women to work in domestic service and shops. Most moved to Edinburgh, staying initially with relatives or friends. But such migration was not necessarily permanent. Girls often returned to Shetland after a few years, though a number married and made their homes on the mainland.¹⁹

For those who remained in Shetland, land work, knitting, and domestic tasks continued as their main experience. Male emigration was especially high in the depression years, leaving women, once again, to act as the backbone of society. The herring industry and domestic service, although declining, provided limited employment for single women, and Lerwick offered more opportunities in services. In contrast, the better-off women of both town and country continued to engage in voluntary pursuits aspiring to the 'domestic ideal'.²⁰

The inter-war years were therefore characterised by rationalisation in response to recession. But, because of the nature of this 'peripheral' economy, there was little, other than low-paid female work in knitwear factories, to encourage growth or diversification. The problems present in the pre-war economy, such as difficult crofting conditions, a decline in herring, and out-migration, continued. The First World War, therefore, had simply

19. Black, B. A., (1989), and Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.199 and p.206-208.

20. Interview Mrs L. C. (b.1922), and Mrs R. P. (b.1920). Allen, M., 'The Domestic Ideal and the Mobilization of Womenpower in World War Two,' in Women's Studies International Forum, 6. 1983. Interview Mr L. R. (b.1905), and letter from Mrs N. S.

brought temporary relief from the long-term structural problems of the island economy.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF WORLD WAR TWO.

Shetland's position in World War Two was strategically far more important than in the first war, while certain parts of the British Isles were at risk from widespread aerial bombardment, Shetland, like other peripheral locations, received limited protection. But circumstances changed after the fall of Norway in 1940, when it was feared that Shetland would become a stepping stone to the invasion of the British mainland. As a result, Shetland was not only the site of naval activity, as had been the case in World War One, but accommodated a large number of troops. Moreover, Norwegian refugees used Shetland as a base for their resistance movement. The presence of all these 'strangers' placed considerable demands on the island economy, despite a loss of labour to the war effort. This chapter will compare the response of this persistently labour-intensive economy to the loss of labour and additional demands brought by the Second World War. It will follow a similar format to chapter two, with comparisons made between the wars. The next chapter will examine the social implications of loss of manpower, and the presence of 'strangers', on a scale greater than even oil could bring.

NAVAL AND MILITARY CONTRIBUTION.

The Shetland economy, once again, contributed heavily from its main resource, labour; for a large number of able-bodied men contributed to the war effort, joined by a

larger proportion of women than in World War One. According to Shetland's Roll of Honour and Roll of Service, 1939-1945, 3,640 Shetlanders took part in active service during the six years of war, including those in the Merchant Navy. Of these approximately 3,166 men and 173 women had been permanent residents of Shetland; this may be compared to a total island population of 6,018 men and 7,724 women aged between 15 and 64 in 1931.¹ Moreover, a large, though unquantifiable number served in the A.R.P., the Land Army, the NAAFI, in nursing and policing, as well as in munitions, mining, or other war-related work on the mainland.² The loss of these men and, increasingly women was bound to affect the productivity and output of the persistently labour-intensive economy.

Protection of the isles, because of the threat of aerial attack, was of greater concern than in World War One. But, unlike the large cities and sites of industrial production, Shetland represented an unlikely target in the first seven months of war, something reflected in the lack of defence arrangements.³ Orkney was more vulnerable because of the naval base at Scapa Flow, although both Shetland and Orkney were protected areas from the outbreak of war.

1. This figure was derived by excluding all those, 'formerly of Shetland', or serving in foreign regiments, such as the Canadian Airforce. Jamieson, I., Shetland's Roll of Honour and Roll of Service 1939-1945, (1991), and Census for Scotland 1931.

2. As calculated from Jamieson, I., (1991), and Rollo, D., (1958) p.27-29.

3. S.R.O., HH50/120 World War Two Files, Scottish Office papers on the North of Scotland becoming a protected area, and Protected Areas, Departmental Action Regarding The Mainland Of Scotland, Orkney And Shetland. Control Of Photography Order (No.3) 1940- Correspondence.

Illustration 4.1 Certificate of Residence in a Protected Area.

Serial **CR. N^o 045147** D.R. Form 16

CERTIFICATE OF RESIDENCE IN A PROTECTED AREA.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that Mary H. Morrison
J. J. Blue *H.*
the Holder of Blue National Registration Identity Card No. SZWW 168 3
* Buff or green

was a resident at (address) Anderson Place, Lerwick

in the Police District of Zetland in the No 2 Protected Area

at the beginning of the 1st. day of December 1939.

Signature of Bearer Mrs J S Morrison Issued by J Johnston
Police Sergt.

[Issuing Office Stamp to be added on back of this Form.]

(Source: Papers of the late Mr J. Morrison, now in the possession of the author.)

A small number of troops were stationed in Shetland on the outbreak of war, joined by local men, mainly veterans of the First War, who formed the Shetland Defence Company. They guarded vulnerable points, and at its peak approximately 1,500 were enrolled in the Local Defence Volunteers, known as the Home Guard after the summer of 1940. Unlike the First World War, a small number of Shetland women also served in the Home Guard.⁴

4. P.R.O., W0166/1234 War Diaries of the Home Forces, 1939 October-1940 December Orkney and Shetland Headquarters, and W0166/2052 Fixed Defences, 1941 June- December Shetland Defences Headquarters, 'Shetland Defences Operation Order No.6,' 20 January 1941, Appendix A.

R.A.F. bases were established at Sullom Voe, subsequently to become the site of Europe's largest oil terminal, and at Sumburgh, the airfield later used to transport oil workers. Flying-boats operated from the Coastal Command Base at Sullom Voe, and engaged in convoy escort, anti-submarine patrols, and air-sea rescue between Norway and Iceland.⁵ Gladiators, somewhat antiquated aircraft, were based at Sumburgh to counter German long-range weather reconnaissance planes, and protect the base at Sullom Voe. But, because Sumburgh airport was not suitable for use by modern aircraft, the Zetland County Council, under their agency service scheme, constructed tarmacadam runways.⁶

The level of protection required in the early months of war caused some controversy. German aircraft had been spotted over Shetland, but mainly on reconnaissance, weather detection and training flights, not bombing raids.⁷ As a result, in January 1940, Winston Churchill argued that the number of troops in Orkney and Shetland was too high. In reply, Admiral Phillips stated that with the advent of

Irvine, J. W., 'Shetland at War 1939-1945,' in I. Jamieson(1991) ([2]1991) p.193, Nicolson, J. R., 'Shetland in the Second World War,' in Shetland Life, July 1985 p.5, and Irvine J. W., ([1]1991) p.9, and p.297-298.

5. P.R.O., ADM116/4065 Admiralty and Secretariat Papers, Details of defence, communications and accommodation at Sullom Voe. Smith D., Action Stations 7. Military Airfields of Scotland, the North-East and Northern Ireland. (1983) p.191, Irvine J. W. ([1]1991) p.7 and p.66-67, Shetland Museum, box of World War One and Two material Makins, A., 'Shetland At War.' (Typed sheet).

6. S.A., (No number) Zetland County Council Agency Service, County Roads Department. Map and construction details of Sumburgh Aerodrome, and by-pass roads. Smith D., (1983) p.193.

7. SN, 2 November 1939 p.4, SN, 9 November 1939 p.4, SN, 23 November 1939 p.4, SN, 28 December 1939 p.8, and Irvine, J. W., ([1]1991) p.11, and p.46.

air warfare, manpower and materials had to cover the whole of Great Britain, in contrast to the previous war where resources could be concentrated in vital areas. Churchill replied that the wide dispersal of resources was not the best plan and that a policy of concentration in central locations should be followed, which involved an element of risk.⁸

Circumstances changed in April 1940, when Norway fell into enemy hands. It was feared that Shetland would be a base for the invasion of Britain. Moreover, if Shetland was taken over by the enemy, it would give the Germans access to the North Atlantic from the North Sea, and threaten the convoy operations undertaken by the Navy and R.A.F.⁹ The safety of the large naval base at Scapa Flow also caused concern, as remarked later by Brigadier J. C. Cunningham.

It transpired that the Germans had a plan to Pearl Harbour Scapa Flow where the Grand Fleet was centred. They could fly over it from Norway but they had not sufficient petrol to fight it out over Scapa and then get back to Norway. So, they planned to capture the Shetland Isles with its aerodrome and seaplane base and hold it for sufficient time to permit of the Scapa Flow action and then to land and refuel on Shetland.¹⁰

This retrospective view is supported by events in January 1941, when the Chief of Naval Staff on operational control for Orkney and Shetland stated that the defence of the isles was important to avoid invasion and provide security for the naval base at Scapa Flow. He argued that adequate

8. P.R.O., ADM116/4112 Notes from a meeting held in the Upper War Room, Admiralty on the 19th January, 1940.

9. P.R.O., WO166/2052 War Diary Shetland Defences, Appendix No.17, 'Shetland Defences Operational Order No.6,' 20 January 1941, and Irvine, J. W., ([1]1991) p.55.

10. Imperial War Museum, Cunningham, Brigadier J. C., Summary Account Of His Military Career.

defence had to be provided, for if either Orkney or Shetland, were invaded it would be impossible to get reinforcements from the mainland in time.¹¹

Protective measures were therefore increased in Shetland from April 1940, when large numbers of troops began to arrive. A concentration of servicemen, and to a lesser extent women, though the numbers are difficult to quantify, was based in Lerwick manning gun posts. Additional boom defences were laid to protect Lerwick harbour against submarine offensives, and obstructions were placed on potential aircraft landing areas. A curfew was introduced restricting movement between 11pm and 6am.¹²

Lerwick was heavily defended with batteries at the Green Head and the Ness of Sound; machine gun nests and individual gun positions were set up within the town and it seemed that every available space was an army camp with tents, nissen huts and concrete buildings.¹³

Activity at Sumburgh airport increased with the arrival of various squadrons of Blenheims which flew convoy patrols for the remainder of 1940 and 1941. These were reinforced, because an entire fighter squadron was seldom available for service in Shetland, by detached flights of Hurricanes from the mainland.¹⁴ Three runways were operational in 1941, and by August 1942, the station held Coastal squadrons of Beaufighters, Blenheims and a detachment of Hudsons. They launched attacks off the Norwegian coast, protected convoys travelling to North

11. P.R.O., ADM116/4590 Memorandum 21 January, 1941.

12. P.R.O., WO166/1234 War Diaries: Home Forces, 1939 October- 1940 December Orkney and Shetland Headquarters. Jamieson, P., (1949) p.72-73, and Irvine, J. W., ([1]1991) p.56, and p.64. SN, 11 July 1940 p.2.

13. Nicolson, J. R., (1985) p.6-7.

14. Smith D., (1983) p.193-194.

Russia, provided anti-submarine patrols, and tracked German aircraft over the North Sea. They were joined by Spitfires, and Mosquitoes, with various aircraft using Sumburgh as a refuelling base.¹⁵

Army personnel, including members of the Gordon Highlanders and Black Watch, were sent to Sumburgh to defend the airport from air and sea attack. They were also to undertake a counter-attack in the event of enemy action. Accommodation for the army, R.A.F. and naval personnel, covered a considerable amount of ground in Sumburgh, with an Italian prisoner-of-war camp also established in the area.¹⁶

Activity at Sullom Voe intensified, with Sunderlands, and Catalinas from 1941, sent to aid the elderly flying boats. They undertook patrols off the Norwegian coast, organised raids on enemy shipping, and air cover for convoys.

I arrived there on March 6th 1944 to join Squadron at Sullom Voe from where we escorted some of the Arctic convoys heading for Russia and various Naval Groups operating off Norway. Basically we covered the area between Shetland and the Faroes. During the whole period (March to July 1944) I never saw a trace of the enemy. A mixed blessing, I suppose, but that was the way with Coastal Command. Much of our effort was really acting as a deterrent and keeping the U-boats from surfacing and thus making life difficult for them when they couldn't charge their batteries and restricting their operations.¹⁷

15. Smith D., (1983) p.194.

16. Interview Mrs E. M. (b.1909), Miss A. H. (b.1903), Mrs J. F. (b.1923), Mr F. A. (b.1920), and Irvine J. W., ([2]1991) p.127.

17. Letter from Mr R. G. Burnett, 26 Park Crescent, Torrance, Nr Glasgow G64 4BH, 25 January 1993.

A Norwegian squadron also operated Sunderland flying boats from Sullom Voe, and Norwegian planes escaping from their occupied country arrived at the R.A.F. base.¹⁸ Scatsta, the site of another airfield constructed near Sullom Voe, was operational from April 1941. The airfield acted as a satellite for Sumburgh, as well as a land plane support for the flying boat station at Sullom Voe. It provided a refuelling stop for aircraft in the area, and numerous communications flights and diversions passed through.¹⁹

Lerwick and its harbour, once again, played an important role in war. The naval base was smaller than the previous war, but still saw considerable activity. Troopships, tankers, supply ships, destroyers, corvettes, mine layers and mine sweepers all berthed in the harbour. Vessels called for fuel, repairs or shelter. Moreover, submarines were present from the start of 1942, using Lerwick to refuel and to rest the crews. These included French, Dutch, Norwegian, Polish, Russian and British boats, with some of the crews based at the Knab camp in Lerwick. Moreover, Norwegian motor torpedo boats were stationed at Lerwick from autumn 1942. The vessels were used to land agents and equipment in Norway, as part of the

18. P.R.O., ADM116/4065, Correspondence with Mr R. G. Burnett, Nr Glasgow, S.A., D6/292/5 Reid Tait Collection, p.150. 'Heroic Air Chapter Ends At Sullom Voe.' Shetland Museum, Makins, A., 'Shetland At War.' (Typed sheet)

and Smith, D. J., (1983) p.190-193.

19. S.A., (No number) Zetland County Council Agency Service, County Roads Department. Map and construction details of Scatsta Aerodrome, and Smith, D. J., (1983) p.181-182.

fight against German occupation. British M.T.B.s joined in similar work from Lerwick.²⁰

Lerwick not only acted as the headquarters for the navy, but for army and air force activity. The scale of activity, from what has been shown, was considerable in Shetland. But the actual number of troops sent to defend the isles remains unclear. Local writers have put the figure at between 20,000 and 30,000 troops.²¹ According to documentation in the Public Record Office, in 1942 over 22,000 troops were stationed in Orkney and Shetland, while the Shetland Garrison consisted of 12,520 personnel 'permanent' stationed, or 11,038 when the Home Guard are removed. Of these 4,939 were attached to the Army, 670 to the Royal Navy, 128 to the Women's Royal Navy Service, 337 to the Royal Norwegian Navy, and 3,864 in the Royal Air Force. They were based at twelve 'vulnerable points' in Shetland, which stretched from the island of Fair Isle, in the south, to Unst, the most northerly of the Shetland isles.²²

The numbers of troops and level of defence remained a controversial issue throughout the war, and was probably linked to the peripheral location of both Orkney and Shetland, and the dilemma of how best to use limited

20. Nicolson, J. R., (1976) p.132, Nicolson, J. R., (1985) p.7, and Irvine J. W., ([1]1991) p.228-229.

21. Irvine, J. W., ([2]1991) p.194, Coull, J., (ed) (1985) p.59, and Nicolson, J. R., (1985) p.5.

22. P.R.O., WO199/676 Military Headquarters, Papers of Home Forces, World War Two, 12th May 1942, WO199/629 Defence of Certain Areas. 1942 April - 1944 September Orkney and Shetland.

resources.²³ But whatever the exact numbers, it would seem that there was a large influx of 'strangers' to Shetland during the Second World War, especially if those engaged in the NAAFI, nursing and war-related construction are added. The troops on arrival were housed in temporary accommodation including tents.

At this time (late 1939) more and more Sunderland Flying Boats and U.S. Air Force Catalinas were using Sullom Voe and at first the air crews were living in tented accommodation which, after very long patrols from east Iceland to the tip of Greenland, and then to return to a windswept tent at Sullom Voe, was just about the last straw in sheer misery. So semi-permanent buildings with all reasonable domestic services etc., and good food and somewhere warm to recover was absolutely vital. Eventually by the time I was transferred to Aberdeen, Sullom Voe had grown considerably and even had its own Sick Quarters (rather primitive) with two R.A.F. Doctors permanently on the camp.²⁴

A battalion of Highland Light Infantry even stayed in a 'fish-quay' in Lerwick consisting of rows of huts used to house summer workers during the herring season. More substantial accommodation was constructed in the form of nissen huts, ready for the winter. Moreover, council houses, hotels and private houses were requisitioned.²⁵ The main camps were in Lerwick, Sullom Voe, Scalloway and Sumburgh.²⁶ The men and women came from a variety of locations in Britain, with many finding Shetland less than ideal as a posting. The lack of military action made life

23. P.R.O., ADM116/4590 Printed sheet on the Air-borne invasion of the Orkneys and Shetlands and Caithness from Admiral Commanding Orkney and Shetland, 4 January, 1942.

24. Imperial War Museum Misc.73, Item 1106 Recollections Of The Shetlands, 1939 by J. F. Moss.

25. Interview Mrs C. C. (1902), Mrs A. B. (b.1907) and Mrs P. L. (b.1910), Linklater, E., The Northern Garrisons. (1941) p.64, and SN, 8 August 1940 p.5.

26. Irvine, J. W., (1988) p.26.

monotonous, and for many Shetland appeared a 'foreign' country.

It was mid-winter and it was freezing, there was a hill above the bay, and the sun did not come above it for the next four weeks and the outlook seemed bleak indeed, getting dark at three o'clock. ... My office was a wooden box in a morass of mud, with equipment strewn all over the place.²⁷

One woman, who arrived to join the Wrens in January 1941, said she thought it was,

The last place God made and forgot to finish! Barren, treeless, cold, wet and miserable, but Shetland folk were very friendly...²⁸

The threat of invasion, with hindsight, was perceived rather than real, for at no time did the enemy launch an attack on Shetland.

The Norwegian Experience

Shetland provided an important base for Norwegians fleeing their occupied country. This was reflected in the words of Captain Arstad of the Royal Norwegian Navy,

No one can realise our feelings when we saw the Shetland Islands low on the horizon, islands which were not only the land of freedom but of kinsmen.²⁹

Almost 5,000 civilians made the journey across the North Sea; of these 3,629 were estimated to have landed in Shetland. The remainder went to Orkney, the Faroes, or further down the Scottish coast. Of the evacuees who survived, 3,600 made the journey in small vessels. Many

27. Imperial War Museum Item 85/12/1., Memoir of Garwood, F. J., Squadron Leader, Commissioned Officer in Shetland.

28. Correspondence with Mrs Mary Elliot, 7 Tiriee Place, Muirton, Perth, February 1992.

29. Kjorsvik, L., and Moberg, G., (1988) p.53.

came unprepared, travelling in overcrowded boats with blankets used for sails, and few had any form of navigational equipment.³⁰ Those who arrived in Shetland were taken to the Norwegian Consulate in Lerwick, where accommodation and food were provided. They then went to London, to have their legitimacy checked. After inspection, the refugees were trained and placed in various sections of the Norwegian forces. Men who returned to Shetland worked on motor torpedo boats, submarines, and the Sunderlands and Catalinas at Sullom Voe. Some even returned to Norway as secret agents.³¹

A number of Norwegians were involved in what became known as the 'Shetland Bus'. Vessels transported supplies, ammunition and secret agents to Norway and returned with escapees. A special operations unit was established, initially at Lunna, on the east of Shetland and run by David Howarth a sub-lieutenant in the Royal Navy. It was relatively successful, particularly in August 1941. By 1942 it became apparent that operations would have to be relocated for communications was a problem, and a single German attack could wipe out the entire operation.³²

Scalloway became the new base in 1942, offering a sheltered harbour and a firm prepared to maintain and repair the vessel working between Norway and Shetland.

30. Skodvin, M., 'Shetland and Norway in the Second World War,' in Withrington, D. J., (ed) Shetland and the Outside World 1469-1969, (1983) p.185, and Kjorsvik, L., and Moberg, G., (1988) p.54.

31. Irvine, J. W., (1988) p.xiii, and Coull, J., (ed) (1985) p.59-60.

32. For more details and his war experiences see Howarth, D., The Shetland Bus, (1952), S.A., D6/292/6 Reid Tait Collection Howarth, D., 'Gun-Running From The Shetlands in London Calling No.317 p.49-50, and D6/292/12 Howarth, D., 'The Saga Of Leif Larsen,' in Radio Times, 2 May 1952, and Kjorsvik, L., and Moberg, G., (1988) p.57-58 .

Operations continued until fishing boat missions became obsolete and submarines took over.³³ From late 1942 Norwegian motor torpedo boats worked from Lerwick, attacking German vessels as well as undertaken similar operations to the naval unit at Scalloway. By the end of the war 206 missions had been undertaken involving 192 agents and 383 tons of military stores; 73 agents and 373 refugees were brought back with 44 crew members having been lost.³⁴ The significance of these activities in the overall war effort should not be exaggerated. The scale of operations was small, but important for both Norwegian and British morale. Contact with Norwegians must have brought home the realities of occupied Europe to Shetlanders.

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF WAR.

The Shetland economy remained highly unmechanised and traditional in nature. There was, once again, no large scale industrial production. But the disruptions of war, including preparation for, and the presence of, thousands of incomers placed considerable demands on the island economy. The markets for home produce and services were much greater than World War One, and larger than even oil could bring. But these demands had to be met, as was the case in the previous war, by a much reduced work force, something particularly problematic in a highly labour-intensive economy such as Shetland's.

33. Kjorsvik, L., and Moberg, G., (1988) p.61.

34. Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.95, Irvine J. W., ([1]1991) p.67-68, p.228, and Nicolson, J. R., (1976) p.133.

AGRICULTURE

War once again stimulated home production of food, and an Agricultural Executive Committee was formed in Shetland to maximise food production. Crofters responded to increased national and internal demand, rising prices and Government incentives. But this was not in the same fashion as the First World War, nor was it in line with British, or Scottish trends.³⁵ Rather Shetland contributed more in meat than crop production. This can be explained, in part, by structural changes, whereby the amount of land under crop had fallen, as had the numbers of horses and cattle, whilst the sheep population had increased considerably by 1939.

Table 4.1

A COMPARISON OF THE STRUCTURE OF AGRICULTURE IN SHETLAND BETWEEN 1914-1919 AND 1939-1945.

	1914	1919	1939	1945
Barley (acres)	783.5	899.75	349	274
Oats (acres)	6511.25	7039.0	5128	4728
Potatoes (acres)	2539.25	2459.75	1692	1389
Cattle	14390	14136	9229	8672
Sheep	136723	112379	194311	243800
Horses	4986	4930	2669	2922.

(Source: Board Of Agriculture For Scotland Agricultural Statistics, 1913-1920, Agricultural Statistics 1939 to 1944 Scotland, and Agricultural Statistics 1945 to 1949 Scotland.)

British agriculture had experienced severe contraction in the inter-war years, as a result of a glut in primary products on the international market. This forced the

35. Pollard. S., (1983) p.205, and Jamieson, J., (c.1972)

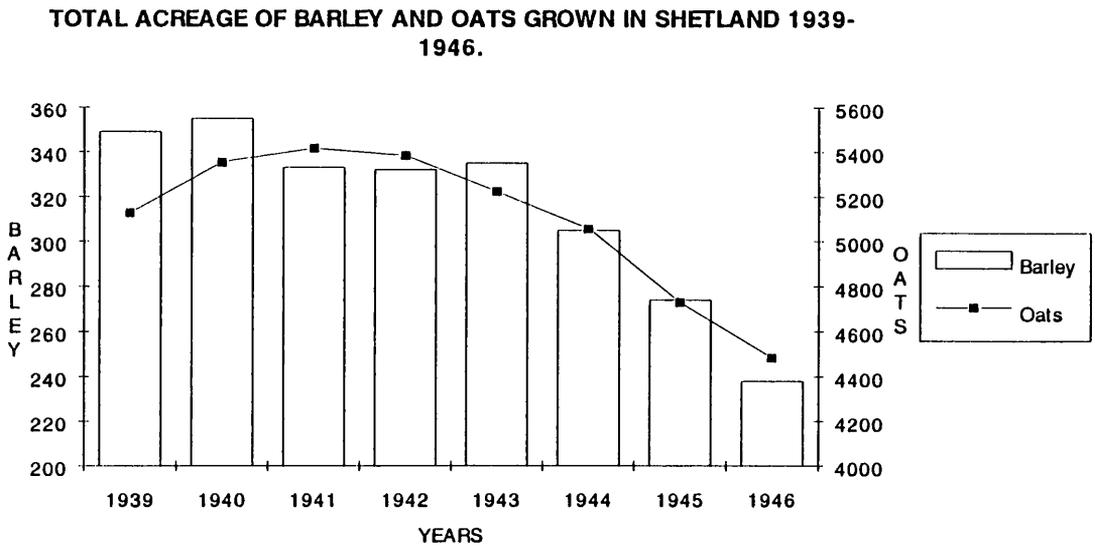
prices of commodities down, and reduced demand, especially for grain. As a result, many farmers reverted to livestock rearing.³⁶ Shetland also appears to have been hit badly by these external pressures, and possibly more so because of its peripheral nature and high dependence upon agriculture, although agriculture in the isles had long concentrated more on livestock rearing. Shetland suffered internally as depopulation reduced demand, and supplies of labour. Therefore, agriculture was forced to concentrate on the less labour-intensive rearing of sheep, highlighting, once again, the resilience and flexibility of this traditional economy when faced with change.

Not surprisingly then, the acreage under crops did not increase as consistently as during the First World War.³⁷ The acreage of barley and oats maintained at the start of the war, but declined thereafter.

36. Pollard. S., (1983) p.82-88.

37. SN, 1 January 1942 p.4, Interview Mrs E. M. (b.1909), and Miss A. H. (b.1903).

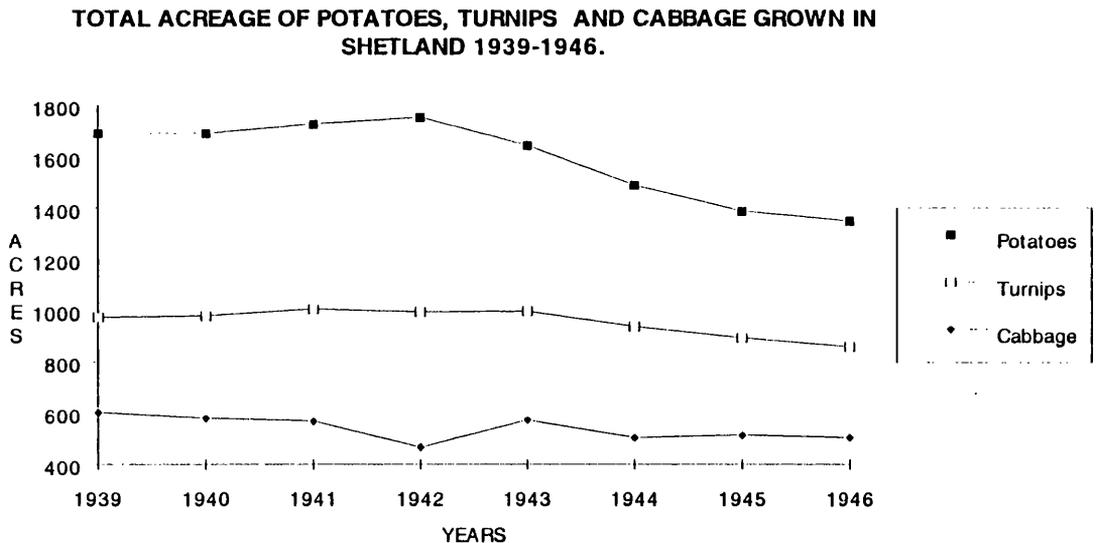
Figure 4.1



(Source: Department of Agriculture For Scotland Agricultural Statistics 1939 to 1944 Scotland, (H.M.S.O 1948) and Agricultural Statistics 1945 to 1949 Scotland, (H.M.S.O 1952))

The acreage of potatoes, turnips and cabbage grown in Shetland, as the First World War, remained small.

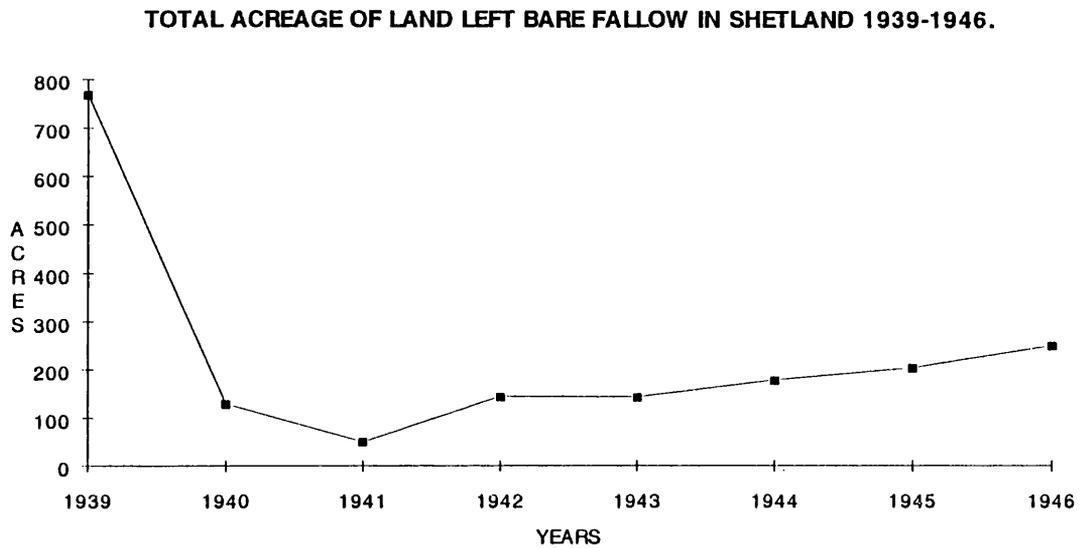
Figure 4.2



(Source: as Figure 4.1)

Even so, the amount of land left fallow, like World War One, fell considerably.

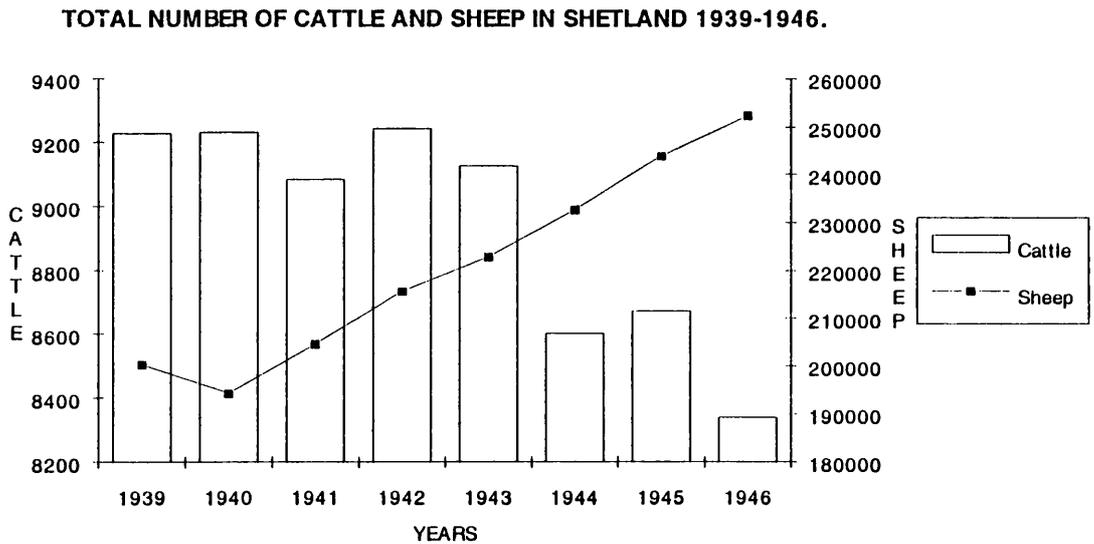
Figure 4.3



(Source: as Figure 4.1)

Shetland contributed proportionately more to the nation's meat supply. The numbers of sheep, in contrast to the First World War, increased, while stocks of cattle were less consistent.

Figure 4.4



(Source: as Figure 4.1)

Therefore, according to official statistics, Shetland did not increase the acreage under crop, despite Government incentives. Loss of labour to the war effort, made worse in the Second World War by the recruitment of women, provides a partial explanation. The Zetland County Council expressed concern over the loss of labour from the land, and requested an exemption scheme for both men and women.³⁸ But as the Agricultural Executive Committee pointed out, women, despite their importance on individual crofts, could not be exempt from service.³⁹ Instead, arrangements, as had been the case in World War One, were made to release men from service during harvest. Crofters could also borrow soldiers from units in the area on a daily basis, depending upon

38. S.A., CO3/1/15, Minutes of a special meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 23 May, 1942.

39. S.A., CO3/1/15, Minutes taken at General Statutory meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland on 27 October 1942, and S.A., CO3/1/15, Minutes of a meeting between a specially appointed committee and the secretary of the Agricultural Executive Committee, to discuss the calling up of women, on 27 October 1942.

operational needs.⁴⁰ Furthermore, as will be seen later in this chapter, war brought lucrative wage-labour opportunities to Shetland. More money could be made working in war-related construction than on the land, so, unlike World War One, intensified crop production was abandoned for higher cash earnings.⁴¹

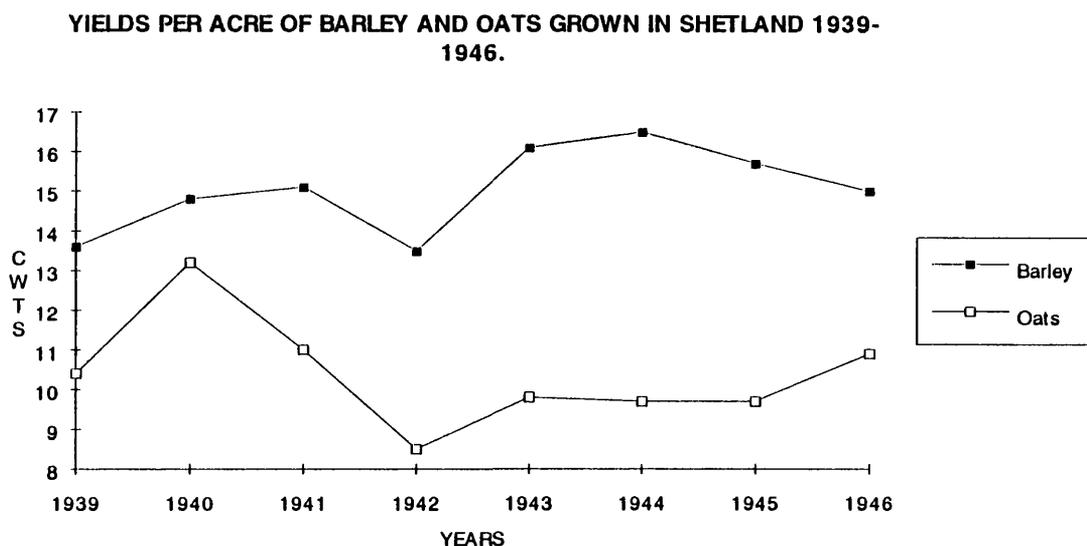
Government made some effort to encourage modernisation, and, unlike World War One, a degree of mechanisation was introduced to help crofters in the absence of labour. In 1940 five tractors were recorded in Shetland, and a tractor scheme was set up by the Department of agriculture in 1941. By 1944 29 tractors were at work in Shetland with a number of home conversions, including two wheeled 'Iron Horses', increasing this figure further. A mobile threshing machine was also introduced during the war.⁴² But mechanisation was on a small scale and did not encourage an expansion in output. Yields per acre increased slightly at the start of the war, but were not sustained, nor were they close to the Scottish averages.

40. S.A., CO3/1/15, A letter dated 17 September 1942 from headquarters of Shetland Defence presented at General Statutory meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland on 27 October 1942. Interview Mrs B. B. (b.1921), Miss C. B. (b.1920), Mrs E. M. (b.1909), and Miss A. H. (b.1903).

41. Interview Mrs E. M. (b.1909), and Miss A. H. (b.1903).

42. S.R.O., AF40/30. Agricultural Census Summaries by parish, 1940 Inverness to Zetland, all parishes, SN, 1 January 1942 p.4, Howie, A., (1944-46) p.90, Jamieson, J., (c.1972), and interview Mrs M. H. (b.1901).

Figure 4.5



(Source: as Figure 4.1)

The main growth area, as the statistics show, was in sheep. This was obviously the most profitable, and least labour-intensive option for islanders. The Government offered financial incentives to increase the numbers of sheep, something the land was most fit for. A high price was secured for these animals, both as a source of meat and wool. For example, a large number of buyers was present in August 1940, causing the price of Suffolk cross sheep to rise by an average of 15s, compared with the same month in 1939, and cross breeds by 16s.⁴³ Cattle also secured high prices, though more land and labour were required to keep them. Cross Shetland cattle sold at Aberdeen rose from between £7 and £13/5/- per head in October 1940, to between £16/15/- and £21/12/6 for cross bullocks, £15/17/- to £19/12/6 for heifers, and £5/12/6 to £7 for stirks, in September 1943.⁴⁴

43. *SN*, 29 August 1940 p.2.

44. *SN*, 24 October 1940 and *SN*, 30 September 1943 p.2.

Official statistics mask the efforts made by individuals to meet the demands of the expanded internal market brought by the presence of servicemen, and those in war-related work. Crofters, as far as possible, supplied the forces with vegetables, meat, milk and eggs.⁴⁵ For vegetables the NAAFI had formal contracts with individuals, mainly in Sumburgh where land was most fertile, thus providing a guaranteed market and price for the acreage under crop.⁴⁶ The number of cabbages grown increased each year, with the NAAFI providing plants flown from the mainland.⁴⁷ As a result, demand from the forces was met from mid-July until March. Local producers provided sufficient supplies of lamb and beef to cover four months in the year, with milk sold on a small scale in townships where camps were stationed.⁴⁸

On a more informal basis individual troops purchased eggs, meat and milk as well as goods to take home on leave.

He wis aaful fine (a soldier who used to visit their house) An he aye cam doon wi fish an got eggs an milk an ordered onything. Sometimes got a hen fae Mam tae tak awa whin dey wir goin right awa, (going start to the mainland) du sees, ... a hen pluckit an cleaned ready ta tak ta da folk.⁴⁹

The enhanced markets brought by war improved incomes, and increased the amount of cash in circulation.

45. Howie, A., (1944-46) p.90-91, interview Mrs E. M. (b.1909), and Miss A. H. (b.1903).

46. SN, 16 October 1941 p.3.

47. SN, 16 October 1941 p.3 and SN, 3 September 1942.

48. Howie, A., (1944-46) p.90-91.

49. S.A., SA3. Maisie Ratter and Jean Peterson on 22/2/1983, and Nicolson, J. R., (1985). p.5.

Money, you wir never really seen money til dan very much, ... you never but had joost a dish of money, an shillins, and twa shillins, an o (men) comin in for dozens of eggs, an everything. ... It wis a time o kinda money makin .. an sellin milk, an sellin eggs an sellin jumpers.⁵⁰

Therefore, unlike World War One, when agricultural output in crops was sustained despite loss of labour, crofters responded to war conditions by increasing sheep numbers. They also exploited the expanded home market, something only to be repeated during the oil boom. Because of the temporary nature of demand, the overall structure of agriculture remaining unchanged. Contraction was less severe after the Second World War, than the First, because Government support was maintained. But this reflects the general shift towards crofting becoming dependent upon state aid, in the form of subsidies.⁵¹

THE FISHING INDUSTRY

Fishing was hit badly by war, although, unlike World War One, the herring season was almost finished when war broke out. The removal of its work force, the requisition of its best vessels, and restrictions upon fishing grounds, once again, meant the catching capacity of this industry was severely curtailed. For the second time, a large proportion of fishermen and boats were channelled into naval service. Restrictions on entry to, and fishing in, the North Sea prevented Scottish vessels from exploiting the herring grounds off Shetland. Restrictions on travel made it difficult for fishermen and shore workers to enter

50. Oral interview with Mrs E. M. (b.1909).

51. Irvine, J. W., (1987) p.185.

Shetland.⁵² The subsequent decline in numbers of people and boats is outlined in table 4:2.

Table 4:2

NUMBER OF PEOPLE AND BOATS EMPLOYED DURING THE WEEK OF THE GREATEST HERRING FISHERY IN SHETLAND 1939-1946.

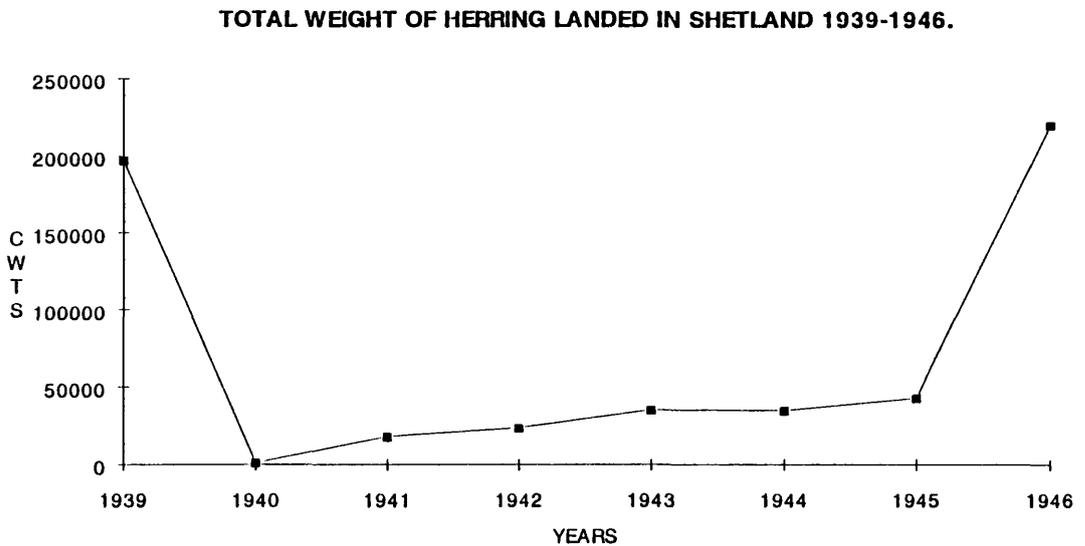
YEAR	NO. OF BOATS	NO. OF PEOPLE
1939	328	4,961
1940	18	97
1941	45	313
1942	40	310
1943	21	210
1944	24	226
1945	35	321
1946	51	720.

(Source: Scottish Home Department, Scottish Sea Fisheries Statistics Tables for 1939-1948. (H.M.S.O 1952) p.17.)

Figures 4.6 and 4.7 illustrate the drop in herring catches as a result of the disruptions of war.

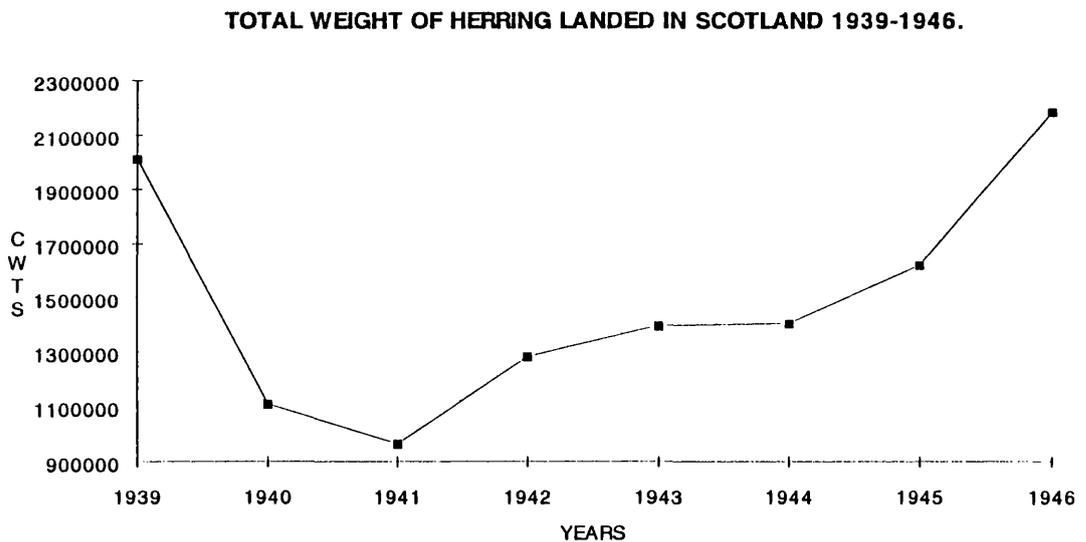
52. Scottish Home Department, Report On The Fisheries Of Scotland 1939-1948. (Cmd. 7726), and S.R.O., AF21/218, Scottish Home Department Fisheries Division Shetland District : Returns For Month To 31 January 1942 for Fishing Vessels And Fishermen On Naval Service etc. signed by Andrew Anderson, Fishery Officer, Lerwick dated 4 February 1942.

Figure 4.6



(Source: Scottish Home Department, Scottish Sea Fisheries Statistics Tables for 1939-1948.)

Figure 4.7



(Source: as Figure 4.6)

Because of shortages in food supplies, and its high nutritional value, fish became an important food during the war. It was not rationed, and demand combined with reductions in catches meant high prices, even when set by the Ministry of Food, were realised. But Shetland, as was

the case in World War One, did not fare as well as the rest of Scotland.⁵³ Herring fishing in Shetland was largely dependent on the export of cured herring, and war, once again, blocked these markets. Distance from the mainland and the irregular boat services, meant Shetland was excluded from the Ministry of Food scheme to maintain supplies for the expanding home market. Instead, native fishermen disposed of their catches to local curers, and a small number were consumed fresh in the isles. But shortages of shore labour restricted fish capture, and herring was often packed ungutted. Shetland was included in the Ministry of Food's scheme to ensure the disposal of catches from 1944. It provided a guaranteed market for herring and set both minimum and maximum prices. Average prices obtained by Shetland fishermen were, somewhat lower than at ports on the mainland, but remained above pre-war level.⁵⁴

53. Scottish Home Department, Report On The Fisheries Of Scotland 1939-1948. (Cmd. 7726), p.6, and p.30-33.

54. Scottish Home Department, Report On The Fisheries Of Scotland 1939-1948. (Cmd. 7726), p.31-32, and p.41-42.

Table 4.3

AVERAGE PRICE PER CWT OF HERRING LANDED IN SHETLAND FROM
APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 1939-1946.

	Average Price
1939	£-/9 / 6
1940	£-/13/11
1941	£-/17/11
1942	£-/16/ 3
1943	£-/13/ 9
1944	£-/16/ 4
1945	£-/15/ 7
1946	£-/14/ 5

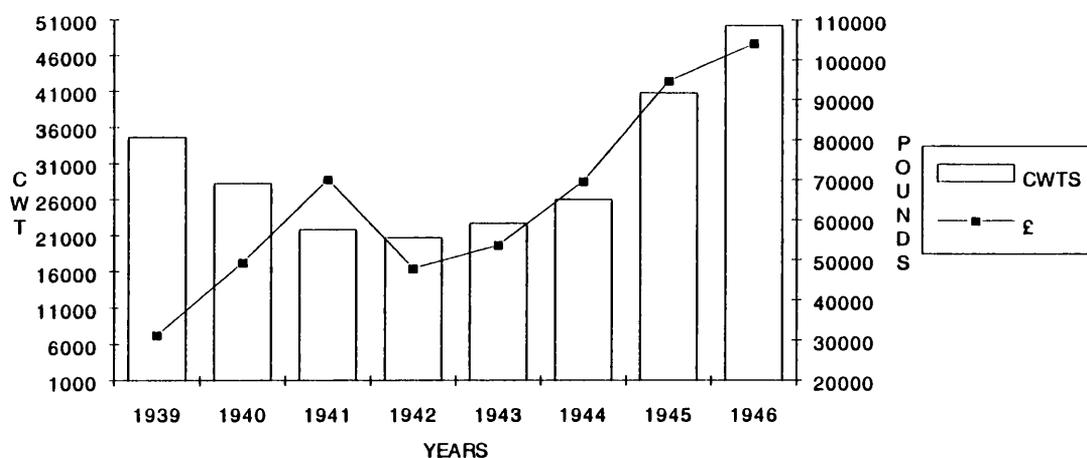
(Source: Scottish Home Department, Report On The Fisheries Of Scotland 1939-1948.)

The winter line fishing was also pursued on a small-scale during the war. But it too suffered from distance from markets, and inadequate transportation arrangements. At a County Council meeting it was noted that local fishermen were experiencing difficulties disposing of their catches to markets in the south because of lack of proper transport and refrigerating facilities. As a result, it was agreed to inform the Ministries of Food and Shipping of the need for adequate facilities so that local fishermen could dispose of their catches in a marketable condition.⁵⁵ Prices, as in herring, were fixed above peacetime levels, so offered a profitable pursuit for those who engaged in it, though unfortunately there are no records of individual fishermen's earnings.

55. S.A., C03/1/14 Minutes of the Zetland County Council, the adjourned General Meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 18th June 1940.

Figure 4.8

TOTAL WEIGHT AND VALUE OF WHITE FISH LANDED IN SHETLAND 1939-1946.



(Source: as Figure 4.6)

Experiments were undertaken during the war in the use of seine-nets, a much less labour-intensive method of fishing. It had become clear that women were less prepared to bait lines, and fishermen were increasingly forced to pay for this service, which reduced profits. Presumably lack of labour and high prices during wartime, encouraged the adoption of this method.⁵⁶

Therefore the fishing industry in Shetland experienced similar trends to those of the First World War that is increased prices for reduced catches, which led to high profits for a small number of fishermen. Combined with agriculture, incomes from fishing brought welcome cash returns, especially important to this traditional economy, historically starved of cash.

⁵⁶. Scottish Home Department, Report On The Fisheries Of Scotland 1939-1948, (Cmd. 7726), p.62-64. Interview Mr R. A. (b.1901).

THE KNITWEAR INDUSTRY

The third industry in Shetland, knitting, did well as a result of war. It experienced boom conditions as demand usually outstripped supply, and prices were high. At the start of war, disruptions to the normal production of clothing meant people were, once again, unable to buy machine-made goods and instead turned to handknitted garments, such as those produced in Shetland. This was especially so, as Shetland wool was initially exempt from the wool order.⁵⁷ Merchants dealing in Shetland hosiery reported extremely lucrative demand for goods, but obtaining sufficient supplies was a problem. This was attributed to men engaging in military or war-related activity, rather than the formal restrictions brought by war, which left women with crofts to run and less time to knit. But, by May 1941, the movement of raw Shetland wool, except that required for manufacture in the isles, was controlled. Getting yarn from mills on the mainland became a problem; and by 1941, 75 percent of the machinery in mills on the mainland had been taken over by the Government for war-related activity. Restrictions were also placed upon the industry by the purchase tax.⁵⁸

Demand was not only external, for the large number of servicemen based in Shetland, as in the case of agriculture, brought a sudden expansion in the internal market. They placed orders with local women for jumpers, berets and mitts, which they sent to families on the

57. SN, 28 December 1939 p.5.

58. SN, 1 May 1941 p.2, SN, 26 December 1940 p.6, and SN, 1 January 1942 p.4.

mainland.⁵⁹ Two writers have argued that servicemen traded in Shetland knitwear, but this is impossible to comment on, given the lack of evidence.⁶⁰ The shift to direct sales between knitter and buyer, which cut merchants from the transaction, was seen to be an outstanding feature of the Shetland hosiery trade in 1941, eventually bringing truck to an end.⁶¹

Such changes meant that increased demand and higher prices were experienced by the knitter. Fortunately, practically all garments made by Shetland knitters were suitable for production by unregistered individuals, for in June 1940 steps had been taken to ensure Shetland hosiery was not placed under Government control, as the industry was seen to provide the main means of livelihood for a large proportion of the population. A representation was made to the Board of Trade to obtain exemptions from this order. The reply stated that independent knitters were not included in the Limitation of Supplies Order, and the Board was prepared, on application, to exclude those wholesalers of Shetland knitwear whose trade was small in size. The Board was also prepared to issue licences permitting expansion in exports to compensate for the reduction in

59. P.R.O., ADM116/4987 Admiralty Experimental Stations, Orkneys and Shetlands: Reports and Miscellaneous Correspondence Collected in Signals Department, 15/12/1940 to 8/5/1944. Letter from Colonel Miles, Signal Department Admiralty, Whitehall dated 31 October 1941, referring to the safe arrival of a sweater from Mrs Stout in Fair Isle. SN, 26 December 1940 p.6,, and Interview Mrs E. H. (b.1909), Miss A. H. (b.1903), Mrs P. L. (b.1910), Mrs D. H. (b.1904), Mrs C.C. (b.1902), and Mrs C. B. (b.1903).

60. Blance, T., (1953), and Heineberg, H., (1973) p.112.

61. S.A., D1/243/13 Scottish Council On Industry, Report Of The Committee On The Crofter Woollen Industry, (Edinburgh 1946), O'Dell, A. C., (1939) p.162, and SN, 1 January 1942 p.4.

home trade. This meant knitters were able to benefit from the positive aspects of war, without being affected by its restrictive measures.⁶²

But knitted garments, like wool itself, were not completely free from restriction. A scheme whereby knitters surrendered clothing coupons for wool, and collected them when selling the finished garment was implemented. Much confusion arose, and neither merchants nor knitters participated fully. Private sales continued,⁶³

Oh, we never asked ony coupons we joost got da cash, ... cash wis whit we wir efter.⁶⁴

In response to Government restrictions, increased prosperity, and the independence of knitters from merchants, women decided to organise themselves.

This event, ..., was rightly hailed as a Shetland landmark as knitters had always been the most downtrodden and backward section of the Shetland working class.⁶⁵

The Shetland Hand knitters' Association was established in 1943, and became a registered Producers' Co-operative Society. The Association was successful, with an estimated turnover of £10,000 in 1943 rising to £45,000 by 1944. This represented a major break through for the industry, which had unsuccessfully attempted to organise in 1923, though to be fair economic conditions were much more buoyant during

62. Interview with Mrs B. B. (b.1921), and Miss C. B. (b.1920), *SN*, 16 July 1942 p.2, and Cluness, A., (ed) (1967) p.100, S.A., CO3/1/14 Minutes of Adjourned General Meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 18th June 1940, and Cluness, A., (ed) (1967) p.100.

63. *SN*, 24 June 1943 p.2.

64. Interview Miss A. H. (b.1903)

65. Jamieson, P., (1949) p.224.

the war.⁶⁶ The association aimed to improve the marketing of hosiery, protecting the interests of Shetland handknitters. It wanted to obtain a fair price for garments, and maintain distinctions between hand-knit and machine made hosiery. By December 1943, it became apparent that protection was only part of the industry's needs, and that a co-operative trading body was required. The association went on to open a hosiery depot in Lerwick and efforts were made to find a large number of outlets.⁶⁷

Therefore, war brought much prosperity to the hand-knitting, which was sustained until the next slump in the 1950s. Individual knitters benefited from an expanded home market, and subsequent contacts for private orders on the mainland. The formation of a co-operative body gave knitters a greater degree of independence, and represented a major shift in the bargaining power of these women. Like agriculture and fishing, knitters received cash, often for the first time, loosening the former dependency upon local merchants. Knitting, both by hand and machine, began to develop into an organised occupation, rather than a 'pastime' after the war.⁶⁸

OTHER WAR-RELATED ACTIVITY

War not only affected the traditional sectors of the Shetland economy, it generated additional business, especially with the large military presence. Hay and

66. Jamieson, P., (1949) p.223-224, and Jamieson, P., 'Shetland Knitters have Plans. Wide Organisation to Secure Post-War Prosperity,' in Press and Journal 4 October 1944.

67. SN, 8 July 1943 p.2, Jamieson, P., (1944), and SN, 11 May 1944 p.4.

68. SN, 27 February 1947 p.3, Jamieson, P., (1949) p.223, and Tulloch, A. T. H., (c.1972)

Company, once again, acted as agents for a number of firms. Incidents increased as a result of the war, and the company arranged accommodation, clothing and transport for many victims. The boat shed at Freefield was scheduled, under the essential works order, and contracted to the Admiralty for emergency repair work; it included boats involved in the 'Shetland Bus,' and other Norwegian operations. The company arranged the shipment of steam coal on behalf of the naval authorities in their capacity as ship brokers and stevedores. But the company found it difficult to meet war demands, as staff were directed into military service. Hay and Company was also heavily involved in the construction phase, specific to the Second World War. Defending the isles included accommodating the troops and modernising the infrastructure. Roads, piers, and airfields were constructed with improvements made in the limited communications networks. The level of activity was greater than ever seen in the islands before, and Hay & Company supplied timber, cement and other building material.⁶⁹

The family firm Robertsons (Lerwick) Ltd benefited from war, once again. It became the local agents for the Royal Air Force, and supplied the floating depot and troopship at Sullom Voe. Petrol for mooring launches, heavy lines and moorings for flying-boats were also transported by the company, which was responsible for laying and maintained R.A.F. moorings at Sullom Voe. Mr John W. Robertson was appointed salvage contractor for the Admiralty and RAF in 1941, and his son became a salvage

69. Nicolson. J. R., (1982) p.129, and p.196-201.

officer. The steam drifter *Maid of Thule* was used to retrieve sunken ships and aircraft, often at great danger to the crew.⁷⁰

The Malakoff, another local firm, had the contract for the hull maintenance of M.T.B.s operating between Shetland and Norway, and repaired damaged vessels.⁷¹ Activity was not only in Lerwick, for the Admiralty paid the landowners of Unst, for use of the pier for armed naval boats, armed Norwegian boats, vessels bringing stores, and drifters on Government duty. The Admiralty and Fleet Air Arm also bought stores and petrol from outlets in the area.⁷²

As was the case in agriculture and knitting, the presence of thousands of troops provided a large captive market for shops, postal communications and transport.⁷³ A shop in Sumburgh sold bottles of milk and individual biscuits to the troops, which kept the staff very busy.

Soldiers wir comin in (to the local shop), dey started in da mornin an da wid (they would have) still been comin in maybe at eleven o'clock at night .. Dare wis no sittin doon, an dare wis, .. I think wis it forty bottles? .. We had tae wash all dis lemonade bottles an hae dem ready we (with) da milk athin dem (in them) for dem (the servicemen) comin for dem, an dan dey bought aa dis.⁷⁴

In fact this shop was so busy that,

70. Robertson, L., 'A Civvy amongst the Brass Hats,' in New Shetlander, No.157, No.158, and No.159 1986-1987, and Nicolson, J. R., (1976) p.130.

71. Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.232-233.

72. Sandison Archives, Baltasound, Unst. 172, Northside, 1940-1946 Compensation and accounts from R.A.F., Air Ministry and Fleet Air Arm.

73. Interview Miss A. H. (b.1903)

74. Interview Miss A. H. (b.1903)

Aunt Charlotte, (the mother of the proprietor) Shu said at dey (the servicemen) wir fillin in in da porch, an in da passage, dey wir fillin in up da stairs til shu toucht dat dey wir goin tae be in apon her, before shu got her cled (clothes on) ... Airmen, an soldiers all comin surely for peerie biscuit.⁷⁵

In the annual report for 1940 it was stated that,

due in large measure to additional population and remunerative work, business has been increasingly brisk in both town and country, and indeed the problem has been to get sufficient goods to sell. Dealers in virtually all classes of goods, apart from foodstuffs and the necessities of life, state that they could sell much more than they were able to procure. In Lerwick trade has been particularly good during the past few weeks.⁷⁶

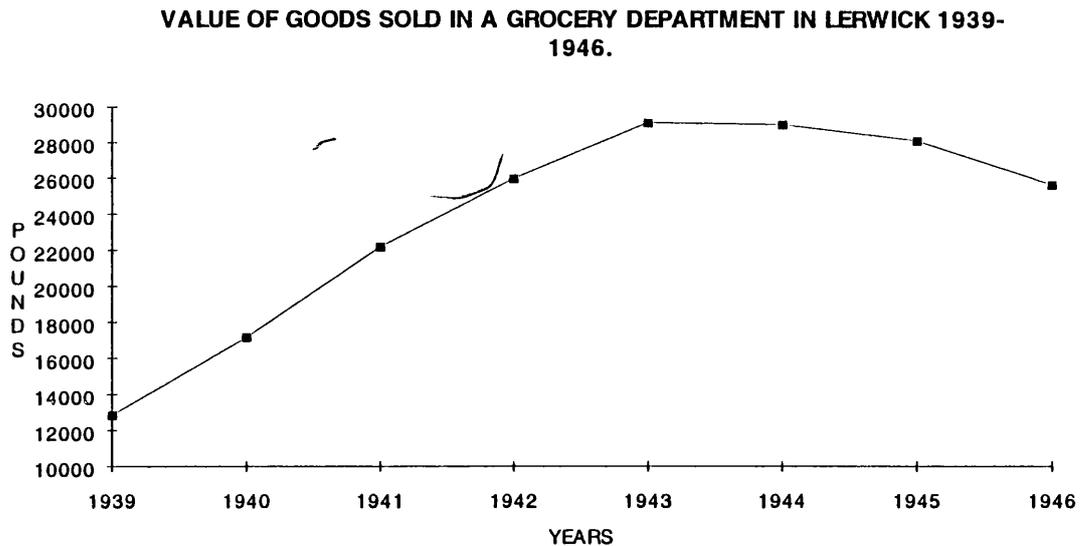
But by 1941, business was conducted under the restrictions brought by war, such as rationing or the allocation of quotas based upon pre-war purchasing. Nevertheless merchants found that whatever goods they held could be sold readily.⁷⁷ Sales of a grocery firm in Lerwick indicated a substantial rise in the value of goods sold during the war. This firm supplied vessels using Lerwick harbour, and troops based in the town.

75. Interview Mrs E. M. (b.1909)

76. SN, 26 December 1940 p.6.

77. SN, 1 January 1942 p.4.

Figure 4.9



(Source: The late Mr J. Morrison, Manager of the firm: records now in the possession of the author)

Shops also benefited from the rising incomes received from service allowances, and the improved employment opportunities in Shetland. Construction, on a scale only repeated on the advent of oil, brought extensive wage-labour to the island population. Firms and labour from the mainland joined local efforts to meet the construction demands of war.⁷⁸ Many Shetland men, for the first time, were able to choose their employer and were paid tradesmen's wages.

I went down to Sumburgh Airport which was gradually taking shape at that time and had no trouble in securing employment with the firm of Watsons ... which was the firm responsible for building aa da hutted accommodation. Dey wir wirkin on da runways and so forth an dey wir a big firm with a lot o employees. Anybody who wanted a job could more or less get one down at Sumburgh at dat time. ... Weel da pay wis better dan, up to dat time average weekly pay for a labourer or ony ordinary workman was round about two pound a week, but I think I can remember that we Watsons as soon went up tae as high as four pound a week. In other words,

78. Interview Mrs D. H. (b.1904), Mr F. A. (b.1920), Mr J. W. I. (b.1917), Mr H. S. (b.1921), Nicolson, J. R., (1985) p.6, Letter from May Sutherland, Heritage Centre, Haraldswick, Unst 23/3/1993.

pay, average pay doubled more or less as soon as war came, an it doesna sound much noo but four pounds a week wis looked on as a damned good wage in those days.⁷⁹

Long hours helped to improve the weekly wage.

Da wages went up an we got da same is da sooth men. ... Weel wis fellows it wir joiners fae aroond here we got the same is da sooth tradesmen got, an dan it came tae one and four pence farthin an hour but afore dat ... we wir agreed for a shillin an hour. ... Forty-four hours or sometin an dan you got time an a quarter, if you wir wirkin extra time... Weel you had tae put in a lot o hours ... I think about da highest dat ever we got, dat is in da war time, wis ... about five pound in da week.⁸⁰

But in the case of Shetland, as well as other family-based economies, an individual's wage is not particularly helpful when assessing the overall economic position of the people of Shetland. What is more useful, is to see if any gains were made in the incomes of the family unit, as combined earnings were the usual source of support. Accurate data on this is impossible to obtain, but from the comments above it would seem that the incomes of most families increased. With the improvements in employment, wages, trade and stimulus to the local economy, war brought another important change, that of an increase in the circulation of money. Unfortunately the Commercial Bank records for the Second World War have not survived. Post-Office savings accounts can be used instead, though it should be noted that only 'open' accounts are kept, that is accounts that are still in existence, so these are not complete.

79. Interview Mr J. W. I. (b.1917)

80. Interview Mr T. H. (b.1910)

Table 4.4

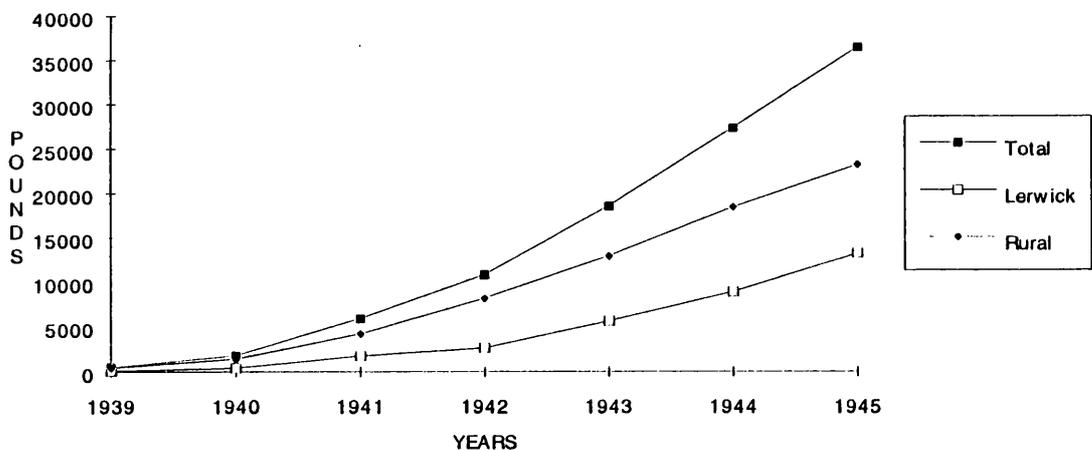
TOTAL MONEY LODGED IN 'OPEN' POST OFFICE SAVINGS ACCOUNT IN SHETLAND (1ST JANUARY) 1939-1945.

YEAR	
1939	£487 19s 7d
1940	£1,827 6s 3d
1941	£5,935 19s 3d
1942	£10,823 4s 4d
1943	£18,593 16s 3d
1944	£27,373 17s 2d
1945	£36,471 11s 2d

(Source: Figures compiled by Ms. M. French, National Savings, Glasgow G58 15B.)

Figure 4.10

TOTAL MONEY LODGED IN 'OPEN' POST OFFICE SAVINGS ACCOUNTS IN SHETLAND 1939-1945.



(Source: as Table 4.4)

Shetland, like most traditional economies, had a history of a lack of cash in its economy which stems from the relations of production. War, as has been shown, brought a welcome break from the barter system bringing money into the economy. It helped to remove a great deal of

debt, and war restrictions on spending, encouraged money to be banked.⁸¹

Jimmy, Lizzie and me we'd, we'd, banked a hundred tae every een when we wir paid for all da stuff.... so we banked a hundred every year I tink...' (During the Second World War). '... you see we wir knittin for wir groceries so we wirna having tae spend much o dis tottie (potato) money.'⁸²

THE OVERALL STRUCTURE OF THE ECONOMY

Finally, it must be asked whether war brought any long-term change to the overall structure, and hence economic nature, of the isles. The economically active population continued to decline, with 357 Shetlanders killed during the Second World War, which was less than in World War One, but as serious.⁸³ Added to this was the ongoing problem of out-migration, with the population falling from 21,421 in 1931 to 19,352 by 1951, a drop of 2,069. In contrast to previous decades, women left Shetland in greater numbers than men. Between 1931 and 1951, numbers of men aged between 15 and 64 fell by 445, compared with a fall of 1,312 in the number of women. The employment structure is outlined in table 4.5.

81. Interview Mrs E. M. (b.1909)

82. Interview Miss A. H. (b.1903)

83. Jamieson, I., (1991) p.88.

Table 4.5

OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE OF SHETLAND BY SEX, 1931 AND 1951.

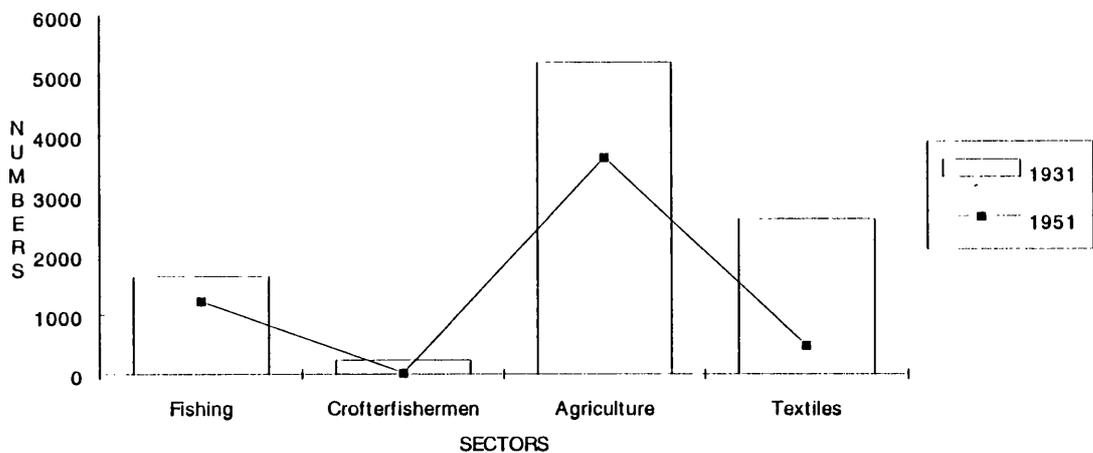
	1931		1951	
	M	F	M	F
Fishing	1643	0	1218	6
Crofterfishermen	233	0	20	0
Agriculture	4095	1122	2847	789
Metals	94	0	294	0
Textiles	91	2513	127	355
Food Drink Tobacco	112	288	112	18
Wood Furniture	338	0	260	2
Construction	268	0	546	0
Transport Communications	1137	29	785	44
Commerce Finance	534	234	444	257
Insurance				
Professional Occupations	159	180	208	202
Personal Services	43	490	92	395
Domestic Service	3	399	9	69
Clerks, Draughtmen, Typists	82	123	139	180

(Source: Census of Scotland 1931 and 1951.)

From table 4.5 it can be seen that the three main traditional industries experienced further declines in the numbers employed.

Figure 4.11

**TOTAL NUMBER EMPLOYED IN THE THREE MAIN SECTORS IN SHETLAND
1931 AND 1951.**



(Source: as Figure 4.5)

The numbers employed in metals, and construction grew, while those in food, drink and tobacco, and transport and communications fell. Similar decline was experienced in commerce and finance, as well as domestic service. Within these totals, not surprisingly, the numbers of women employed in agriculture, food, drink and tobacco, commerce, finance and insurance, and domestic service fell. The only occupations to grow, according to the census, were transport and communications, clerks, draughtsmen and typists, but these changes were minuscule. The numbers of women employed in textiles, falls substantially, which reflects the inadequacies of the census as a source, rather than a dramatic decline in the number of knitters.

Therefore it can be seen that the structure of the Shetland economy experienced little change as a result of the war. Rather, as was the case in World War One, a period of temporary relief was brought to the island economy. Other industries in the isles saw some limited growth and fluctuation. Such overall trends are reflected in the continuing depopulation of the isles.

CONCLUSION.

It would seem that the second external shock, like the first, reached Shetland but more forcefully. The isles were strategically more important in World War Two, providing a staging post for ships, aircraft, manpower, and a sizeable military force. The international position of Shetland in World War Two, therefore, reinforces the notion that the

isles are not a peripheral as many think. The greater military presence affected the economy, with an expanded home market and stimulation of the island economy. Individuals benefited from rising incomes and an increase in the circulation of money. War-related construction also ensured that Shetland was left with a much improved infrastructure, and communication network. But, boom conditions were temporary, and little long-term change was brought to the economy. To what extent this was also the case for the social impact of war will be studied next.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF WORLD WAR TWO.

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE.

The second external shock had limited effects upon the social structure of Shetland. The power of the landed classes had already been eroded by the end of the previous war, with land held by absentee lairds and divided into small rented holdings. The pattern of land ownership was unaffected by hostilities, with the number of landholdings continuing almost unaltered in Shetland. In 1939 there were 3,185 holdings, and 3,216 in 1946. The number of holdings in Scotland grew more significantly in the early years of war in contrast to the experience of World War One, from 74,291 in 1939 to 75,879 by 1943. The average size of holdings fell as a result, and although Shetland followed a similar pattern, its acreage per holding remained much smaller than that of Scotland. In 1939 the average size of holding in Shetland was 9.1 acres compared with a Scottish average of 61.4, falling to 6.3 and 58.7 acres respectively by 1946. This perpetuated the problem of profitable crofting in Shetland.

Ownership of holdings also fell during the war in both Shetland and Scotland. The reclassification of land provides a partial explanation, for in Shetland, as in the previous war, the amount of land under grass and crop dropped and that of mountain and heath grew. But this trend persisted even when compensating for land re-categorisation. In 1939, 15.3% of all Shetland land under crop and grass was owned and occupied, as opposed to

rented, falling to 11.1% by 1945; the remaining 84.7% was rented, rising to 88.9% by 1945.¹ Thus rented holdings still dominated, in contrast to the historic rise of owner occupation in Scotland.²

War, however, did change labour conditions. Wage labourers before the war were relatively powerless, as work was available only with the local businessman, merchant, or laird. Labourers were forced to accept low wages and poor working conditions, which reinforced indebtedness and increased the power of the 'big man' further. War gave wage labourers, both male and female more power, for they had a wider choice of employers.³ This, combined with better wages, helped to reduce indebtedness, and Linda Fryer has argued that,

... the Second World War was to the hand knitter what the Crofters Holding (Scotland) Act of 1886 had been to the fisherman.⁴

The majority of local merchants and businessmen benefited, once again, from the additional stimulus brought by war, though rationing and shortages acted as a constraint on consumption.

WOMEN AND WAR.

Modern warfare ensured that women could no longer play a 'passive' role in hostilities, for all labour resources

1. S.R.O., AF40/ Agricultural Census Summaries by Parish, 1938-1946. In 1939, 26,914.75 acres of land were under grass and crop, of these 4,109.25 acres were owned and occupied and 22,805.5 rented. By 1945 20,430.75 acres were under grass and crop, and 2,277.5 were owned whilst 18,153.25 were rented.

2. As shown in Campbell, R. H., (1991)

3. Jamieson, P., (1949) p.40-41.

4. Fryer, L., (1992) p.77.

were required to maximise military production. The value of female labour had been demonstrated in the previous war, and women played an even more active role in World War Two.⁵ The Government had hoped market forces would re-direct women to war work, but in March 1941 the compulsory registration of women aged between 20 and 40 was introduced, and by December conscription had been implemented. From 1943 housewives were also directed to part-time war-work, but, because of the distance factor, this did not affect married Shetland women. These were radical measures, especially as they undermined the dominant ideology of a woman's place being primarily in the home. Although Britain was the only country to enforce female conscription, these policies were still formulated with the 'domestic ideal' in mind.⁶

In Shetland, the outbreak of war again brought unemployment. Young women working in the herring industry were sent home, and the first attempts to utilise female labour were voluntary. A branch of the Women's Voluntary Service was set up in Lerwick in June 1939 drawn largely from the Women's Rural Institutes. It encompassed all types of work undertaken by women and functioned in conjunction with the Local Authority. By the end of October 92 women had volunteered their services at the Lerwick Branch. A number enrolled for nursing whilst others offered their

5. Marwick, A., (1976) p.132, and Smith, H., 'The Womanpower Problem in Britain During the Second World War,' in The Historical Journal 27, 4, 1984. p.934.

6. Summerfield, P., (1988) p.104-105, Braybon, G., and Summerfield, P., (1987) p.152-159, Marwick, A., (1976) p.132 and p.138, Smith, H., (1984) p.933-4, and Allen, M., (1983) p.404-5.

services as car drivers and telephonists. The remainder volunteered for secretarial and canteen duties, or any type of 'hard work'.⁷

Young single women were the main target for mobilisation, especially those aged between 20 and 40 years. There were 2,017 single women in Shetland aged between 20 and 40 years in 1931, or 3,918 single women aged between 15 and 60. Of these, only 176 Shetland women were involved in military service. The majority were called-up, rather than volunteered, and this meant leaving the isles.⁸

It wis on da nort boat, yes da first time I wis been oot o Shetland. I wisna dat surprised aboot onything. I wisna been on a train afore, but I wis .. read aboot dem, seen photos, an so on. I kent whit leak [knew what like] it wis, an I kent da geography o da place, da stops an things leak dat [like that].⁹

They were sent to various parts of the country to enlist, and for training. The degree of choice depended upon the service one wanted to join, as it was much harder, because of the prestige attached to this service, to get into the W.R.N.S. It is possible the Shetland accent acted against women, especially in jobs where verbal communication was important.¹⁰

You wir told at you might hae tae go intae joost ony service at dae decided tae put you, so if you had any inclination for any wan particular thing you wid be best tae apply. An I had absolutely no interest in munitions, I

7. Scottish Home Department Report On the Fisheries Of Scotland 1939-1948. (Cmd 7726) p.42-43, and SN, 26 October, 1939 p.4.

8. As calculated from Jamieson, I., (1991) Braybon, G., and Summerfield, P., (1987) p.165. Interview Mrs E. B. (b.1921), Mrs A. E. M. (b.1922), Mrs R. P. (b.1902), Mrs D. S. (b.1923), Mrs J. S. (b.1920), Mrs C. T. (b.1920), and Mrs G. W. (b.1920)

9. Interview Mrs C. T. (b.1920)

10. Irvine, J. W., ([1]1991) and experiences of nine women interviewed who joined the services. Interview Mrs D. S. (b.1923), and Mrs M. S. (b.1920), Braybon, G., and Summerfield, P., (1987) p.165.

wisna particularly interested in being involved in the land wirk. I wis not inclined tae nursing. And of the services I chose da Navy because I thought, weel I might be most at home with that. It wis near da sea, I presumed so I volunteered for the navy, and at da time dae wirna takin on recruits fae such a far away place. But I think it wis only about four months later I got word.¹¹

The choice of service, and attitude to call-up was mixed.

I didna mind, in fact I went doon wan day an volunteered tae mak sure I went. ... so I geed [went] right doon tae da Labour Exchange an I said, 'You might hurry up that call-up paper.' ... Tae tell you da truth, I'm glad I went. I'd never been oot o Shetland afore, so you can imagine it wis an eye opener. ... Weel yes, I chose tae go intae da W.A.A.F., because I wanted tae be a balloon operator, ... whit I wanted wis tae .. go intae da big toons sooth [on the mainland]... I cooldn't du dat because I'd had rheumatic fever. ... Dis girl in da office said, I couldna be a balloon operator, ...'I'm afraid you'll have to work in an office.'¹²

I mind Scott wanted tae get me exempt, cause I wis helpin him in his mechanics in his workshop. Cause he wis a dentist you see, an he had nae dental mechanic, an I geed [went] doon in da afternoons an used tae help him wash aa da plates oot an aa yun [those] moulds ... And he said, if I wanted he could get me exempt, cause he had no mechanic, an he had tae du da false teeth tae. But I said, 'No way, I'm joost wantin tae go an dats it.' ... Yes, .. I wis wantin tae see da world. .. I saw places at I wid niver o seen if I hidna o geen away.¹³

Women were then directed to a particular job within the services, partially dependant upon the skills and experience gained prior to call-up. For example, girls with clerical skills tended to work in office or administration jobs, those with domestic skills to cooking, or kitchen duties. Similarly, for women in the W.R.N.S. the work was traditionally female in nature, such as clerks or stewarding, and if in the medical corps, nursing. In contrast, some were directed to jobs not linked to previous

11. Interview Mrs C. T. (b.1920)

12. Interview Mrs R. P. (b.1920)

13. Interview Mrs J. S. (b.1920)

work practices, and required new skills. Girls were employed as balloon operators, flight mechanics, and trained in radar. As the A.T.S. provided a back up service for the army, catering, clerical work and store keeping were the main duties.¹⁴

These girls lived away from home, under the restrictions of military life. As a result, they shared feelings of increased independence, confidence, and companionship.¹⁵

Oh it certainly broadened your outlook, .. I think you wir far mare [more] tolerant, in you .. could see da idder [other] persons point o view, .. you learned tae meet folk. .. When you're brought up in Shetland it's very difficult whin you go away, especially whin your in among da English, you're sort o kind a backward wye [way]. But you soon come oot o it, .. whin you geed away. I fan [found] whin I cam back, I had far mare [more] confidence as I had before I left.¹⁶

Shetland girls, through their war service, were exposed to people from various social backgrounds.¹⁷

I kent wan lass [knew one girl] her midder [mother] wis a hotelier, anidder een [another one] her midder had a boarden hoose, an some o dem wir in domestic service, quiet a few .. But we did have wans oot o better educated brackets, an dae wir wan at Crail at seemingly, in her own private life, wis Lady something, or idder [other]. But shu wis joost cleaning aircraft, shu wisna in ony high specialised category, an shu wis joost a Wren whin I mind seeing her.¹⁸

When you geed an saw away, [went to the mainland] whit wis going on dare, you reckoned you wir da poor relatives here in Shetland. I mean .. you met up we [with] .. lasses .. an

14. Interview Mrs M. S. (b.1920), Mrs G. W. (b.1920), Mrs J. S. (b.1922), Mrs C. T. (b.1920), Mrs E. H. (b.1921), Mrs D. S. (b.1923), and Mrs E. B. (b.1921), Marwick, A., (1977) p.138, as calculated from Jamieson, I., (1991), and Braybon, G., and Summerfield, P., (1987) p.152.

15. Interview Mrs E. B. (b.1921), and Mrs G. W. (b.1920)

16. Interview Mrs G. W. (b.1920)

17. Interview Mrs E. B. (b.1921)

18. Interview Mrs C. T. (b.1920)

dae used tae tak you home for weekends, .. an you saw how da other half lived.¹⁹

Some enjoyed their war service gaining a great deal from it, including a much more extensive social life, whilst others hated it. Not all war service was undertaken outside the isles. A number of Shetland W.R.N.S., were posted to Lerwick for part of their service. They still had to live in camps, and were allowed home on leave.²⁰

Young single Shetland women, on reaching registration age, also moved to the mainland to work for the NAAFI, and join the Land Army. Such work was often domestic in nature, and included cooking and cleaning, or, if on the land, a continuation of croft duties. This was not the case for everyone, for a few Lerwick girls volunteered with no previous experience on the land.²¹

I volunteered whin I wis eighteen. ... Weel, .. aa da boys wis going, an some o da lasses wir trying tae dodge, but I wanted tae wirk. I wanted tae join da Wrens, an my grandmidder an midder [mother] said, 'Dats too dangerous.' 'Weel,' I said, 'I want tae be a launch driver in da Navy.' I wis mechanically minded. No, no cooldna du dat. I says, 'Weel if I canna get intae da Navy, I'll join da Land army.' I wanted tae du something for me [my] country.²²

They were sent to train in the Rowett Research Institute, Aberdeen, and then on to farms.

19. Interview Mrs D. S. (b.1923)

20. Interview Mrs M. S. (b.1920), Mrs J. S. (b.1920), and Mrs E. H. (b.1921)

21. Interview Mrs L. C. (b.1922) SN, 12 June, 1941 p.2, and Woodeson, A., (1993) p.66.

22. Interview Mrs L. C. (b.1922)

Illustration 5.1 Trainees and Permanent Staff at the Rowett Institute, 1943 (includes atleast one Shetland girl).



(Source: Mrs H. T., Northroe, Shetland)

The amount of work and responsibility varied from post to post.²³

Dir wis a lass fae Glasgow Jean Stark, an we teamed up, ... tae go tae Drumlithie, .. Stonehaven. An we wir sent tae different farms, ... She got da gentlemen's farm, an I got da hard labour and harassment farm!²⁴

Taking da horses we da plough, Clydesdales, I leaked [liked] dat. It wis hard wirk, an it didna half tell on you... Dey had tae teach me on da farm tae turn, ... Coming home at night, dats anidder [another] but I leaked [liked] wis climbin up on da Clydesdale, an your legs were awye oo [away out].. on dis great big horse..²⁵

23. Interview Mrs J. T. (b.1921)

24. Interview Mrs L. C. (b.1922)

25. Interview Mrs L. C. (b.1922)

like girls in the services, these women mixed with people from different backgrounds, making new friends and learning from this experience.²⁶

I had niver been sooth till dan [never travelled to the mainland before]... Da land girls, an dat at you wir meeting wir fae aa different places, hearing things at you wir niver thought aboot before... Well I niver realised at dey wir say much o dis religions, leak [like] Catholics, Protestant, an aa dat sort o thing, because we wir niver aware o it here in wir locality. ... Some folk seemed tae think at dey wir such a difference atween Catholics, an idder Protestants. It aa seemed abit strange tae me, for I thought we wir aa joost folk.²⁷

Dir wis wan lass at wis so posh at shu cooldna wirk in da fields so shu wis geen [given] a tractor. Shu drove da tractor, but we aa had tae get a shot o dis tractor... Shu wis a fine lass but shu didna eat we da scruff..²⁸

Single Shetland women, mainly on call-up, moved away to take up jobs in munitions and other war-related work.²⁹

I think it was joost .. part of the fact that you wanted tae du something. And I wasn't old enough to join the forces, but .. you could go into munitions. You got special training, .. for two months ... [I] was what was called an electrical fitter. ... We made cases for cameras, for R.A.F., that was the section I was in.³⁰

I didna like the forces, cause I didna like bossy women, sergeants, an I didna like da land army for dere uniform, dat tight legs at went down an everything .. an then dare's only wan thing left munitions, so it [would] have tae be munitions .. I happened tae be lucky be [by] getting intae Yarrows ... cause dae got an awful good name.³¹

The numbers involved are impossible to quantify.³² But the work practices were very different from those previously undertaken by island women. Training was provided.³³

26. Interview Mrs L. C. (b.1922), and Mrs J. T. (b.1921)

27. Interview Mrs J. T. (b.1921)

28. Interview Mrs L. C. (b.1922)

29. Interview Mrs H. D. (b.1924), Mrs M. G. (b.1918), Mrs J. S. (b.1915), Mrs C. C. (b.1922), Mrs M. H. (b.1922).

30. Interview Mrs H. D. (b.1924)

31. Interview Mrs C. C. (b.1922)

32. There are no formal records of women in this group, nor those who joined the Land army. Unfortunately, due to the nature of his work,

We trained for sae lang yunder a [for so long there at] Springburn, an dan wir [our] bits o welding wis sent tae Dundee tae be passed. An we aa three passed wir test. Weel, .. we joost got .. bits o iron, an we had tae weld da twa bits tagidder [together]... We had tae du sums, but I cooldna mind dem. But eens at we wir kind o doing dem [once we had started to do them]... it ... cam back tae you. ... Yea, yea we wir welders, ... dae said at weemin were better welders is [than] men cause dae had a steadier hand.³⁴

It wis better pay on da buses, you wir doing a man's job, ... so I joost went on da buses. Mary wis on da buses, my pal ... We had tae du ... three weeks tae learn da bus routes, an da money, an dat. ...³⁵

After training they were sent to suitable posts, to utilise their new skills.

Dat's whit dey call drop tanks. It wis a tank, a cylinder shaped thing. It wis pointed at da ends, an I believe it wid o been about six or eight feet lang. An we had tae weld dat, an it wis seemingly spare tanks at dis aircraft carried we [with] oil, an whin dey wir empty dey wir joost dropped, an it wis joost sheet metal. It wis awful thin, an da welding rod wis joost about da thickness o a peerie [small] needle, but we got used tae it. .. I mind , weel I niver cared tae [liked to] drink milk in me life, but I mind everyday we had tae drink a pint o milk for maybe ony poisonous fumes going doon we wis..³⁶

I wis on wan o da big capstan lathes. I canna remember any women being on the big capstan lathe, dey must have thought I was a strong looking person, or something ... I mean you couldna have gotten anything much heavier to do on a machine as that great big knee cap that came down, and bended, ... really a big circle at each end of complete brass ... I enjoyed it. Yes I enjoyed machinery. I enjoyed the knitting machines, and I enjoyed working in the capstan lathes.³⁷

Attitudes to war work varied.

It wis kind o lightsome, you spoke tae aa body, an you got tae ken alot o folk at wis ee [that were always] travelling on da bus.³⁸

even Jamieson, I., (1991) only gives them lip service. Oral interviews have made it possible to capture the experiences of some of these women.

33. Interview Mrs C. C. (b.1922), and Mrs H. D. (b.1924)

34. Interview Mrs J. S. (b.1915)

35. Interview Mrs M. G. (b.1918)

36. Interview Mrs J. S. (b.1915)

37. Interview Mrs C. C. (b.1922)

38. Interview Mrs M. G. (b.1918)

It wisna hard wirk. It wis kind o monotonous wirk standing welding fae eight o'clock at night til eight o'clock i da morning. ... It wis joost a job, an I lived for da day at I coold win hime [get home], tae tell you da truth.³⁹

Some were aware of making a valuable contribution to the war effort.⁴⁰

Oh yes, we definitely felt that [sense of achievement], and dan da biggest joy was whin we got tae go down and watch ships being launched, an dey had bottles o drink dat dey hit over dem, an you'd see da women coming down we da beautifulest evening wear, long frocks and posh, all down to them at had connections we da boat.... They said, 'Your parts go on that boats now, so you can go down and watch the launching.'⁴¹

But others were more concerned with the loss of identity in these large work places.

One day I found Cellie sitting on the bench, it was our break time, looking more than ever down in the mouth, and I said, 'Cellie, what ever is the matter with you? What happened?' 'Oh,' she said, 'Hit wis joost dat dir wis naebody's been speaking tae her,' an she wis seen Mimmie, an Mimmie wisna even said, 'Yun's de [that's you] Cecilia,' And this seemed to be the absolute pits, you see. Well I collapsed in laughter, it really did me good. But you see we had just about lost our identities, you needed someone to say, 'Yun's [that's] you Mary.'⁴²

Unlike other groups, women in war work tended to stick more closely to their friendship groups. This possibly reflects the nature and size of the work place, as well as the type of accommodation. These women may have been less exposed to certain aspects of life on the mainland, but war certainly extended the nature and type of work available to them.⁴³

39. Interview Mrs J. S. (b.1915)

40. Both Mrs J. S. (b.1915), and Mrs H. D. (b.1924) felt they had made a valuable contribution to the war effort through their war work.

41. Interview Mrs C. C. (b.1922)

42. Interview Mrs M. H. (b.1922)

43. Interview Mrs J. S. (b.1915), Mrs M. G. (b.1918), and Mrs C. C. (b.1922).

Not all women left the isles, especially if married, or heavily involved in land work. A number, because of the large contingent of troops stationed in Shetland, were able to stay at home. They worked in NAAFI canteens, joined the land army, or were exempt on the basis of essential land work. Duties in the NAAFI were generally domestic, and the majority of women interviewed were single, although the manageress of the canteen at Sullom Voe was married. She was free to take a live-in post, because her husband was away on military service, and they had no children.⁴⁴

Illustration 5.2 Manageress and member of Staff at Work in the NAAFI Canteen at Sullom Voe.



(Source: Mrs C. L., Lerwick)

44. S.A., SA/3. Jean Peterson on 22/2/1983.

Cook, cook, you made suppers, you .. got up at seven in the morning an you baked. You had to make so many scones, joost ordinary scones. Dey wir a mobile van at used tae go all around camp we dis scones. You got up in da morning an you baked, well sometimes twelve dozen scones, an they were buttered, an they went out to the camp hot, an then after that wis passed, an you got a cup of coffee... You started then to prepare ... whit you were going tae have. You had cakes, you baked cakes, an jam tarts, an apple pies an sponges, an all that sort of thing. .. Da van went around again after lunch time, that wis sort of afternoon break, they got this cakes. .. The person that was going on night duty got a couple of hours off in the afternoon, ... An then after that you'd came on at six, an ... from six to nine,... you cooked suppers. Chips, eggs an liver an stew, and steak, an all that sort o thing. It niver was steak, it was mince probably.... Well I wis learned tae be a cook before I went tae war,... NAAFI learned you nothing. The only thing it learned you wis tae see how many portions you could get oot of a small [amount of ingredients] ..⁴⁵

It is impossible to calculate numbers of women who worked on the land, for, as Marwick argued, an estimated 93,000 women worked on the land nationally in 1939 rising to 204,000 by June 1945, but only a very small percentage of these were formally enrolled in the Women's Land Army. This is confirmed by C. Twinch, who shows that only 7 women were registered in Shetland, according to the Scottish Women's Land Army Employment Returns for November 1943.⁴⁶ Certain women already working on crofts did not need to join the Land Army, rather they gained exceptions on the essential nature of their work. For the majority of women, both single and married, the Second World War perpetuated previous experiences on the land. But their work was once again intensified, especially as a result of the additional

45. Interview Mrs J. S. (b.1915)

46. SN, 25 February 1943 p.2. Five girls in the Women's Land Army were employed, or trained by farmers, or agricultural executive committees in Shetland. Interview Mrs B. B. (b.1921), Miss A. H. (b.1903), Mrs E. M. (b.1909), Mrs M. C. (b.1925), Mrs B. T. (b.1920), and Miss C. B. (b.1920), Marwick, A., (1976) p.132-133, and Twinch, C., Women on the Land: Their Story During Two World Wars, (1990) p.156.

internal demand brought by military personnel. Two women in particular worked very hard during the war growing extra vegetables for the NAAFI, and supplying camps with milk. They often began work at three o'clock in the morning, preparing vegetables before their normal crofting duties began.⁴⁷ One young women, who was formally attached to the Land Army, because her parents' croft was not large enough to justify exemption, learned to drive whilst working on a dairy farm, which supplied milk to camps in the area.

We wrought we [worked with] da milk, so I delivered milk tae da camps, .. daily delivery, we a van. ... It wis 42 [1942] dat I got my licence. John o da farm, it wis him at I learned we, so it wis handy.⁴⁸

Knitting also received stimulus from the war.

Yes I mede alot tae dem (the servicemen) ... I mede tae a fellow at cam here , .. he cam for eggs in da wartime. ... He cam for his eggs every week, a dozen. An dan dey saw me knittin, .. I wis makin jumpers. .. He ordered een for his wife, an .. I mede alot leak dat. .. I think I had eleven on order whin dey [the troops] wir shifted fae here.⁴⁹

Although older women often did not have time to knit, because of additional crofting duties and other work commitments, young women found the social life offered by war interfered.⁵⁰

Dare wis plenty o dances in da wartime. We wir going tae something every night, nearly. ... Dey wis no time tae knit dan [then].⁵¹

47. Interview Mrs E. M. (b.1909), Miss A. H. (b.1903), and Mrs M. C. (b.1925), Jamieson, P., 'A Good War Record. Self Sacrificing Spirit of Shetland, The Women Who Toil,' in Weekly Scotsman, June 12th 1943, and Letter from May Sutherland, Heritage Centre, Haraldswick, Unst 23 March 1993.

48. Interview Miss C. B. (b.1920)

49. Interview Mrs B. M. (b.1907) 1989.

50. SN, 1st January 1942 p.3. Interview Mrs B. B. (b.1921), and Mrs A. B. (b.1907)

51. Interview Miss C. B. (b.1920)

Some were able to combine knitting with an active social life, whilst others saw it as a very lucrative occupation.⁵²

In Lerwick the experience of women was somewhat different. Unlike their rural counterparts who were already responsible for much of the work on the land, young women in the town were called upon to take up jobs vacated by men. In Kay's grocery shop, women replaced men.⁵³

Dat's [that's] why I geed tae Kay's, cause it wis a shop full o men. An da boss said at gradually da wid [would] all be called up, except Jim. .. Jim widna be, he wis da manager. But dae wir three idder [other] men. An da funny thing about dat wis at da boss said he wid have tae start taking in girls. ... So I wis joost da first wan. An I thought I wid only be able tae bide [stay] a week, cause I got dat much teasing about coming tae wirk among aa dis men.⁵⁴

Women moved into banks, and took over businesses.⁵⁵

I ... worked in my father's shop, ... I was running it. ... It was the country business in Lerwick. It really was the country people we dealt with. We bought all the wool, ... and we bought all the knitwear, so we were the merchants for that. ... Yes I drove, and ... I had a very small motorbike, and I used that as much as I could, as I had to save the petrol for collecting the wool ... I used the wee car for collecting wool, right on da roof, an on the bonnet, an on the wings, an just enough room to do the wheel. ... I was one of the first ... women drivers. ... And I just carried on exactly everything the way my father did it.⁵⁶

Women took up other positions of responsibility, such as officer-in-charge of the Report and Control Centre, and policing under the Women's Auxiliary Police Corps. Some

52. Interview Mrs M. S. (b.1920), Mrs E. M. (b.1909) and Miss A. H. (b.1903), who were able to make between seven pounds, and seven pounds four shillings a week from their knitting, even with their land commitments, during the war.

53. Interview Mr J. M. (b.1909)

54. Interview Mrs R. P. (b.1920)

55. Interview Mrs M. S. (b.1920), and Mrs P. A. (b.1917)

56. Interview Mrs P. A. (b.1917)

continued in similar peacetime occupations, at least until call-up or marriage, and knitting remained an important 'occupation' in the town.⁵⁷

Women in Shetland, despite the arduous labour under war conditions, were, once again, less affected by its hardships. Unlike those on the mainland who suffered bombing, evacuation, and becoming host families for evacuees, only a few married women in Shetland had their homes requisitioned. These women were forced to provide accommodation for war-related staff further intensifying their work, especially with young families and crofts to run. But unlike women on the mainland, child care was less of a problem, for work was centred around the home, and relatives were available to help. Crofts and the sea ensured a supply of meat, fish, eggs, milk and vegetables minimising the effects of rationing.⁵⁸ Lerwick probably suffered more from war shortages, but these were negligible compared with large towns and cities on the mainland. As a result, the dual burden of work and domestic tasks, such as shopping, was less severe. In addition, Shetland women were accustomed to running the home and providing for their family in the absence of men.⁵⁹

57. S.A., CO3/1/15-16 Minutes of Zetland County Council 1/11/41 to 13/4/44. Meeting of the Emergency Committee for Civil Defence held on 10th of June, 1943, and CO3/8/1-2 Minutes of a meeting of the Police Committee of the County Council of the County of Zetland, held on 22nd August 1944. Interview Mrs L. C.(b.1922), Mrs M. S.(b.1920) and Mrs A. Bk.(b.1923) and Mrs M. L.(b.1909)

58. Smith, H., 'The Effects of War on the Status of Women,' in H. Smith(ed)(1986) p.209-210, Braybon, G., and Summerfield, P.,(1987) p. 235-250, and Marwick, A.,(1976) p.83-89. Interviews Mrs M. L.(b.1909) and Mrs A. B.(b.1907)

59. SN, 1 January 1942 p.3. Annual report for 1941. Irvine, J. W.,(1988) p.26-28, argued, 'queues became a way of life,' in Shetland. But oral evidence shows that the only food queues were at Black's

Women not only worked, but undertook voluntary activities. These were once again administered by the wealthier members of the community. The Women's Voluntary Services decontaminated clothes, collected salvage, trained in civil defence, and were to help with feeding arrangements in the event of a heavy raid. They were forced to move to larger premises as their war work increased, and a branch was established in Scalloway.⁶⁰ The Women's Rural Institute organised entertainment for the troops, and fund raising events. Women of all ages and social backgrounds helped in Church of Scotland Canteens. The canteen in Lerwick, aided by '200 voluntary lady workers' was so successful that a replacement of greater capacity had to be built. It provided inexpensive refreshments, and facilities for writing, reading and recreation, as well as regular entertainment for the troops. Women were also active in the local branch of the Red Cross, and once again knitted comforts for the troops and provided blankets.⁶¹

Lerwick's auxiliary nurses trained, ready for action, and women joined the Home Guard for the first time. They provided a back-up service for the fire brigade, and undertook A.R.P. duties.⁶² A Girls' Training Corps and

Bakery in Lerwick, where people waited for fresh bread, and possibly an extra loaf.

60. S.A., CO3/1/15, Minutes of a meetings of the Civil Defence Committee for the County of Zetland on 12th March 1942, 26th March 1942, 4th June 1942, and 23rd October 1941. CO3/1/15, Minutes of a meeting of the Emergency Committee for Civil Defence for the County Council of Zetland on 8th April 1943, CO3/1/14, Minutes of a meeting of the Convener's Committee of the County Council of the County of Zetland on 11th of July 1939. Interview Mrs M. H. (b.1922)

61. SN, 1 August, 1940 p.2, SN, 17 April, 1941 p.5, SN, 15 February, 1940 p.4, and Interview with Mrs M. L. (b.1909)

62. SN, 1 January, 1942 p.3. Braybon, G., and Summerfield, P., (1987) p.156. But women were not allowed to join the Home Guard until 1943,

Girls' Auxiliary Corps were set up to train girls between 16 and 18 for the services, and to give those aged between 14 and 16 'a general grounding for life'.⁶³

The influx of troops in Shetland also had implications for women in Shetland. They provided a valuable source of potential husbands, especially important in an island plagued by an imbalance in the sexes. Dances were held in the Town Hall, and 'tea dances' were organised on Saturday afternoons to entertain officers from country districts.⁶⁴

We used to go to the dances in the Town Hall, I think they cost a shilling. ... Always plenty of men, and plenty of women. Of course a lot of the women were having the most marvellous time of their lives, .. It was an India summer for them, because ... [they were outnumbered by servicemen]. The ability to wear a skirt, that was all that mattered, you could be assured of at least one or two men to escort you, and they seemed to have the most wonderful time. They were always terribly friendly. Some how they seemed to be disengaged from the war, they didn't seem to be involved in the war at all.⁶⁵

Girls even went dancing during breaks from work.

An during da two hours dat we got aff ... I alwyse choose ten til twelve, .. we'd go tae da toon hall dance.. An wirking we [with] alot o cooking your clothes wir smelling, an you didna have time tae change. But of we'd go tae da dance, an da army boys, da army men, ... as soon as you walked in dae kent dat [knew that] you wir cafe lasses, Peter Leask's an da Lounge, we aa smelt da same. An we danced for ... two hoors an dan back on da job...⁶⁶

E.N.S.A. concert parties were sent north, and performances were staged by local personnel. Women were bussed to camps

and were not issued weapons. Interview Mrs M. H. (b.1922), and Mrs M. L. (b.1909)

63. S.A., CO3/1/15-16, Minutes of a meeting of the Emergency Committee for Civil Defence for the County of Zetland held on 16th May 1943. The Girls' Training Corps were asked to provide reserve telephonists for the Report and Control Centre. SN, 24 September 1942 p.2, SN, 29 April, 1943 p.3., and Shetland Life, No. 137, March 1992.

64. SN, 1 January 1942 p.3, and SN, 29 August 1940 p.2.

65. Interview Mr A. M. (b.1915)

66. Interview Mrs L. C. (b.1922)

to attend 'social gatherings' in rural districts.⁶⁷ They also met servicemen through their voluntary work,

It wis voluntary, ... Yea, [canteen work] for servicemen. .. Tea, coffee, an buns and cakes, an sweeties, an fags, an dat kind o thing. Oh we ee had a good spree dat night, ony night we wir dare, aa harmless fun. .. Oh dey wid chat you up an aa da rest o it...⁶⁸

as well as in their own homes.⁶⁹

The influx of servicemen, and subsequent partnerships, was reflected in the marriage-rates of the isles. Unlike the previous war when the rate of marriage declined consistently, Shetland saw an up turn until the marriage-rate rose above that of Scotland's. This reflects the national trend of a marriage boom before war separated couples, and followed by the additional period when thousands of servicemen were stationed in the isles. The marriage-rate then fell until 1945, when the return of military personnel caused a revival throughout the country with Shetland almost reaching Scottish levels again.⁷⁰

67. SN, 2 April 1942 p.2, SN, 10 June 1943 p.3, SN, 5 September 1940 p.2., and SN, 27 August 1942 p.2. Interview Mrs G. W. (b.1920), and Mrs M. S. (b.1920)

68. Interview Mrs E. B. (b.1921)

69. SN, 1 January 1942 p.2. Telegram sent from H.M. Forces to extend best wishes to the people of Shetland, and to thank them for their hospitality.

70. Winter, J. M., 'The Demographic Consequences of the War,' in H. Smith, H., (ed) (1986) p.151-153. Interview Mr A. M. (b.1915)

Figure 5.1

**MARRIAGE-RATE PER 1,000 POPULATION FOR SHETLAND AND SCOTLAND
1939-1946.**

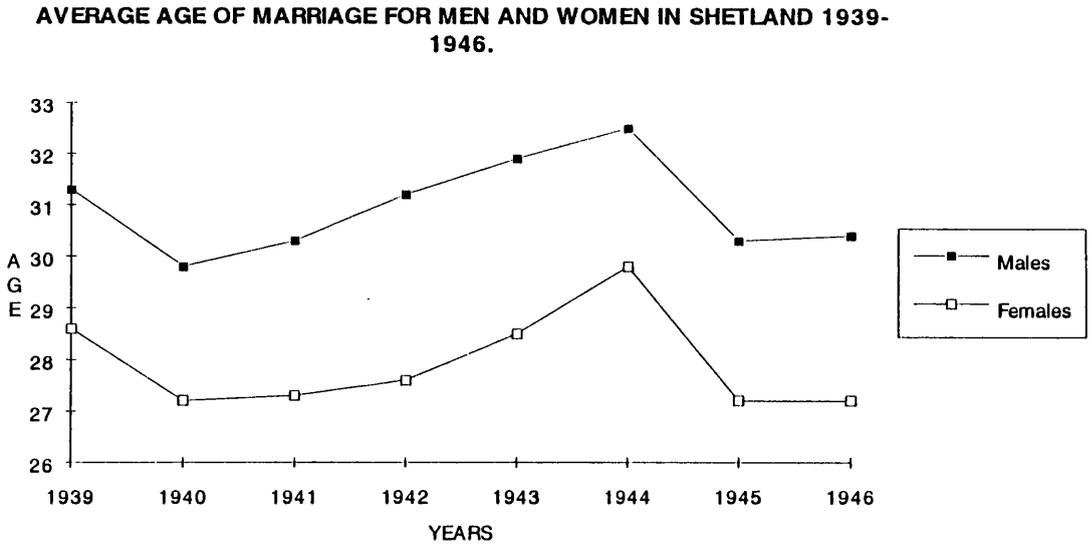


(Source: Annual Reports Of The Registrar-General For Scotland, 1939-1946)

The average age of marriage for men and women in Shetland dropped at the start of war, rising thereafter, until 1945. The Scottish average remained practically unaltered by war.⁷¹

71. Winter, J. M., (1986) p.160. Nationally the war caused a reduction in the average age of marriage, and the number of unmarried women.

Figure 5.2



(Source: as Figure 5.1)

Figure 5.3



(Source: as Figure 5.1)

Marriages may have been more numerous during the war, but weddings were not necessarily as elaborate. Restrictions made the normal wedding procedure problematic, even in the immediate post-war period. Family and friends helped gather sufficient rations to make the cake and

provide a reception. Clothing coupons were saved and dresses often made at home. Goods, such as eggs, were acquired through a black market, and guests enjoyed themselves despite the curfew.⁷²

The grocers if they had a bit extra, which most grocers did, they shared it out. .. An especially at a wedding .. they would give a bit extra here and there, .. But Lillian baked.. the cake, made all the food ready, the savouries and the cakes... It was a sort of sit down buffet wedding... You were allowed to buy a case of whisky, or a barrel, or case of bottles of beer... But there was still some navy chaps here, and including myself, an one or two we managed to smuggle a wee bit o rum ... An it was a great wedding, the only thing was it was a Shetland wedding, .. eightsome reels .. an plenty of them. The grand march, .. an I was an English man. I couldna even dance let alone do a Shetland dance...⁷³

The number of Shetland girls who married servicemen may have been underestimated by the marriage-rate as some weddings took place on the mainland.⁷⁴ It was noted in August 1944 that,

scarcely a week now passes without a Shetland girl marrying a service man, British or allied, and in this issue we report two more war-time weddings, one in Lerwick and the other in Edinburgh.⁷⁵

Local girls not only met and married British troops, but also Norwegians stationed in Shetland during the war. In addition, local men also married women posted to Shetland.⁷⁶

72. Interview Mrs M. S. (b.1918), and Mrs K. A. (b.1920)

73. Interview Mr F. C. (b.1919), who married a Shetland girl in 1946.

74. Interview Mrs E. B. (b.1921), who married a serviceman on the mainland.

75. SN, 3 August 1944 p.2.

76. SN, 12 June 1941 p.3. 'Shetland War Romances. ... Three more war romances in Shetland have culminated in marriages in Lerwick.' SN, 4 November 1943 p.3. 'Shetland - Norwegian Romance. Wedding In Lerwick Church.' Interviews with Mrs A. Bk. (b.1923), and Mrs H. D. (b.1924). Mrs J. D. met her husband while posted in Lerwick with the W.R.N.S.

Illustration 5.3 Shetland Bride Travelling with Her Daughter to Norway to Join Her Husband, 1947.



(Source: Mrs H. D. Lerwick, Shetland)

Connected to marriage-rates were those of births. The birth-rate in Shetland initially rose, falling again by 1946. But these trends should be treated with caution, as the actual number of additional births was small, for in 1938 there was 278 births, by 1942 374 births and 309 in 1946.

Figure 5.4



(Source: as Figure 5.1)

The rise in births between 1939 and 1942 in Shetland, despite the small numbers, was probably due to the increased number of marriages at the start of war, as well as a rise in the number of children born out of wedlock. The illegitimacy ratio in Shetland and Scotland began at the same level in 1938. The ratio then diverged, with levels in Shetland remaining above those for Scotland for the rest of the war, with the exception of 1945. In Shetland the ratio peaked at 9.8 illegitimate births per 1,000 total births in 1942 compared with 6.1 in 1938. In Scotland the rise in the illegitimacy ratio was more consistent, peaking at 8.6 in 1945.

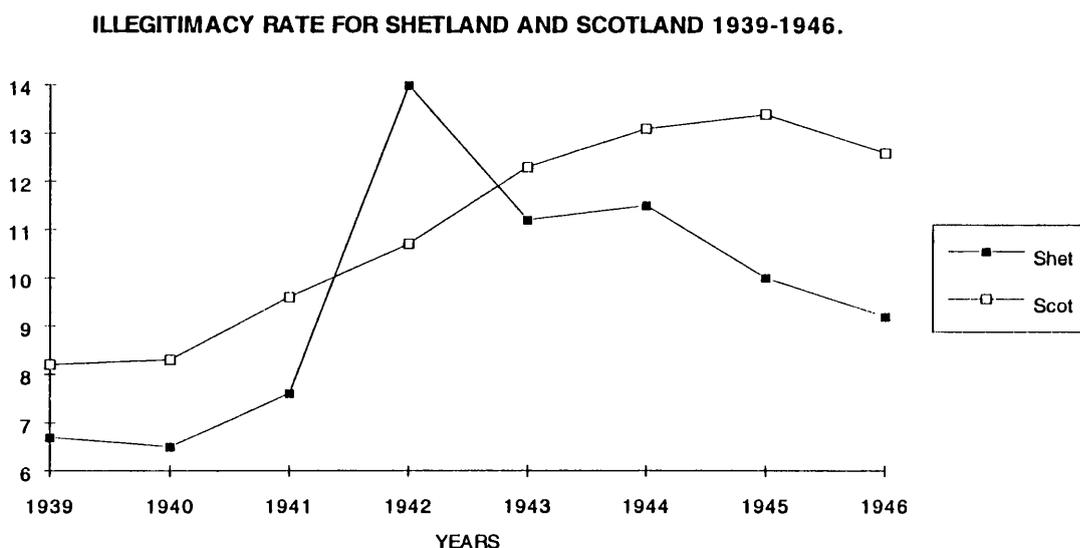
Figure 5.5



(Source: as Figure 5.1)

In contrast, only in 1942 was the illegitimacy rate higher in Shetland than Scotland. The number of births per 1,000 unmarried women between the ages of 15 and 44 in Scotland increased consistently from 1940 until the end of the war. In Shetland the numbers rose at the start of the war from 6.7 in 1939, peaking in 1942 at 14, and continuing above pre-war levels until 1946. Once again the data obscured the trends in Shetland, for the crude figures show that there were only 15 illegitimate births in 1938, rising to 34 in 1942, but such a rise would have been especially obvious in a small community such as Shetland.

Figure 5.6



(Source: as Figure 5.1)

The rise in illegitimate births, nationally has been attributed to the decline in the moral conduct of both sexes. It was felt that the First World War had caused a major upheaval in the 'traditional moral conventions' of the nation, and the Second War led the way to a further 'permissive' society. This was not only reflected in the number of children born out of wedlock, but in the rise in sexually transmitted diseases. But war did not bring as extensive change to the moral conduct of women as these points may suggest. In fact, the rise in illegitimate births in Britain, and probably Shetland, was probably linked, once again, to a reduction in the legitimating of pre-marital pregnancies, rather than a rise in 'immoral' behaviour.⁷⁷

77. Summerfield, P., (1988) p.111, Braybon, G., and Summerfield, P., (1987) p.210 and p.215, Marwick, A., (1976) p.138

Certainly, in Shetland, the presence of troops acted as a temptation for young women.⁷⁸ It provided an opportunity to indulge in 'courtship' with different partners, and Dr Walker, the Medical Officer of Health, showed concern, in August 1944, when he reported that the incidence of venereal diseases in Shetland had increased three-fold since the war broke out, and warned that 'personal chastity' was the only means of protection.⁷⁹ Suggestions of moral looseness were also noted by a local writer at the time, who referred to something of a 'new outlook' on life amongst the young, a degree of 'carelessness', and desire to have a 'good time'.⁸⁰ The moral fibre of married women also came under scrutiny, as they went to dances and mixed with men in uniform.⁸¹ Although this was not the case for all married women.

Dir wis wans, .. soldiers in da Gilbertson park, ... dey cam wan night.., [they came one night] so Daddy says, 'Come in,' .. so we mede dem tea.. Dey cam da followin night, an dey said dey wid leak [like] tae tak wis tae da pictures. An Daddy says, 'Oh no, no,' he says, 'Dis two is married, an .. she has a boyfriend so.. thank-you very much for your offer, but .. dir's none o dem goin.' ... An my sister Helen... says tae Daddy, 'I'm goin tae go tae dis dance Daddy,' an he says, 'Your goin tae go tae no dance.' She wis a married wife dan. He says, 'Your not goin tae go tae a dance, .. an swing in another man's arms,.. [with] your husband at war,' so shu niver wan tae da dance.⁸²

To what extent this jeopardised marriages is difficult to say, especially as there are no divorce figures available for Shetland in this period. Loneliness, a carefree attitude to the future, improved self-esteem and

78. Interview Mr R. A. (b.1901)

79. SN, 10 August 1944 p.4.

80. S.A., D9/120. Papers of Peter Jamieson.

81. Interview Mrs R. I. (b.1911), and Mrs D. S. (b.1923)

82. Interview Mrs R. I. (b.1911)

increased opportunities to be disloyal to one's partner caused the national divorce-rate to rise. The number of divorces filed on the bases of adultery in Britain rose four-fold, and those filed by men also grew. It would appear that, despite a few cases, for example, in December 1940 a divorce was granted in Shetland as a husband had been deserted by his wife, and a case of bigamy was filed during the war, the institution of marriage was never under serious threat in Shetland. Even where marriages failed, it could be attributed to the 'marriage-fever' at the start of the war causing couples to embark upon relationships which could not withstand long periods of separation. The change in divorce laws also made the termination of marriages easier and less expensive. Military welfare services made it possible for service personnel to get divorces much quicker and at minimal expense, so explain the increased number of men filing for divorce, after the war, over women. Yet despite this, the divorce-rate remained at a very low level.⁸³

Nevertheless, the Second World War affected Shetland women more profoundly than the First. For those in military service, or working outside the isles, war brought independence, responsibility, companionship, improved self-confidence, and an opportunity to undertake new tasks. For those remaining in Shetland, the Second World War had some similar effects, such as mixing and working with others and

83. Interview Mrs R. I. (b.1911), and Mrs J. S. (b.1920), Braybon, G., and Summerfield, P., (1987) p.212-4, SN, 26 December 1940 p.2, SN, 22 June 1944 p.3, Summerfield, P., (1988) p.111, and Winter, J. M., (1986) p.160.

increased feelings of self-worth. Some women acquired new skills, though for those who remained on the land and knitted, the Second World War once again involved a perpetuation of previous work practices. War, despite these changes, did not 'liberate' or 'emancipate' women nationally, nor in Shetland. The upheaval of war in Britain caused a change in attitude towards the family and childbearing, with greater value placed upon the home. As a result, war did not change the sexual division of labour, rather it reinforced the domestic role of women. But women in Shetland, as has been shown by oral sources, were affected by war. They gained from personal experiences, and as a result were not prepared to accept the same degree of subordination, even when returning to domesticity.⁸⁴

It's never been the same since [the war], because you had an age group like myself, we'd seen a different life so it certainly did change, it had to. One started to work and you did have a little money which people like my mother had niver had, they had to help their families at that time,.. Independence had come .. I mean the First War did start it to a certain extent, but the Second War certainly did... They [women] gained more independence, and they found out that they had been able to take on a man's job. I think the fact that I had left home young, and proved that I could do it gave you that independence.⁸⁵

ATTITUDES AND IDEAS OF ISLANDERS.

Shetlanders, now aided by the wireless, kept in touch with outside events more closely than in the First War. Not every household had a wireless, and people would gather in homes to hear the latest news bulletin. Word of mouth was still important, and newspapers also provided a channel for

84. Winter, J. M., (1986) p.174 and p.159, Smith, H., (1986) p.220-221, Summerfield, P., (1988), and Braybon, G., and Summerfield, P., (1987)

85. Interview Mrs H. D. (b.1924)

information, though censorship limited its worth. The telegraph remained the main means of communication during the war. A telephone cable had been laid between Shetland and the mainland by 1940, but it was taken over by the Admiralty, and only in 1946 was a direct telephone link with the mainland made available for civilian use.⁸⁶

The reaction to the outbreak of war was once again mixed. Not all Shetlanders were pro-war with at least fourteen men registered as conscientious objectors. For example, John Stickle, a 21 year old agricultural worker from Unst objected to all work connected with war on religious grounds and because his father had been killed in the last war. Mr Stickle was asked whether these views were very common in Shetland, to which he replied yes, and that there were two other conscientious objectors in Unst.⁸⁷ Mr Stickle's case came under attack in Shetland when it was stated that,

most Shetlanders during the last war at least, thought of these C.Os with contempt and some sort of being outside Shetland. Now Shetlanders, like many more, are not anxious to fight and kill, but I am sure can always be depended on to defend their homes and stand up for justice and right,
...⁸⁸

Many felt terror and anxiety, made worse by memories of the previous war. The level of concern, depended upon the age and extent to which relatives were involved, especially

86. S.A., D9/120. Papers of Peter Jamieson, Smith, H., (1977) p.63, Interview Mrs C. S. (b.1920), Mrs M. B. (b.1903), Mrs E. M. (b.1909), Miss A. H. (b.1903), and Mr L. R. (b.1905), Nicolson, J. R., ([1]1972) p.113, and SN, 8 March 1945 p.2.

87. Numbers listed SN, between 14 March 1940 and 17 April 1941, and ST, 4 May 1940 p.8.

88. SN, 25 May 1940 p.5.

as three hundred and fifty-seven people from Shetland were killed during the Second World War.⁸⁹

We wir young, it didna really ... Well we wir annoyed an dat, an aa da boys wir gettin ready tae go awaa, dae wir territorials an dat. But it wis mare excitement for wis, cause I wis only nineteen. An da dances were joost every night...⁹⁰.

The everyday lives of people were affected, though not to the extent of the major industrial centres. Like the mainland, Shetland was subject to rationing, and blackouts. Rationing appears to have created a black market, as crofting households sold eggs, milk and sometimes a chicken to servicemen and neighbours. Sheep were slaughtered and consumed in Shetland, or sent to the mainland in small packages for relatives. Knitwear was sold to servicemen and no coupons were exchanged, and occasional charges were brought for such black market offences. Servicemen also brought goods to islanders in return for their hospitality.⁹¹

A curfew was enforced, and travel to and from the isles became controlled. Certain locations were designated military areas, limiting movement further. For example, civilians were not allowed to enter military camps, and disruptions on travel and mail caused considerable inconvenience.⁹² Concern for the safety of passengers and

89. Interview with Mr J. S. (b.1920), Mrs C. C. (b.1922), Mrs M. S. (b.1920), Mr J. W. I. (b.1917), and Jamieson, I., (1991) p.88.

90. Interview Mrs M. S. (b.1920)

91. Interview Mrs R. I. (b.1911), Mr L. R. (b.1905), Mrs A. R. (b.1912), and Mr G. F. (b.1922), and ST, August 1943.

92. SN, 11 July 1940 p.2, and SN, 23 November 1939 p.4. Interview Mr F. A. (b.1920), Mrs K. A. (b.1920), Mr A. J. (b.1912), and Miss M. B. (b.1903). P.R.O., ADM116/4744. In May 1940 the air mail service was withdrawn from Shetland, and all mail had to travel by sea.

goods prompted the County Council in August 1941 to arrange for the Royal Navy to provide a protective escort for the steamship.⁹³ In contrast, the air service was increased during the war. But it depended upon the availability of aircraft and crew, and priority was given to military personnel, or officials on war business. As a result, civilians had practically no access to flights, and the problems of travel intensified as war progressed.⁹⁴

Life was further disrupted as a result of military activity in the isles.⁹⁵

I mean da only trouble we had really wis whin dey wir marching... Dey didna worry whaur dey geed. Dey didna worry wis it your fence, or whit it wis, dey wir joost right oor, through da lot... Whin da officers wir in charge dan dey had tae go whaur dey had tae go, an dat wis it. .. Peat banks, no matter if you'd had a peat bank new cut we [with] peats, dey joost up oor da bank an awye ...⁹⁶

We were unfortunate to have nissen huts here athin [in] da yard, ... an aabody dan a days had ootside loos, .. da dry loos. Weel dis had tae be emptied, an had tae be taken tae da midden. An I mind me midder [my mother] saying .. at shu joost had tae watch her chance, maybe whin dey [the servicemen] geed [went]... tae get dir denner, .. nip across tae da midden empty it [the toilet] an get about again as quickly as possible.⁹⁷

War also undermined a strongly established tradition that of the sacred nature of the Sabbath. Essential war

93. S.A., CO3/1/14, Minutes of a meeting of the Committee appointed by the County Council of the County of Zetland on the 24th October 1939, to make representation regarding the steamship service, and CO.3/1/14, Minutes of the Adjourned meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland held on 19th August 1941.

94. S.A., CO3/1/14, Minutes of a meeting of the Convener's Committee of the County Council of the County of Zetland with representatives of the Civil Defence Services held on 1st May 1941, CO3/1/14, Minutes of a General Statutory Meeting Of the County Council Of the County of Zetland held on 21st October 1941, and CO3/1/15., Minutes of a special meeting of the County Council of Zetland held on 23rd May 1942.

95. Interview Mrs J. C. (b.1902), and Mr H. S. (b.1921)

96. Interview Mr H. S. (b.1921)

97. Interview Mr G. F. (b.1922)

work, and military duties did not stop on Sunday, and so it was no longer the day of rest and worship for everyone. Moreover Shetland had been 'dry' since 1921, with alcohol only available wholesale, or sold illegally in cellars and back houses. During the war beer was sold freely in NAAFI canteens and servicemen's messes.⁹⁸

Illustration 5.4 Servicemen Enjoying a Drink at the NAAFI Canteen at Sullom Voe.



(Source: Mrs C. L. Lerwick, Shetland)

The influx of 'strangers' brought by war also had certain consequences.

I think dey [Shetlander's] reacted extremely weel. I think da general attitude, you see nearly every hoose had somebody awaa in da services, an I think da general reaction wis these poor sods are joost da same as wir Johnny,.. The least we can do is tae try an be good tae dem, so dey wid invite dem in for a cup o tea, an of coorse da boys were dead keen tae come. Dey wir living in nissen

98. Interview Mr G. F. (b.1922), Mrs H. D. (b.1924), and Mr S. P. (b.1920), and Irvine, J. W., (1987) p.179.

huts, ... we [with] concrete floors, an a couple o benches, an a table we [with] a barrel o beer standing freezing, niver ony heatin. ... Dey wir a lot o very strong freendships at grow all oor Shetland...⁹⁹

Cinemas were set up in camps, with young and old invited to films. For many in rural districts, this was their first trip to the cinema, and brought visual contact with the outside world. Older men, and those exempt on the bases of essential work, mixed with the troops in NAAFI canteens, and to a limited extent with servicemen at dances.¹⁰⁰

I remember we used to go to dances, ... in the Boddam hall. (a few miles from Sumburgh airport) ... Shetland was dry, there was no pubs. But ... all the Shetland men seemed to have a half bottle of whisky, which they never brought into the hall. They used to take it out and secrete it out in the dry stone dyke, or somewhere outside. And then they'd come along and invite you out for a drink. ... We never had any half bottles, we didn't have the means of getting them, so it was a rather one sided form of socialising, with Shetland providing all the drink.¹⁰¹

These strangers were therefore well received by islanders, which is highlighted in how much they were missed.

Oh missed dem, [the servicemen] my goodness it wis dat dead quiet you didna ken whit wis happened tae you, because dey wir alwyes such a noise going on. Terrible, an dan [then] whin you cam home, you wondered whit on earth wis happened. Dare wis no noise, no music, no nothing it wis joost dead...¹⁰²

I thought the world had come to an end, cause it wis joost da jollity... Although it was a war on, dey [the servicemen] wir all so jolly... When they all went, .. chee-whiz you just thought that the world was ended. No the war feenished, but da world ended.. I think everybody in

99. Interview Mr J. W. I. (b.1917)

100. Interview Mrs E. M. (b.1909), Miss A. H. (b.1903), Mrs D. H. (b.1904), Mrs A. B. (b.1907), Mr A. J. (b.1912), Mr P. G. (b.1906), and Mrs H. D. (b.1924)

101. Interview Mr A. M. (b.1915), a servicemen stationed in Shetland during the war.

102. Interview Mrs K. L. (b.1905)

Lerwick and Scalloway must have realised just what a miss all the crowds wis. The dance halls wis always packed...¹⁰³

The majority of residents perceived these 'strangers', as causing minimal trouble, but this was not strictly true.¹⁰⁴

Mr Henderson argued that A. Cluness was wrong to state that, 'no single instance of strife or animosity,' arose between islanders and servicemen during the war. Rather Mr Henderson cites the feelings of his father the morning after two drunken Argylls had stolen his boat and set sail for Aberdeen. His father, after having rescued them, felt there was, 'animosity to spare.'¹⁰⁵ In addition,

Wir hoose here, I'm seen me coming hime fae me [my] wirk in da winter time, seven o'clock, back o seven o'clock ... an I cooldna win [get] in da door for army frying eggs upon wir stove in yunder [there].. It sort o niggled you in awye [away]. I mean, aaright dat wis da boys awaa fae hime ... But dey wir certainly a lot at took advantage o it [local Shetland people's hospitality] .. Dey wid [would] have eaten I dunna ken [don't know] whit, an wir rations geed [went] tae a lot o dem as weel, which wis grossly unfair cause dey wir getting ample.¹⁰⁶

Local men felt threatened by the attention given to, and received from, girls by the servicemen.¹⁰⁷

Dey put da lorries oot collecting up da lasses, so dey had plenty o entertainment. Army trucks going roond about da districts collecting up da lasses. Sometimes da boys wisna awful pleased. We were in dat group. ... Da whole trouble wis dey [the servicemen] didna want wis in dir dances, but dan dey [then they] wanted tae come tae wir dances, dat's whaur da trouble started. If you'd [the local men] come intae dir dance, dey'd o thrown you oot leak dat, but dan dey cam intae wir dances, an dey reckoned dir wis no reason

103. Interview Mrs C. C. (b.1922)

104. Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.231., Cluness A. T., (ed) (1967) and Nicolson, J., (1985), also all saw the troops as causing minimal trouble.

105. S.A., D1/252 Correspondence of Tom Henderson, Spiggie, Scousburgh to Mr R. S. Bruce, Whalsay, reviewing Cluness, A. T., (ed) The Shetland Isles, (1967).

106. Interview Mr J. S. (b.1922)

107. Interview Mr P. G. (b.1906), Mrs D. S. (b.1923), Mrs M. S. (b.1920), and Mrs J. F. (b.1923)

why dey shouldna come, so it cam tae be a bit o a problem sometimes...¹⁰⁸

Moreover, there was also concern over safety, and some people locked their doors for the first time.¹⁰⁹

Dare wis an old women who stayed next door tae me midder [my mother], an shu had her own hoose [She lived alone]... An dis soldier cam tae da door wan [one] night an he wanted tae come in... An shu says, 'Oh no, I canna.. me husband is in.' 'Oh I want tae come in an get a cup o tea.'... Shu ee had [always had] a man's cap hanging in her lobby.. An shu said tae her man, 'Johnny .. come doon here an get your bonnet on.. Dir's a man here at da door I canna get clear o.' Whin ever he heard dat dan he went.. He joost thought shu wis on her own... He joost thought he wid maybe win [would maybe get] in tae da hoose, maybe steal twa or three things.¹¹⁰

As will be seen during the oil era, the rise in crime was perceived, rather than real. Concern was expressed over the presence of servicemen in relation to crime. Temporary Police stations were established at Brae and Sandwick, constables were placed in Whalsay and Burra Isle, and Lerwick increased its civilian police force.¹¹¹ But only a small number of minor offences were committed, and the scale of the police force remained limited. Careless driving, charges of being drunk and incapable, minor thefts, one attack and one stabbing, hardly constitutes a crime wave.¹¹² Moreover, these men were 'policed' from

108. Interview Mr H. S. (b.1921)

109. Interview Mrs R. I. (b.1911), and Miss A. H. (b.1903)

110. Interview Mrs R. I. (b.1911)

111. S.A., CO3/8/1-2, Minutes of a special meeting of the members of the Police Committee of the County Council of the County of Zetland held on the 16th September 1942, CO3/8/1-2, Minutes of a meeting of the Police Committee of the County Council of the County of Zetland on 17th September 1940, S.A., CO3/1/14, Minutes of the General Statutory meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland held on the 16th December 1941.

112. SN, 17 September 1940 p.2, SN, 26 September 1940 p.8, SN, 17 October 1940 p.2, SN, 13 February 1941 p.2, SN, 16 October 1941 p.2, SN, 30 April 1942, SN, 15 October 1942 p.2, SN, 5 November 1942 p.2, and SN, 12 November 1942 p.3.

within their ranks, as was later to be the case, though not under formal military ruling, during the oil era.¹¹³

OVERALL IMPACT OF WAR.

To what extent the presence of these 'strangers', and the experience of Shetlanders changed the attitudes, ideas, and outlook of islanders is difficult to assess. The majority of Shetlanders were glad to return to the isles after the war.¹¹⁴ But it would appear that war had changed their attitudes to a certain extent. According to Peter Jamieson, young Shetlanders from crofts and fishing had gone away to active service and shared in the cultural and political upheaval brought by war. They had fought to preserve their ideas and beliefs. But war had also allowed them to see people at home struggling with no improvement, which made them determined to change things for the better.¹¹⁵ This point is reinforced below,

I think dare was a general move, . in some places at least, .. a general trend away fae [from] da traditional, say crofting, an keeping a coo, an grown corn, an aa dat kind o thing joost mare or less at da back o da war. A lot o young folk joost didna want tae be buddered we dat. Dey didna see ony particular desirable end product... I think dey thought it wis an awful lot o work, an dey didna see an awful lot coming in exchange...¹¹⁶

113. S.A., CO3/1/14, Minutes of the Convener's Committee of the County of Zetland held on the 2nd July 1940. It was noted that a number of military prisoners were detained in the Prison, and the Police Authority wondered whether they had to provide legalised cell accommodation for these men.

114. Some did not return, which reflects a change in attitude to island life.

115. Jamieson, P., (1949) p.45.

116. Interview Mr W. S. (b.1920)

Not only were young people less prepared to toil on the land, but wanted to continue to enjoy the freedom they had experienced.

Whin we got called up ony eens [anybody], da leak o me [like me] wis never been oot o Shetland in me [my] life, whin you cam dare, [to the mainland of Britain] weel, dey wir things dere at you never realised wis taking place. I mean, going athin a pub for instance. First time I geed athin [went into] a pub I looked up an doon da street in case da police wis comin. Bit I mean dat wis just wan thing, da folk just had a different attitude.¹¹⁷

Men returning from war were not prepared to accept the restrictive licensing laws. In December 1946 the 'wets' won the poll by a large majority, reversing the previous 'dry' ruling of 1921. People became involved in more organised social events, which threatened another long established tradition, that of visiting neighbours and 'haddin her oot along eer.'¹¹⁸

It's difficult tae say .. da sort o affects o war, .. you began tae get da establishment o youth clubs around da place. Da story aboot da auld wife at Burra, whaur dey put [where they] da coo awye [away], an somebody said, 'Are you pittin you're coo awye?' an shu said, 'Yes my dear, wir joined da youth club.' But dat wis again .. a thing whaur [where] folk wis beginning tae put dir coo away, fae ... da old style o crofting, an da whole family being involved.¹¹⁹

The fall in church rolls has also been attributed to the changes brought by war, because the nature of the traditional Sabbath was put under pressure, and arguably never recovered. There was also less emphasis on black clothes, and the tradition of mourning.¹²⁰

117. Interview Mr G. F. (b.1922)

118. Interview Mr W. S. (b.1920), and Miss M. B. (b.1903), and Jamieson, P., (1949) p.167-168.

119. Interview Mr W. S. (b.1920)

120. Interview Mrs C. B. (b.1903), Miss M. B. (b.1903), and Mr G. F. (b.1922)

The presence of so many strangers brought knowledge of city life, and different cultures, Inter-marriage meant this exchange continued in the post-war period, because some couples settled in Shetland, and relatives from the mainland came to visit. This in turn forged stronger links between Shetland and the mainland, and provided a degree of fresh blood and ideas.¹²¹

In certain areas the presence of these troops brought further change by helping to erode elements of an archaic and crumbling social structure.

The concerts .. in Uyeasound, or Baltasound [in the island of Unst] affore da war were, you got all the sort o high head ones, the nobility, they were down at the front. And gradually if you moved towards the back of the hall you came to the less respectable, an so on... It wis all very orderly, but the Air force.. brought in a slight element of take it or leave it .. Dey wir a bit, shall we say, nearer the bone, and it was accepted.¹²²

But the presence of these troops possibly also threatened aspects of island life, which may explain the revival in Nordic culture and language during, and in the immediate post-war period. There was also a revival in Shetland folk music and songs.¹²³

The overall impact of these troops upon Shetland and Shetlanders was probably less that would have been the case in other rural or isolated areas though, because of the

121. Interview Mrs H. D. (b.1924), Mr H. S. (b.1921), and Mr G. F. (b.1922), and Jamieson, P., (1949) p.46

122. Interview Mr S. P. (b.1920)

123. S.A., D9/120 Papers of Peter Jamieson. A 'Shetland Poetical Circle,' established in March 1941, and in 1944 a branch of the Shetland Poetical Circle started a journal called Shetland Life and Thought. Shetland News, published material on Shetlandic culture, dialect, literature and poetry, which arose some considerable interest and enthusiasm during and after the war. Smith B., 'The Amazing Social History of Shetland,' (1973) in B. Smith., Gesamtausgabe. (c.1971-1992). The New Shetlander, was established after the war.

nature of the island economy. As already stated, Shetland is not as insular, or isolated as some may think, for travellers and traders have come to Shetland for centuries, and because of the limited opportunities there, Shetland men, and latterly women have travelled. Men serving in the merchant navy shared their knowledge and experience with local people, and women who went into service on the mainland learned about places outside Shetland. In addition many Shetlanders emigrated so there was much correspondence with the colonies. This reinforces the point that Shetland has always had historic links with the 'outside world'.¹²⁴

War therefore, may have had less of an effect upon the people and outlook of this 'peripheral' location than may initially appear. But the degree of social change brought by World War Two is equally controversial among writers on Shetland, as for Britain. For example, Irvine argues that war brought major social change to Shetland, for it was when Shetlanders, 'burst out of the cocoon that island life had represented for so long,' and brought changes that would have taken years of peacetime.

The war opened new horizons for Ness people - for those who went away to serve. The equivalent of thirty or forty years of peacetime development had been crammed into five or six years. Attitudes had changed, values had been revised, and Dunrossness had been dragged, almost without a whimper, into the modern world.¹²⁵

In contrast, Smith argues that wars brought little change to island life, though he does admit that further research

124. Illustrated in Flinn, D., (1989), and Interview Mrs B. B. (b.1921), and Mrs C. T. (b.1920)

125. Interview Mr J. W. I., (b.1917), and Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.239, and Irvine, J. W., (1987) p.181.

is required.¹²⁶ Whilst Donaldson argues war brought Shetland briefly into the activities of the core, and goes on to argue that it was not until the 1950s and 1960s that a change in the outlook of islanders was transferred into conduct.¹²⁷ The evidence here suggests that Irvine exaggerates the degree of change, while Smith underestimates it. Rather war brought a degree of change, but it was not sufficient to wipe out older attitudes.

Therefore, unlike the economic impact whereby both World Wars brought a short term shock, the social impact of World War Two, as Marwick suggests, had greater long-term consequences. The Second World War did not destroy Shetland's social traditions, but began to undermine them. Hence, when the disruptions of the oil boom arrived, it encountered a society already accustomed to dealing with sudden upheavals, and more open to outside influences than social anthropologists have been prepared to admit.

126. Smith, H., (1977) p.65.

127. Donald, S. B., 'Economic Change Since 1946,' in D. Withrington(ed) (1983) Mr J. W. Irvine disagrees, he believes, according to an interview, that the prosperity of the 1960's depended partly upon the attitudes and experiences acquired during the war.

SECTION THREE: 1945-1982.

THE 1950S AND 1960S.

An account of the crofting communities in 1953 saw war as a positive influence in these areas:

There are one or two other less obvious features of war-time activity which may be none the less important and perhaps more persistent. There is first of all the improvement in the standard of living which follows automatically from the State's enactment of a fairly low maximum limit for retail prices. The principle of uniformity which this implies has been further implemented by institution of flat rate freight charges irrespective of distance. By these means a very considerable mitigation of the penalties of remoteness and isolation has been achieved, together with a share in the substantial improvement in the standard of living ... These developments ... have emphasised ... that Highland resources are capable of yielding a standard of living for people which few would have believed possible when they are organised in a real attempt to maximise output and are free of the inhibiting power of stifling competition. These changes give us much information, ... and indicate many lines on which to plan reconstruction. They add an element of hope to our planning for the future.¹

But the immediate post-war years were characterised by recession, as the integrated national economic base with its strong degree of central planning and control ended, and the economy reverted back to pre-war conditions.² Agriculture and fishing experienced instability and contraction in the aftermath of the Second World War. Agriculture continued to offer little more than a subsistence living, unattractive when compared with wartime cash incomes.³ The fishing fleet was ageing and remained over-committed to the seasonal herring industry, which had

1. Collier, A., (1953) p.67.

2. Smith, H., (1977) p.69-70.

3. Oral interviews suggested this, as did Heinberg, H., (1973) p.129.

been in decline since the First World War. The Herring Industry Board, established in 1946, helped provide relief until 1950. It set up a pool system, whereby fishermen in Lerwick were guaranteed a minimum price for catches of herring. It opened a new factory in Lerwick to quick-freeze and smoke herring, and secured markets for them. Grants and loans were also made available after the war to modernise boats and equipment for both herring and white fish. This was especially useful for the adoption of seine-netting, with 629 cwts of white fish caught by this method in Shetland in 1938, rising to 50,253 cwts by 1947.⁴ But this reflects increased dependency on state aid, rather than genuine competitive markets. In contrast, knitwear enjoyed boom conditions as war inflated demand and relatively high prices continued. But, by 1950 the normal production of clothing had resumed and the industry was, once again, subjected to fierce competition from mass production.⁵

Public works brought some relief in this period, as government money was invested in tarmac roads, piers, public water supplies, electricity and telephones. House building, especially in Lerwick, also provided work. But an over-reliance on Government schemes meant that unemployment rose as projects reached completion.⁶ In September 1948, 90 men or 1.6% of the working male population were unemployed, rising to 480 or 8.5% by September 1949, and to 1,000,

4. Scottish Home Department, Report On The Fisheries Of Scotland 1939-1948. (Cmd. 7726), p.24-25, p.32-35, p.41, p.63.

5. Donald, S., (1983) p.199 and 205.

6. SN, 13 January 1959 p.2.

17.6% by January 1950.⁷ In 1959 a local press headline noted, 'Male Unemployment The Problem,' and went on to report 1,100 men unemployed, or 1 in 5 of Shetland's insured population. Families relied upon welfare payments, cash from knitting, part-time employment and produce from crofts. This resulted in the all-too-familiar pattern of emigration and depopulation, as the isles 'educated for export.'⁸

Events were soon to change. Concern for the economy and subsequent depopulation, encouraged a new era of development. This was spurred by the formation of the Shetland Development Council in 1957, which became the Shetland Council for Social Service in 1959.⁹

The main object of the new Council will be to foster and develop industry and commerce in the islands and give all the help possible to development projects. The tone of the meeting was optimistic in regard to the basic industries in Shetland at the present time, and the hope was expressed that these industries would be encouraged and expended in the future in the interests and for the benefit of all the people of Shetland.¹⁰

The Council, formed on the basis of a memorandum prepared by the County Convener Mr Prophet Smith, provided a planning agency, especially important in the light of increased central control over economic development, for it

7. Smith, H., (1977) p.70 and Donald, S., (1983) p.200. Male working population aged between 15 and 65 inclusively in 1951.

8. SN, 4 January 1944 p.3 headline, 'Shetland's Population Lowest Ever Recorded,' Thomson, W. P. L., (1983) p.175-176, Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.222, and Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.38.

9. SN, 23 April 1957 p.5, 'Replacement of Development Council,' SN, 10 March 1957 p.4., and Minutes of Executive Committee meeting of the Shetland Council of Social Service, 14th May 1959.

10. 'Hopes of New Era for Shetland. A Representative Development Council Formed, Discussion at Largely Attended Meeting,' SN, 23 April 1957 p.5.

was felt that 'self-confidence' had to be restored and 'initiative encouraged.'¹¹

Changing attitudes, and attempts to revive the economy were aided by the establishment of the Highlands and Islands Development Board in 1965, by the Wilson government. Its purpose was to encourage and fund economic development, based upon growing government concern for peripheral locations. Several projects had been started in Shetland before 1965, such as the rebuilding of the fishing fleet and the establishment of a fish factory in Scalloway. But lack of capital constrained local initiative. The H.I.D.B. provided the missing link, and when funds became available helped to put a number of schemes into practice.¹²

Initially money was directed towards local industry and included fish processing firms and small knitwear units. Agriculture also benefited from Government grants to reclaim and re-seed hill land. Moreover, the Crofters Commission encouraged the amalgamation of crofts into larger units which were seen to be more viable, and offered grants to up-date equipment, improve livestock, and increase the value of arable land through the use of fertilisers.¹³

11. Minutes of Executive Committee meeting of the Shetland Council of Social Service, 20th April 1961, and Donald, S., (1983) p.203.

12. Minutes of meeting of the Shetland Council of Social Service with Lord Hughes of the H.I.D.B., 9th June 1965, Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.41, and Carter, I., (1974) p.281-263.

13. Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.41, Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.262-265, Tulloch, A. T. H., (c.1972), Thomson, I., 'Crofters and Crofting,' in A. Hetherington(ed) (1990) p.75-76. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.223, and Heinberg, H., (1973) p.154-155, 161 and 164.

The 1960s saw a period of internal drive. Fishing and fish processing diversified. The fishing fleet moved away from the seine net and declining drift net herring fishing, to the use of purse netters for herring, mainly in response to their increased use by the Norwegians. Seine netting was supplemented by trawling, dredging for scallops and the expanding crab and lobster fishing. Seafood was exported to Scandinavia, while cargos of frozen fish were shipped to America.¹⁴

Knitwear was produced in machine-based factories employing both men and women; while tourism and craft work expanded. New small-scale ventures, not all successful in the long-term, included mink farming and stone polishing, whilst Shetland Silvercraft made brooches and ornaments, and rainbow trout were farmed.¹⁵ By the end of the 1960s the Shetland economy had almost full employment and the isles were able to retain and even encourage the return of their migrants, finding outlets for their skills. Shetland began to import labour from the Scottish mainland to fill positions in fish factories and on crofts. This is reflected in the more stable population figures, 17,812 in 1961 and 17,327 in 1971.¹⁶

14. Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.41-43, Donald, S., (1983) p.211, Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.263-4, Nicolson, J. R., (1977) p.159-162, Heinberg, H., (1973) p.142-154, and Goodlad, C. A., 'Old and Trusted, New and Unknown: Technological Confrontation in the Shetland Herring Industry,' in R. Anderson and C. Wadel (ed) North Atlantic Fishermen: Anthropological Essays on Modern Fishing. (1972).

15. Minutes of Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Shetland Council for Social Service, 11th March 1966. Tulloch, A. H. I. (c.1972)., Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.265, Donald, S., (1983) p.205-208, and p.213 and Heinberg, H., (1973) p.170-175, for details.

16. Minutes of the Executive Committee meetings of the Shetland Council of Social Service, 14th May 1959, 21st March 1963, 3rd February 1966, and 21st April 1966, all refer to a shortage of labour.

Lerwick continued to be important to Shetland in the 1950s and 1960s, acting as an administration, distribution, and service centre. It was the base for sea communications with Aberdeen, where fishermen landed the bulk of their catches, and crofters sold their produce.¹⁷ Unlike the inter-war years, between 1951 and 1971 the population of Lerwick grew by 589, reaching a total of 6,127. Residents of Lerwick represented slightly more than one in three of those living in Shetland in 1971.

Despite the attraction of Lerwick, industries were encouraged elsewhere, which improved employment opportunities and permitted people to stay in rural areas. Housing and amenities advanced as tapped water supplies, sewerage and electrical power were brought to country districts. Moreover, improvements in roads and growing numbers of private cars meant Lerwick was increasingly accessible to all those living on the mainland of Shetland.¹⁸ Telephone networks, which replaced telegraphs after the Second World War, improved contact with the outside world, as did the advent of television in 1964. Television exposed even the most remote rural locations to the national and international forum, ensuring Shetland remained in touch with the wider world.¹⁹

Thomson, W. P. L., (1983) p.175, Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.262 and 266, Nicolson, J. R., ([1]1972) p.44, and Census Returns for 1961 and 1971.

17. Heinberg, H., (1973) p.128-130, and p.134-136.

18. Heinberg, H., (1973) p.124-125, p.129, and p.141-142, Irvine, J. I., (1985) p.259-261, Nicolson, J. R., ([1]1972) p.108. The number of cars in Shetland rose from 1,146 in 1938 to 4,741 by 1966, of which 2,540 were private cars.

19. ST, 3rd May 1974 p.1, Heinberg, H., (1973) p.129, Nicolson, J. P., 'The Parish of Sandsting and Aithsting,' in J. R. Coull, (ed) (1985) p.149, and [Anon], Sullom Voe Oil Terminal, (1982) p.16.

The 1960s, then, were characterised by internal confidence based upon the prosperity of the island economy. Such activity was largely funded from sources outside Shetland, illustrating, as in other peripheral locations, a greater reliance upon Government aid. But this is not to suggest Shetland was totally dependent on subsidies: rather, the market economy responded to the assistance provided. The new and extended functions of central government, largely as a result of the war, meant that Shetland became more integrated into the British economy. The role of local government was a controversial subject in both Britain and Europe; but Shetland did not become a satellite society, for it was felt that London should not control events based upon little knowledge of the isles. The isles remained unaffected by the reorganisation of local government. Shetland and Orkney became special island regions avoiding amalgamation with the Highlands; this victory was to prove very important during the oil era.²⁰

THE ROLE OF WOMEN.

The Second World War, as has been shown, brought new opportunities and experiences for the majority of women in Shetland, but economic recession hampered long-term change. In 1931, 32.6% of all women in Shetland aged 14 and over were gainfully employed, compared with 33.8% in Scotland. By 1951 only 21.6% of all women in Shetland aged 15 and over were occupied, compared with 33.6% in Scotland.

20. Smith, H., (1977) p.73, Donald, S., (1983) p.215, and Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.42-44.

Furthermore, of these, 6.2% of all married women in Shetland were employed in 1931, and 6.4% in Scotland. By 1951 the proportion of gainfully employed married women in Scotland had reached 14.2% of all married women, while in Shetland it remained at 6.4%.²¹

Alterations in the fishing industry meant seasonal female employment in herring came to an end, an occupation important to those who combined it with crofting and knitting.²² Fish processing, especially white fish, became concentrated in factories and offered all-year-round employment. The work force lived in either Lerwick or Scalloway, while others commuted on a daily, or weekly basis. As a result, women with croft and household responsibilities were less attracted to such employment.²³ Moreover, modernisation in the white fishing fleet meant that wives and daughters of fishermen were no longer required to bait lines in the winter.²⁴

Domestic service declined further after the war. Consequently, competition for the few available jobs, especially those within travelling distance, heightened. The growth in education opportunities and health provisions did bring some additional employment. Women worked in the newly opened school canteens, and demand for teachers increased. In 1931, 180 professional women were employed in Shetland, the majority of whom were teachers. By 1951 the

21. Census For Scotland 1931 and 1951.

22. Heineberg, H., (1973) p.143-145.

23. Heineberg, H., (1973) p.149-150. According to the 1931 census 288 women worked as makers of food, drink and tobacco, the majority of whom were 'fish workers'. By 1951 the number of women employed in this category had fallen to 18.

24. Heineberg, H., (1973) p.149.

figure had reached 202, the greater part of whom were teachers and nurses. Included in these figures was a rise in the number of married women.²⁵

The majority of women, as was the case after the First World War, were forced to revert back to knitting. It fell upon women, once more, to earn sufficient cash from knitting to sustain families. Hand knitting remained the main form of production, although the number of home-based knitting machines increased. Households borrowed machines from knitwear shops in Lerwick and set up in their homes. This allowed sufficient flexibility for other work and family commitments. These accelerated production and bolstered output. Men also became involved in home-based machine knitting because of the lack of alternative employment. This created a new division of labour within crofting families. The male machinists produced the plain knitted pieces, while women finished the garments, by making the patterned borders, sewing together the machine and hand-knitted parts, sewing on buttons and washing and ironing.²⁶

The knitwear industry, once again, cushioned the population from economic hardship. But it was not able to halt out-migration. The total population of women in Shetland fell from 11,876 in 1931 to 10,351 by 1951, and further to 9,302 by 1961. Unfortunately, the census only

25. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.220-221. In 1931, according to the census, 490 women were employed in personal services, falling to 395 by 1951. In both cases, the majority were domestic servants, Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.241 and 250, and Census For Scotland 1931 and 1951.

26. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.220-221, and Heineberg, H., (1973) p.171-175.

includes those born in Shetland who moved to the Scottish mainland, and the birthplace and enumeration tables were not divided by sex until 1961. The majority, 702 Shetland women, lived in the city of Edinburgh in 1961, compared with 490 men. Some may have been students, and only temporarily resident in the city, but further education on the mainland also encouraged emigration. A further 334 women lived in the city of Aberdeen, compared with 264 men. Only 130 Shetland women and 119 men lived in the city of Glasgow. These figures show that Shetland women tended to move to the mainland rather than abroad.²⁷

Opportunities for both men and women in Shetland began to improve by the 1960s. Boom conditions in the knitwear industry meant small factories were established in rural areas, as well as in Lerwick. These provided full-time employment for young women, with reasonable rates of pay. By 1966 approximately 250 people were employed full-time in knitting units, compared with 90-100 in 1938. The knitwear industry also continued as a cottage industry, partly because of the dislike for monotonous factory work and partly because of the flexibility it afforded to women. Knitting at home became a full-time occupation for some men and women. In 1970 it was estimated that the average Shetland family earned £5 at knitting a week which was a useful addition to the income of a crofter or fisherman.²⁸

27. In 1951, 1,296 people born in Shetland, lived in the city of Edinburgh, 462 in the city of Aberdeen and 308 in Glasgow.

28. Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.42, Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.240, and Heineberg, H., (1973) p173-175.

Openings arose in the newly established fish processing factories. This was especially the case when a factory was built in Out Skerries. It provided paid employment for women who processed the local catch. Previously women had plenty of work, on the island but little paid employment, but by the late 1960s there was a shortage of female labour. This induced a change in attitude towards married women working. The activity rate, that is the actual employment of males or females as a percentage of the working population, rose for women. In 1961 the activity rate of female labour stood at 31, rising to 39 by 1966 and further to 44 by 1971. This was mainly because female employment rose over the decade despite a decline in the female population of working age. Women in Shetland before the advent of oil were employed in hospitals, retailing, hotels and catering, and less in fish-processing and knitwear, a transition intensified by the third external shock, oil.²⁹

29. Dey, J., Out Skerries: An Island Community, (Shetland 1991) p.97-98, Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.240 and p.266, McNicoll, I., 'Some Aspects of the Impact of Oil on the Shetland Economy.' (PhD thesis 1977) p.15-22, and Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981). p.1-5, and p.8-9.

CHAPTER SIX: THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NORTH SEA OIL: THE CONSTRUCTION ERA

DISCOVERY OF NORTH SEA OIL: THE SHETLAND EXPERIENCE.

Exploration for oil in the North Sea began in 1965, when the first round of UK sector licenses was allocated. Shetland became involved in 1970, when onshore supply and helicopter bases were established in the isles. These activities were temporary until the exploration breakthrough in July 1971, when oil was discovered on the Brent field, 110 miles north east of Shetland.¹

The discovery of oil off the shores of Shetland, although not announced by Shell/Esso until August 1972, once again placed Shetland in a strategically important position. As far as the U.K. was concerned, oil was seen as a means of removing stagnation and introducing economic growth which would transform the industrial base of Britain. But oil, like war, received a mixed reception from the people of Shetland. There were those who saw the benefits, whereby oil was viewed as a means of broadening the economic base and bringing employment to the isles. But equally apparent was the potential to spoil the landscape and cause various social problems, especially as the work force would be imported. It was felt by some, as a result of the prosperity of the 1960s, that Shetland did not need oil, and could be relatively unenthusiastic, indifferent and reserved towards the industry.²

1. [Anon] Shetland's Oil Era. (Shetland ?)

2. Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.78-79, and Graham, J., (1990) p.139.

The Zetland County Council was also aware of both the potential of oil and its detrimental effect on the community. As a result they decided to take steps to protect Shetland, and began by promoting a special parliamentary bill aimed at extending the powers of the local authority. The Zetland County Council Act was passed in 1974, and gave the Council power, in the interests of the community to control oil developments.³ The act represented an extraordinary achievement for an isolated island authority, whereby the Council became not only an agent of control but also an agent of development.⁴

The Zetland County Council, which became the Shetland Islands Council in 1975 under local government reorganisation, was granted power to become a harbour authority and issue licenses for work within a three mile radius of the coast. It was able to acquire land, through compulsory purchase, and invest in profit-making companies, as well as create a reserve fund from oil revenue.⁵ This increased the local authority's influence and ability to negotiate with multinational oil companies.⁶

3. Graham, J. (1990) p.139, Harris, A. H., Lloyd, M. G., and Newlands, D. A., The Impact of Oil on the Aberdeen Economy. (1988) p.80, suggests why the act, which gave additional power given to the local authority, was passed.

4. Grieco, M., 'Oil Related Development and Shetland: Institutional Framework,' in Scottish Journal of Sociology No.2, 1977-78, and Williamson, L., (1981-82). This caused a conflict of interest and the council has been criticised for its emphasis on 'commercial viability' rather than 'social concern'. See Grieco, M., 'Oil and the Council: A Study of the Changing Role of the Local Authority,' in The New Shetlander, No.119, 1977.

5. Williamson, L., (1981) p.12, and Smith, H., (1977) p.76.

6. Grieco, M., (1977), and Williamson, L., (1981-82), for details of how the relationship between the Shetland Islands Council and the oil companies developed and changed.

These events highlight a major theme of this thesis, which is to question the core-periphery framework in relation to Shetland, and associated exploitation. According to the theory, under classic core-periphery relations, the core, whether international oil companies or London, retains control over the periphery at all times, and the periphery, in its subordinate position is forced into an unequal exchange with the core. Natural resources and labour are usually extracted by the core at the expense of development in the periphery.

Circumstances surrounding the advent of North Sea oil were more complex, and Shetland did not act in the tradition of a passive peripheral location. Aided by the desperation of the British government to gain revenue from the extraction of oil from the North Sea, the Council, through the Zetland County Council Act, was given sufficient negotiating powers to ensure a more equal relationship with the international industrial core. As a result, maximum economic and social benefits were sought for Shetland by the Council, reflected in the formation of the Charitable Trust in 1976, which had total funds of £130,529,000 in 1993.⁷

An Interim Plan had been drawn up by the County Development Officer in 1972, which recommended that oil developments be concentrated in one area, on land owned by the local authority and shared by oil companies.⁸ In

7. Shetland Islands Council Charitable Trust Annual Report for the Year ended 31st March 1993.

8. Clark, I. R., and Fenwick, J. M., 'Reflections on Shetland and Oil,' in The New Shetlander, No. 145 1983 p.27-28.

response, the Council requested a Compulsory Order, as a means of controlling the physical planning of oil, as well as to prevent land speculation.⁹ The Council decided to build one industrial complex and tanker terminal situated at Sullom Voe, a deep water approach on the northern coast. This was favoured over the construction of a number of large oil-related installations throughout the isles. The site chosen had been practically derelict since World War Two, when it had been used as an R.A.F. base. It was agreed that the Council would make land available for the terminal, provide harbour facilities and build a construction village, in return for 'disturbance' payments from the oil industry.¹⁰ This was reminiscent of World War Two, when the Council was involved in war-related construction.

Work began on Sullom Voe oil terminal at the end of 1974, when the first 13 million tons of peat was removed from the 1000 acre site.¹¹ The scale of construction was much bigger than first anticipated and at its peak in 1980 employed over 7,000 people.¹² The construction, development and operation of the terminal was carried out through the Sullom Voe Association Limited, a non-profit making limited company set up in May 1975. The company was owned jointly by the Shetland Islands Council and the oil companies,

9. Smith, H., (1977) p.76.

10. [Anon] Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. (March 1977) The compulsory purchase of land met with opposition, causing splits in the council and the community. See Kerr, J., 'Governors and Governed,' in A. Hetherington(ed) (1990) p.171, and Smith, H., (1977) p.76/77. [Anon] Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. (Scalloway 1982) p.1.

11. Clark, I. R., and Fenwick, J. M., (1983) p.27-28.

12. Blackadder, A., (1986) p.45

represented by Shell and BP, the leaders of the Brent and Ninian pipeline groups, and acted as a forum for discussion between the two bodies.¹³

Oil companies, because of the vast cost of off-shore production facilities and the Sullom Voe Terminal, were under pressure to start production as soon as possible. The Government was also keen to receive its share of the oil revenue. As a result, it was decided to complete the basic oil handling facilities, and not wait until the terminal plant became operational. The first stabilised oil was pumped ashore a year and seven months after planning permission had been given for the terminal. Only certain parts of the terminal site were operational, and for three years construction and operations worked alongside each other, allowing oil to flow into Sullom Voe.¹⁴

On completion, Sullom Voe was the site of Europe's biggest oil and liquefied gas terminal. It was of major importance to the development of the North Sea, and could manage production from the twelve oil-fields in the East Shetland Basin. It was opened by the Queen in May 1981, and at that time had the capacity to handle 75 percent of Britain's oil production.

13. [Anon] Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. (March 1977)

14. [Anon] Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. (1982) p.5.

Illustration 6.1 Some 'Bears' Waiting to Meet the Queen on the Official Opening Day.



Some of the "Bears" who waited to see The Queen.

(Source: ST, 15th May 1981)

The Port of Sullom Voe was owned and operated by the Shetland Islands Council as a Harbour Authority. The Sullom Voe Oil and Gas Complex was located within the port limits on Callback Ness, and was operated by British Petroleum Development Limited on behalf of several oil company participants. The oil, delivered to Sullom Voe through the Brent and Ninian pipelines, was collected from a group of oil-fields located in the East Shetland Basin.¹⁵

Sella Ness, a depot close to the terminal, was the Harbour Authority base. It was located on the site of an abandoned fish factory, and accommodated the port

15. [Anon] Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. (1982) p.1, and Shetland Islands Council Port of Sullom Voe Port Information and Tidal Predictions for 1993. (1993)

administration, tug company and shipping agents, as well as an oil pollution control store. The wartime underground fuel tanks were brought back into use for storing diesel fuel for a road-tanker depot. These port facilities were built along with the terminal construction. The SIC was responsible for the construction of four tanker jetties, and, as Harbour Authority, prepared the navigation and communications centre at Sella Ness, where tugs, mooring boats and pilot cutters were based. The tugs used for navigation are owned by Shetland Towage, a company in which the SIC has substantial shares.¹⁶

Under the Sullom Voe Port and Harbour Agreement signed in 1978, the SIC received payments relating to the tonnage of oil and gas exported from the terminal and to the cost of building jetties. The revenue from this and other agreements go into a Charitable Trust fund which is used to help alleviate social distress. The fund also provides capital for local industry in preparation for the post-oil era.¹⁷ The formation of this fund was an unusual achievement for the island authority and no equivalent appears to exist in other areas affected by North Sea oil developments, other than smaller-scale common good funds.

Airport traffic and supply bases also represented important oil-related developments. Supply bases were concentrated in Lerwick harbour, although one was

16. [Anon] Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. (1982) p.1 and 12. See Grieco, M., (1977), for the other commercial involvement of the Shetland Islands Council.

17. [Anon] Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. (1982) p.1, and Shetland Islands Council Charitable Trust Annual Report for the Year ended 31st March, 1993 p.28.

established at Sandwick.¹⁸ In contrast, the majority of oil-related air operations were located at Sumburgh airport. Both in the exploration, and subsequent development stage, Sumburgh airport provided an important staging point for workers flying to oil-rigs in the North Sea. They were transported into the isles by fixed wing and off-shore by helicopter.¹⁹

The construction of both Sullom Voe Oil Terminal and the developments at Sumburgh Airport and Lerwick Harbour, had a significant impact on the Shetland economy. It is to these that the focus now turns.

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT : THE CONSTRUCTION ERA.

The scale of operations required to construct Sullom Voe terminal was extensive by national standards. The isolated location of Shetland intensified development demands. The site was cleared, heavy duty roads were built, together with a jetty for importing construction material. Over a million tonnes of construction materials passed over the jetty including cement, prefabricated houses and processing plants. Preparing the site took three years, and as a consequence the first mechanical contractor started work on the main processing plant only in the summer of 1977. On completion, Sullom Voe Oil Terminal represented one of the largest civil engineering projects undertaken in Britain. The terminal cost £1.3 billion to build, and the Shetland Islands Council, because of its position as port

18. [Anon] Shetland's Oil Era. (Shetland ?)

19. Graham, J., (1990) p.140

and harbour authority at Sullom Voe, spent a further £47 million constructing tanker loading jetties.²⁰

This level of activity had potentially far reaching consequences for Shetland. Like the Second World War, the construction phase brought a short, sharp shock to the island economy. But the impact of oil, unlike war, was seen as a potential threat to the island economy and way of life. As a result, planning became a prerequisite of the construction era and oil-related activity. War involved a degree of planning, but at national level, with overriding military considerations. The time-span and outcome of war was much less certain than the construction era which worked to tight deadlines.²¹

Like the war years, the construction era was characterised by classic boom conditions of high wages, aided by overtime, and full employment.²² There was no drain on the able-bodied men and women of Shetland, as had been the case during war, and the majority were able to benefit. Like war, however, oil removed labour from the traditional industries. Lucrative employment appealed to Shetlanders who moved from traditional occupations to work in construction and other oil-related jobs.²³ For example,

20. [Anon] Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. (1982) p.4-5, and Wills, J., (1991) p.61-63 and p.76.

21. McDowall, S., and Begg, H., (1981) p.1, Blackadder, A., (1986) p.43, and Site meetings were held each Sunday to monitor and control the construction project. ST, 15th May 1981, 'Sullom Voe 1981. A Shetland Times Special Colour Report,' p.14 and 15.

22. In 1958 the unemployment rate stood at 11.1% in Shetland, 3.5 times the Scottish rate. It fell below that of Scotland's in 1971, and further between 1971 and 1973, remaining fairly stable at 2.3%, until 1980. Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study. (1981) p.3-1.

23. ST, 17th October 1980, p.10, The New Shetlander, No. 120 1977 p.14, ST 15th May 1981, 'Sullom Voe 1981 A Shetland Times Special

oil-related jobs in Shetland grew from 935 in 1976 to 8,590 by December 1980.²⁴ Fourteen percent of those employed were local people, and at its peak, over 1,000 of them worked in construction: this represented 10% of the labour force. This caused shortages in the economy, especially in fish processing and knitwear. The Shetland Islands Council tried to prevent labour leaving the traditional industries by limiting accommodation in camps to 'incoming' staff, and by oil companies promising not to 'poach' workers. This was obviously not acceptable, as the unions firmly pointed out, and in 1976 the ban was lifted. Other public and private employees also found it difficult to retain a work force.²⁵ But Shetland did not have sufficient skilled labour and as in the Second World War, was forced to import workers.²⁶

Skilled labour arrived in Shetland from the U.K. and Ireland. Initially 1,200 workers had been required, but predictions increased to 2,500 by early 1978.²⁷ In fact the

Colour Report.' p.7, Institute for the Study of Sparsely Populated Areas, 'Social Consequences of Rapid Industrial Developments in Sparsely Populated Areas of Scotland.' Aberdeen unpublished, 1976, p.9-10, and Sewel, J. (ed) (1979) p.5-6.

24. McDowall, S., and Begg, H., (1981) p.22.

25. The County Clerk and General Manager noted that in one week over twelve 'key men' in the county workforce had resigned, which disrupted refuse collection in rural areas. *ST*, 13th September 1974. p.1. Also see Graham, J., (1990) p.139, and Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981) p.7-2, for details of the labour shortages faced by the Shetland Island Council during the construction era. The Sunday Times, 21st July 1974 p.53. Certain local services stopped and businesses closed because of labour shortages.

26. It should be noted that 'travelling' staff were preferred for construction work because of the long hours and seven day week expected of labour. Such intensity of work was less suitable for local labour, who required days off for other responsibilities, like crofting. Shapiro, D., 'The Industrial Relations of Oil,' in R. Parsler and S. Shapiro (ed) (1980) p.9.

27. Wills, J., (1991) p.67. A recruitment and training centre was established at Bellshill outside Glasgow, and was attended by construction workers before going on to Shetland. Also see Taylor, P., and Hutton, A., 'Some Labour Market Characteristics of Oil-Related

construction work force, including temporary construction and service staff, reached 7,025 by 1980. This gross under-estimation of staff requirements was probably a ploy by oil companies to minimise the 'disturbance' levels of construction to the council. The 'bears', as they were known, worked a four-week shift at Sullom, followed by a week at home.²⁸ They were transported to the mainland each month by air, initially from Sumburgh airport which was 55 miles from the terminal.²⁹

Although large, the number of imported workers was nowhere near the levels brought by World War Two, when at least 12,000 service personnel and construction workers came to Shetland. These new temporary residents were housed in camps, portacabins, caravans, bed-and-breakfast establishments, and hotels. Remnants of the war were seen as Sullom Voe Hotel, used for oil-related personnel, had originally been an Air Officers' mess. A purpose-built village at Firth was constructed and designed to hold 1,200 workers. It was built by the SIC, and as Sullom Voe reached completion certain facilities at the camp became available to the community. The accommodation camp was self-contained, and had similar facilities to the NAAFI canteens

Travelling Workers,' in R. Moore(ed) Labour Migration and Oil. (c.1981) p.106 and p.126-127. Sullom Voe Oil Terminal, Oil Industry in Shetland. (1977)

28. 'Bears', a similar term to 'rough necks', used to describe non-skilled labour.

29. Shetland In Statistics 1993. p.15. See Taylor, P., and Hutton, A., (c.1981), for further details of the migrant work employed in the construction of Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. Graham, J., (1990) p.139, and [Anon] Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. (1982) p.4-5

established during the Second World War to cater for the needs of servicemen.³⁰

Illustration 6.2 Construction Workers Enjoying a Drink in the Camp Bar.



Enjoying a pint in one of the camp bars after a day out on the site.

(Source: ST, 15th May 1981)

A second village was built at Toft which could hold 2,400 people, but even this was not sufficient. During the height of the construction phase two ships were moored in Garths Voe which provided accommodation for a further 700. One of the vessels was in Shetland for almost three years, and the other for under two. Similar circumstances arose at the start of the Second World War, when the *Manela*,

30. Sullom Voe Oil Terminal, Oil Industry in Shetland. (1977), Manson, T., 'The Future of Shetland's Past,' in Button, J. (ed) (1978) p.72, and [Anon] Firth Voe Construction Village, information pamphlet printed by Grandnet, the company that ran the village.

anchored off Sullom Voe, was used to accommodate R.A.F. personnel.³¹

The construction era by its very nature was short-lived. Boom conditions peaked in 1980, and as work began to fall away, many of those concerned about the impact of oil in the 1970s began to worry about its predicted decline in the 1980s. The SIC were aware that unemployment levels by 1981 had reached over 7%, with the prospect of rising to as high as 15%. Oil had become part of the Shetland economy, with over 20% of the population employed in oil-related jobs in 1981, and a further 10% in jobs dependent on the oil industry. An SIC report predicted that 1,750 jobs would be lost in the 5 years between 1981 and 1986, and that around 2,000 people could be unemployed by 1986, unless action was taken.³²

In the wake of these fears, and the continuing problems faced by the traditional industries, a short-term economic strategy was developed to encourage employment in the early 1980s, similar to post-war reconstruction plans. The five-year plan aimed to provide industrial sites and buildings, market products, especially fish and knitwear, promote Shetland as a place for future oil developments, and provide financial incentives for traditional industries to diversify into new products. This was a major shift in attitude and policy by the SIC. Oil had been viewed as an

31. [Anon] Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. (1982) p.1 and 5, and P.R.O., ADM116/4065 Defence of Shetland Islands, Inter-service Arrangements. Defence 843. Correspondence, 10th January 1940.

32. Wills, J., (1991) p.77, Blackadder, A., (1986) p.54, and Blackadder, A., 'Shetland's Employment Prospects,' in Shetland Life, No.6 1981 p.14-15.

alien industry that required control and containment throughout the 1970s. But by the 1980s it had become apparent that oil was now part of the island economy and should be nurtured. The main short-term aim was to create 2,000 jobs as a means of alleviating the high levels of unemployment resulting from the completion of Sullom Voe. A Strategy Document also developed policies for the long-term economy. The three policy objectives for such strategies were to expand and support traditional industries, to bolster oil activity and to encourage new industries to set up in Shetland.³³

The downturn in the economy after 1980, as the service requirements reduced in response to a decline in oil-related activity, was not as severe as had been feared. The temporary construction work force left Shetland, and, in line with the Council's plans, some of the permanent jobs at the terminal went to Shetlanders. This was a change in policy, for Councillors initially wanted to prevent Shetlanders taking jobs in the temporary construction era. In contrast, they placed pressure upon industry to employ and train Shetlanders for the permanent posts at the oil terminal. Over half the terminal's employees had been recruited locally by 1981, and the proportion was rising. In 1982 approximately 850 permanent staff were working at Sullom Voe, of whom almost 400 were employed directly at the terminal, on both day and shift work, and 250 by a maintenance contractor. The remaining 200 were employed in various other associated areas such as Port and Harbour

33. Blackadder, A., (1986) p.58-60.

Authority and the tug company. But the Shetland Islands Council and oil companies were forced to import skilled labour to manage and maintain the operation of the plant, together with the pilotage and other port duties requiring specialist ability. Training programmes were run by the Terminal Operator to enable Shetlanders to learn the required skills.³⁴

Air Services.

The construction of Sullom Voe Oil terminal had certain spin-offs for the Shetland economy, which included stimulating the service sector. For example, unlike World War Two, when the majority of troops were moved by sea, air services provided an efficient method of transporting oil-related personnel. Air services had already been affected by oil developments, with helicopters flying from Sumburgh from 1971, but activity increased considerably during the construction era. In 1972 70,589 passengers passed through Sumburgh airport, and by 1978 there were 685,492, with the main runway enlarged to cope with the additional traffic.³⁵

Until 1978 Sumburgh airport was the centre of air services for oil-workers, and the extra flights resulting from a growth in business in Shetland. It became apparent that roads were not suitable for the amount of bus traffic involved in transporting construction workers to Sullom

34. Blackadder, A., (1986) p.45, ST, 15th May 1981, 'Sullom Voe 1981. A Shetland Times Special Colour Report,' p.7, and [Anon] Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. (1982) p.11.

35. Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study. (1981) p.4-7, and 'Twenty-five Years Of Oil,' Special feature in Press and Journal 22 September 1994 p.6.

Voe, and the airport facilities were being stretched, especially as services were often delayed due to fog. In response, the SIC agreed to reopen Scatsta, a wartime airfield only three miles from the terminal. Scatsta was operational again by 1978, and at the height of construction 2,500 passengers a week used it.³⁶

Unfortunately, a large new terminal had been under construction at Sumburgh and was opened in 1979, just as oil-related traffic began to decline. Passengers passing through Sumburgh fell from 367,307 in 1982 to 235,693 by 1984, which can partly be explained by the high landing charges imposed as a means of covering costs. This coincided with the introduction of long-range helicopters, such as the Puma and the Chinook, which could carry more passengers over longer distances. As a result it was possible to fly crews to the oil rigs direct from Aberdeen, without stopping in Sumburgh. By 1983 concern focused on the run-down of Sumburgh Airport as well as the end of the construction phase, both predictable events.³⁷

The rapid growth in oil-related transport throughout the boom had its own direct stimulus on the island economy. For example, extending the runway and building a new terminal at Sumburgh airport, as well as at Scatsta, meant Sullom Voe was not the only site of construction in the 1970s. In addition, the operational demands of these airports increased employment for both skilled and

36. [Anon] Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. (1982) p.5.

37. Clark, I. R., and Fenwick, J. M., (1983) p.28. The numbers employed at Sumburgh airport fell from 748 in 1980, to just over 200. Irvine, J. W., (1987) p.189-191.

unskilled labour. In 1971 only 13 people were employed in air transport in Shetland rising to 496 by the third quarter of 1978. These figures do not include the support services, such as cleaning and catering, which employed over 200 people at Sumburgh in 1976. The Joint Employment Monitoring showed that the high rate of employment continued until the second quarter of 1980, when 791 people worked in all aspects of air transport.³⁸

As for the construction sector, Shetland did not have sufficient labour so supplies were imported. As a result, the proportion of locally recruited staff in air transport never rose above 40%, and was at times below 30%. Only a small proportion of professional and technical staff, below 5%, were recruited locally, because of specialised skill requirements.³⁹ This migrant labour force was very different from that brought by construction, or war. The majority were skilled personnel who moved to Shetland on a semi-permanent basis, bringing their families with them.⁴⁰ The degree of assimilation and the wider social impact of such in-migration will be investigated in the next chapter.

Supply Bases.

Although not directly related to the construction of Sullom Voe, the growth in supply services played an important part in the island economy. Supply bases provide

38. Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981) p.4-7 and 4-8.

39. Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981) p.4-8.

40. Byron, R., and MacFarlane, G., (c.1980), tables seven and eight for occupation structure of incoming informants. p.32-33. Also figure 1.2 and 1.3 for population trends.

off-shore operations with equipment and provisions. The first was opened in Shetland in 1971 and a further four bases have opened, three in Lerwick and one in Sandwick. Two were operated by oil companies servicing their own supply boats, whilst the others provided a commercial service to supply boats stopping in Shetland.⁴¹

Initially, these were 'forward bases' rather than production centres, because of the distance from the main centres of oil-related activity, and because the industrial base was too narrow to meet the demands of the industry. This meant materials were imported to Shetland, and stored until ready for shipment. Norscot and Ocean Inchcape, two of the bases, went on to secure extensive material-handling contracts for off-shore developments, and other oil-related activity.⁴²

The bases employed only 17 people in 1973, but by the first quarter of 1980 there were 380. The majority of staff were recruited locally, unlike other areas of oil-related activity, though supply base companies did find it necessary to import some skilled staff. The operating receipts of oil supply bases in Shetland in 1982/83 were £13.4 million, compared with £142.4 million for Sullom Voe.⁴³

41. McNicoll, I., 'The Impact of Oil Supply Bases on the Economy of Shetland, in Maritime Policy and Management, 1977, 4. See Nicolson, J. R., (1977) p.171-183, and Wills, J., (1991) p.9-12 for details of developments at Lerwick Harbour.

42. Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study. (1981) p.4-4.

43. Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study. (1981) p.4-5, and McNicoll, I., Shetland: Economy and Industry 1982/83. (1985) p.29

The stimulus and investment brought by oil to the island economy were outlined in a series of complex calculations undertaken by McNicoll. He showed Shetland had a very high growth rate in the late 1970s and early 1980s in relation to Scotland's and that of the U.K.; this can be attributed to Sullom Voe terminal, with its high operating income. The terminal provided a much greater contribution to income than all the traditional industries.⁴⁴ But the overall prosperity of the island economy had hidden some of the inherent problems faced by individual industries. Most of the growth between 1971 and 1976 was in the service sector, while the traditional industries, the key elements of the non-oil economy, declined in real terms between 1971 and 1976. Estimates show that local output of fishing, fish processing and other manufacturing declined by £2.8 million in real terms in this five year period.⁴⁵

The purchasing pattern of the oil industry was such that it was concentrated in the service sector, and had almost no impact on local manufacturing. In fact oil might have been responsible in part for the real decline in manufacturing as it directed resources, especially labour, away. Ports, communications, hotel and catering, business and services, as well as other manufacturing were highly dependent on the oil industry.⁴⁶ Extensive stimulation of the services, by the oil industry in relation to other

44. McNicoll, I., 'Intertemporal Changes in a Rural Economy: A Case Study,' in Economic Development and Cultural Change, Vol.30, No.1, 1981. p.108-9, and McNicoll, I., (1985) p.4-6.

45. McNicoll, I., and Walker, G., The Shetland Economy 1976-77 Structure and Performance. (1979) p.5.

46. McNicoll, I., (1981) p.115-116, and McNicoll, I., (1985) p.29

areas of the economy, is characteristic of the 'mismatch' between the supply ability of indigenous industries and the requirements of the oil industry. This problem affects other rural areas in Scotland, where there was limited interaction between the oil and indigenous industries.⁴⁷ But this should not under-value the actual amount spent by the oil industry of £40.2 million, which was well above any other in Shetland.⁴⁸

AGRICULTURE.

Agriculture, despite some improvement in the 1960s, still remained geared to crofting. Most agricultural output in Shetland came from crofts in 1969, although there were some farming units in the more fertile parts of the isles. Livestock rearing, mainly in sheep continued to dominate over crop production. The advent of oil, unlike both wars, brought little stimulus to this industry.⁴⁹ There was not the same urgency for home production as had been the case under the restrictions, and shortages of war. Food consumed by construction workers, their diets, and expectations being rather different in camps, like most oil requirements, was imported from the mainland. There were no equivalent NAAFI contracts for crofters to provide local produce, and Shetland suppliers had minimal contact with

47. McNicoll, I., (1981) p.110-111.

48. McNicoll, I., (1985) p.29-32, and Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981) p.6-1. The traditional industries, agriculture, fish catching and processing, knitwear and visitors generated £19.2 million of household income in Shetland in 1982/83.

49. Donald, S., (1983) p.211, Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981) p.5-8 and 6-2, and Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland, Agricultural Statistics 1970, (1971)

the caterers at Sullom Voe.⁵⁰ The rise in permanent, or semi-permanent residents during the oil era probably increased the demand for food. But this, depending on consumers' tastes, was probably in processed foods imported from the mainland.⁵¹

Agriculture was labour-intensive and had a low profit margin. Costs outstripped earnings leaving the industry dependent on subsidies. In contrast, the oil terminal, ports and utilities were less labour intensive and had a much higher profit margin, making them a more lucrative alternative. Crofting had been combined with other forms of wage labour, usually in fish processing or manufacturing. But, because of the high wages offered by oil-related jobs, some crofters gave up pluralism of employment in favour of full-time wage labour. As a result, crofts became of secondary importance, and lay either unused, or just as rough grazing. Moreover, the availability of alternative employment encouraged young people to leave crofts, with work responsibilities, once again, placed in the hands of women and the elderly.⁵²

The loss of labour during the construction era had potentially serious long-term effects for agriculture, and

50. Moore, R., (ed) ([1]1981) p.19. McNicoll, I., (1986) p.11-13. Discussion with Mr A. Blackadder, Principal Industrial Strategist, Shetland Islands Council, on 6th May 1984.

51. Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study. (1981) p.6-2 and 6-3.

52. McNicoll, I., (1985) p.13-14, McDowall, S., and Begg, H., (1981) p.24. Oil-related employment, with its shift work, overtime and week-end work, was not particularly compatible with crofting. Moore, R., 'Northern Notes Towards a Sociology of Oil,' in R. Parsler and D. Shapiro, (ed) The Social Impact of Oil in Scotland: A Contribution to the Sociology of Oil. (1980) p.27, and Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study. (1981) p.5-8.

the other traditional industries. These were labour-intensive, with insufficient capital to invest in mechanisation. Production and markets suffered as a result of labour shortages, and it was feared that labour would be unwilling to return to these ailing industries in the post-construction era.⁵³

Oil, therefore had the potential to cause 'underdevelopment' in regions by weakening, if not destroying, the traditional industries on which the economy was to rely after the construction era.⁵⁴ But, the Shetland Islands Council had taken steps to avoid this. Provision had been made in initial negotiations for oil revenue to be set aside, and invested in the traditional industries when required. In the early 1980s the Council, as the construction phase came to an end, decided to provide financial assistance for the traditional industries. A ten-year Agricultural Plan was implemented which aimed to promote agricultural production, and revitalise rural communities. The scheme offered low interest loans, financed by the Charitable Trust. Although the amount of capital available was not enormous, it brought welcome relief and assistance. By 1989, 237 loans, worth £3.3 million, had been issued for land improvement projects, new buildings, buying livestock and machinery. The loans encouraged further financial support through grants from the H.I.D.B. and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Scotland, as well as from crofters' own money. In

53. McNicoll, I., 'Oil and the Shetland Economy,' in J. Button(ed) (1978) p.54.

54. Moore, R., (1980) p.27-28.

total the Plan has directed investments of over £7 m in local agriculture.⁵⁵

Agriculture, therefore, was not stimulated by the construction era. Rather construction acted as a drain on agricultural labour and hence production, reflecting the exploitative relationship between the traditional industry and the larger, more powerful multi-national oil companies. But this was reversed as artificial stimulation was ensured in the negotiating stages of oil, when provisions were made to provide capital for agriculture and the other traditional industries. Government aid, in the form of grants and subsidies, has also helped to sustain agriculture in Shetland.⁵⁶

THE FISHING INDUSTRY.

By 1969 fishing represented a diverse sector, with a modern fleet and shore processing facilities for various types of fish. Markets were extensive, with seafood shipped to Scandinavia, and frozen fish to the United States. By 1971, 14 fish processing factories operated, with plants on the islands of Yell, Out Skerries, Whalsay and Burra. Fish processing was also important in Scalloway, where three factories employed over 100 people, and exported 4,500 tons of frozen fish to the U.S.A. in 1971. In 1971, 967 people

55. [Anon] Sullom Voe Oil Terminal, (1982) p.1, and Graham, J., (1990) p.143.

56. The Shetland Economic Survey 1987/88, Report No.5: The Agricultural Sector 1987/88. (The Fraser of Allander Institute, March 1990)

worked in fish processing plants, with approximately 1,800 employed overall in the industry.⁵⁷

The exploration and subsequent development of a new natural resource in the North Sea caused 'conflict' between fishing and oil. Concern was expressed for the future of the fishing industry as a result. Debris represented the main problem at the start of oil developments. It was deposited from supply boats, pipe-laying barges and rigs, and damaged fishermen's nets and gear. In response, the government introduced strict controls on dumping, and provided compensation arrangements for damage to gear and vessels, as well as for lost fishing time.⁵⁸

In the case of Shetland, Goodlad argued that the debris problem had not been solved and became one of 'loss-of-access', whereby fishermen no longer went to affected grounds. The Fishing Federation tried to gain compensation for loss of access, but the oil industry argued that it already paid the Government, through licences, for the right to explore and produce oil in the North Sea. The Government was therefore liable for compensation payments. In reply, the Government felt it already gave extensive aid

57. Donald, S., (1983) p.211, Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.41-42, and Shetland In Statistics 1993, p.22, and Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.263.

58. Mackay, G. A., 'The Conflict Between the Oil and Fishing Industries in the North Sea,' in J. D. House(ed) (1986) p.32. Mackay argued that 'conflict' was probably too strong a term for the relationship between the fishing and oil industries, as the initial problems of debris and competition for harbour facilities were quickly resolved, although the loss of access to fishing grounds and the threat of pollution were recurrent concerns. S.A., CO3/10/4 Extracts from the Highland And Islands Development Board Special Report No.7, 'In Great Waters,' in the Minutes of the Meeting of the Development Committee of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 9th May 1972, and Mackay, G. A., (1986) p.30

to the fishing industry and payment in relation to oil was not necessary.⁵⁹

Shetland fishermen received one payment, in 1975, of £70,000 from the oil industry for loss of access. This sum, with hindsight, was entirely inadequate, and reflected the Shetland Fishermen's Association's lack of experience in negotiating with powerful groups. The S.F.A. improved its bargaining power, and received £25,000 compensation for loss of access, until the year 2000, of shell-fishing grounds opposite Sullom Voe; a site where B.P., the operating firm at Sullom Voe, planned to build a ballast water-treatment plant. B.P. also agreed to cover costs, including loss of markets, if shellfish become contaminated in the surrounding area.⁶⁰

Although difficult at the start, competition for shipping lanes, harbour space and marine services was minimal. Pollution caused less of a problem than first envisaged, though the threat of oil spills continued. Of greater significance, in line with both wars, was the loss of labour by fishing. Fish processing firms had both men and women 'poached' by the construction industry. Fish workers were paid on a piece rate basis, so when fish ran out so did pay. Oil-related employment offered an attractive alternative, with a higher secure basic wage. The numbers employed in fish processing dropped by over 50%, from 1,007 in 1972 to 480 by 1981, although rising to 516 by 1983. Between 1971 and 1981 six processing plants

59. House, J., (ed) (1986) p.3, and Mackay, G. A., (1986) p.29.

60. Goodlad, J., (1986) p.64-70.

closed. The ten remaining factories relied upon seasonal and part-time staff, with a high labour turnover.⁶¹

Fishing also lost labour during the construction era. In 1971, it employed 636 people, falling to 542 by 1981, a decline of 15%. The majority of fishermen remained loyal to their occupation because of the traditional nature of work and the family ties involved. Earnings were comparable with those offered by the oil industry, and the share-ownership of vessels made it difficult to leave, especially with high investment commitments.⁶²

Oil alone did not cause the decline in fishing and fish processing. The low price of fish, high cost of fuel, ban on herring fishing and further conservation measures, had adverse effects. Moreover, the loss of American markets for frozen fish hit the processing sector badly.⁶³ These problems coincided with oil developments, which not only 'poached' labour, but provided a valuable source of alternative employment. As a result, some communities where fishing had begun to decline benefited, in the short-term at least, from oil. Residents of Burra, where investment in fishing had temporarily stopped, commuted to work on the construction site at Sullom Voe. The bridge, linking Burra

61. House, J. D., (ed) (1986) p.3-4, Mackay, G. A., (1986) p.27, Hunter, G., 'Fisheries and Oil,' in J. Button(ed) (1978) p.103, Shetland In Statistics 1980, and Shetland In Statistics 1993, p.22, and Goodlad, J., (1986) p.71.

62. Shetland In Statistics 1993, p.22, and Blackadder, A., (1986) p.51, and Byron, R., 'Oil-Related Development in Burra Island, Shetland,' in J. D. House(ed) (1986) p.37.

63. Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981) p.5-4, and Blackadder, A., (1986) p.49-50.

with the mainland of Shetland, completed in 1971, made this possible.⁶⁴

The future of Burra became uncertain in the 1980s, after the completion of Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. It was feared people had obtained an urban outlook and preferences, and would not be prepared to return to fishing as a 'way of life'. But this was not the case, labour moved back to fish processing and staff shortages were no longer a problem. In contrast, fishermen began to move, because of the long-term problems faced by the industry, into permanent posts at the port of Sullom Voe, based upon their marine skills.⁶⁵

Oil developments had the potential to cause less obvious, but more intrinsic problems for the fishing industry. As oil became increasingly important in small economies, taking more than its share of the limited local resources of capital, expertise and entrepreneurship, it was feared that the fishing industry, like agriculture, would become of secondary importance. The decline in fishing, during the oil era, could cause permanent competitive loss in relation to other fishing economies, and in turn to cause a decline in the communities,

64. McNicoll argued that the loss of labour by fish processing was unavoidable, and in the short-term interests of the industry. But that the long-term effects would be more serious. McNicoll, I., (1978) p.54, and Byron, R., (1986) p.35-37.

65. House, J. D., (ed) (1986) p.2, Goodlad, J., (1986) p.71. The numbers employed in fish processing never reached pre-oil levels, and in 1992 stood at 583. Shetland In Statistics 1993, p.22, and Blackadder, A., (1986) p.51. The numbers employed in fish capture fell from 542 to 485 between 1981 and 1991. Shetland In Statistics 1993, p.22..

especially as oil was unlikely to offer a long-term replacement economy.⁶⁶

Conditions such as these would have been disastrous because the fishing industry, both in terms of capture and processing, was valuable to the Shetland economy. Fish catching and processing had a higher multiplier effect, that is the total amount of output, income or employment accruing to the economy of one unit of fishing, than oil. This is because the oil industry, as has been shown, is much less integrated into the local economy, and only generated small amounts of local output per unit of expenditure. The traditional industries of agriculture and fishing were much more 'efficient' generators of regional income.⁶⁷

Like agriculture, oil revenue was available to help the fishing industry. The SIC, once again as construction drew to a close, gave priority to the fish and fish processing industries. In the space of four years loans and loan guarantees were given to over twenty fishing boat projects allowing them to buy new and second hand vessels. Capital investment was made available for fish processing, and money was spent in marketing, as well as in research, to help develop new products. Charitable Trust money has been used to buy three fish factories closed down in the 1970s. One has been reopened for processing fish, and most of the other operational factories are expanding. But a change in legislation has meant the Charitable Trust can no

66. House, J. D., (ed) (1986) p.4-5, and Moore, R., (1980) p.27-28.

67. McNicoll, I., (1986) p.11-13, and Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981) p.6-2.

longer invest directly in fishing or the knitwear industry. The Trust is still able to provide indirect assistance mainly in the form of Hire Purchase finance, and has helped to promote the North Atlantic Fisheries College as well as provide aid with its running costs.⁶⁸

Fishing remained important in the post-construction economy. Its value has been increased by the emergence of a major activity, fish farming, mainly for salmon. The development of this industry has been aided by the special powers given to the island council under the 1974 Z.C.C. Act. It allowed the council to control the allocation of licences within a three mile radius of the shore, with preference given to local residents. The fishing industry was the largest non-oil generator of activity in Shetland in 1987/88, and the real contribution of fisheries increased between 1982/83 and 1987/88, mainly because of the emergence of fish farming.⁶⁹

The impact of oil upon fishing was, therefore, very different from that of both World Wars. The construction era did not directly affect the daily work patterns of those involved in the industry. It did not place formal restriction upon fish capture, nor stop fish processing, as was the case during both wars. Prices were not restricted, and oil did not bring additional demand in response to shortages. Fishing was not an especially lucrative option,

68. Blackadder, A., (1986) p.60-61, and Shetland Islands Council Charitable Trust Annual Report for the Year ended 31st March, 1993 p.3.

69. Graham, J., (1990) p.145., and The Shetland Economic Survey 1987/88 Report No.3: The Fisheries Sector 1987/88. (The Fraser Allander Institute, March 1990)

as had been the case for the small numbers who engaged in it. Oil developments were responsible for certain restrictions on fishing ground, but the effects are difficult to quantify.⁷⁰ The construction phase did cause shortages of labour, but this came at a time when the industry was already in crisis, further minimising its effects. Oil-related construction, therefore, brought neither the benefits nor the adverse effects of war.

THE KNITWEAR INDUSTRY.

The knitwear industry underwent a period of growth in the late 1960s and early 1970s, based upon the specialised nature of products. But the industry continued to be small-scale, labour intensive and less efficient than its competitors. Knitwear firms were not manufacturers in the true sense, rather they distributed and collected goods from domestic producers. Only a small amount of factory activity was involved in the product before despatch, and hand-made garments, although expensive, still had a place in the luxury market. Moreover, hand framed Shetland pullovers had become established as a 'fashion basic' at that time.⁷¹

Oil, as was the case for the other traditional industries, offered lucrative employment for those working in knitwear. Women, who had been employed as out workers by the knitwear manufacturers, took jobs at Sullom Voe, rather than stay at home knitting for little return. This was

70. House, J. D., (ed) (1986) p.3.

71. Tulloch, A. T. H., (c.1972)

similar to the Second World War, when wage labour became available in NAAFI canteens. Although extremely difficult to calculate, estimates showed that the number of full-time employees in knitwear fell from 234 in 1971, to 155 by 1977, and further to 109 by 1983, whereas the number of home knitters dropped from 2,268 in 1971 to 1,200 by 1981.⁷²

Loss of labour has been cited as the main reason for the decline of the knitwear industry in the 1970s.⁷³ Three knitwear factories were closed in the Lerwick area by 1977, and one firm in the North mainland. In addition, firms complained of a drop in the output of home knitters. This was linked to improved employment opportunities, which enabled women to work outwith the home and gave them little spare time for domestic knitting. Moreover, there was less necessity to knit, as oil-related incomes were sufficient to maintain the household. But the lack of reliable supplies from out-workers jeopardised orders and affected future markets.⁷⁴

Oil was not the sole contributor to the decline of knitting. Like fishing, other factors were at work, such as a sudden drop in overseas markets, and increased foreign

72. S.A., CO3/10/6 Minutes of the Meeting of the Development Committee of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 20th June, 1974, Schei, L. K., and Moberg, G., (1988) p.160-161, and Shetland In Statistics 1993. p.27.

73. Between 1971 and 1976 activity in the industry fell by 30%, and knitwear created £788,000 less real output, £390,000 less real income and 290 fewer full-time equivalent jobs in 1976 than it had in 1971. Development Department, SIC. McNicoll, I., The Knitwear Industry in Shetland. Report to the Shetland Island Council, November 1979. p.8-9.

74. Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study. (1981) p.5-2.

competition.⁷⁵ Textile firms were forced to release labour during such downturns, and found it difficult, in a oil construction economy, to attract a work force when market conditions improved. Lewis and McNicoll saw this as having a 'ratchet' effect on firms, because after each downturn, it became increasingly difficult to attract labour. An ever reduced work force would then constrain expansion, and reduce the maximum boom conditions. This would continue until firms were no longer able to compete.⁷⁶ In Shetland, unlike fish processing, women who had left the knitwear industry, and taken up oil-related jobs, were reluctant to return and work for hosiery merchants. Instead, they set up knitwear businesses, either at home, or in small factories. Not all survived, as the industry was vulnerable to international market fluctuations.⁷⁷

Oil brought little stimulus to the knitwear industry, although the influx of 'strangers' did affect the informal markets for knitwear.⁷⁸ Oil workers, like servicemen, provided a captive and lucrative market, with direct exchange between knitter and buyer. There was no disruption to the normal supply of clothing, which had stimulated demand for knitwear during war. Rather garments were

75. Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study. (1981) p.5-1 to 5-2. There was a sudden drop, after 1973, in the French market for Shetland knitwear. In addition, developing countries, especially the Far East, increased the production of poorer quality, but highly competitive garments in the 1970s.

76. Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study. (1981) p.5-1 to 5-2.

77. 'Shetland's Employment Prospects,' in Shetland Life, No.6 1981 p.14-15, and Discussion with Mr A. Blackadder, Principal Industrial Strategist, Shetland Island Council, on 6th May 1984, and Shetland In Statistics 1993, p.27.

78. Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study. (1981) p.6-2.

'unique', with a reputation as luxury items. The extent of trade brought by oil workers is very difficult to quantify, as transactions took place on an ad hoc and informal basis. But it appears to have brought reasonable returns for those involved.

Like the other traditional activities, oil revenue was invested in the knitwear industry in the post-construction era. The Charitable Trust helped to fund marketing for the knitwear industry, and the council and H.I.D.B. provided support to travel to international trade fairs helping the 'Shetland' name to reach international prominence. As a result, the real output of the knitwear industry grew between 1982/83 and 1987/88 as a function of rising demand, and it continued to be a reasonably important source of non-oil activity in the economy.⁷⁹ As already noted, the Charitable Trust no longer provides direct assistance to the knitwear industry, though it does provide Hire Purchase finance and continues to own a company involved in promoting trademarks for Shetland products.⁸⁰

TOURISM.

Tourism, although small-scale, was potentially an important growth area, but oil had adverse effects on it. Oil-related personnel brought unprecedented, all-year-round

79. Graham, J., (1990) p.143, and The Shetland Economic Survey 1987/88. Report No.6: The Knitwear Industry 1987/88. (The Fraser of Allander Institute, March 1990). Knitwear was the least integrated of the three traditional industries in the economy. Like oil, it imported a large proportion of its requirements and exported the final product. This reduced the multiplier effect of this sector upon the economy.

80. Shetland Islands Council Charitable Trust Annual Report for the Year ended 31st March, 1993.

demand for accommodation, which caused prices to increase. The tourist industry was confronted with high prices and insufficient accommodation. In fact, demand for beds in Shetland hotels was such that reservations from tourists were not taken. Shortages of labour, created by oil, intensified the problems of lack of accommodation. Staff went to work at the oil camps as domestics, because wages were better than hoteliers were willing, or able to pay. The hotel industry overcame the shortage of labour problem by using imported labour, as well as more part-time staff.⁸¹

Moreover oil threatened to damage the environment and spoil the scenic attraction of Shetland. This was especially serious as tourism was expected to be of growing importance for the post-oil era. But as demand for accommodation from the oil industry declined, local hotels were forced to compete for tourist trade, and try to improve the supposedly 'unpleasant' image Shetland had acquired with oil. Like the traditional industries, tourism was given oil-related support. Funding was provided to advertise and promote Shetland at international trade fairs.⁸²

OTHER OIL-RELATED ACTIVITY.

Oil-related construction, like both wars, brought stimulus to local firms. But oil generated less activity in

81. Blackadder, G. A., and Baster, J., (1992) p.175, Wills, J., (1991) p.65, McNicoll, I., (1978) p.54-55, and Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981) p.7-1.

82. McNicoll, I., (1978) p.54-55, Blackadder, A., (1986) p.52-53, and Graham, J., (1990) p.143.

the Shetland economy than may have been expected. This can be attributed to two factors. Firstly, the cost of production in Shetland was such that pre-fabricated equipment had to be imported. Initially, it had been decided by the companies to undertake 30 per cent of the work on the British mainland and 70 per cent in Shetland. It soon became a fifty-fifty divide, and by 1978 three-quarters of the construction work was undertaken outside Shetland. Weather delays, the problems and cost of accommodation, feeding and transport of workers, the cost of back-up services, aircraft and other building expenses, meant that for every pound spent on a mainland worker in a prefabrication yard, six pounds had to be spent for the same results in Shetland. Prefabrication minimised the work force and hence the time and cost of construction, for it was estimated that the construction of Sullom Voe Oil Terminal would have taken fourteen years not seven, if prefabrication had not been introduced. It also took the pressure off an already overstretched Shetland economy, and provided jobs in the heavy industrial regions of Britain, affected by economic recession.⁸³

Secondly, as has been shown, the demands of the oil industry did not match the goods and services provided in local areas. The industrial structures of rural locations were not geared to the specialised requirements of the oil industry, and instead used natural resources to produce more basic products. The oil industry was forced to seek

83. Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.70 and 82, and Wills, J., (1991) p.9, and ST, 15 May 1981, 'Sullom Voe 1981. A Shetland Times Special Colour Report.' p.13-14, and Sullom Voe Oil Terminal, (Scalloway 1982) p.5.

its specialised needs elsewhere, and only bought standard goods and services in local areas, such as quarrying materials, basic manufacturing, utilities and services.⁸⁴

Large quarries were established in Shetland, as sand and gravel became a lucrative endeavour. A Lerwick engineering firm, Norscot Ltd, took over the construction of the flare stack at Sullom Voe after a manufacturer firm from the mainland sent up defective goods.⁸⁵ Shipping, car and coach hire, hotels, restaurants and shops received considerable stimulus, and in many of these service industries the output generated by oil was a large proportion of the total output. For example, in 1976, 23 percent of total transport output was oil-generated, and 56 percent of the output of all services arose from oil. But, because a high proportion of wealth created by oil in Shetland was exported, such as wages paid to migrant labour, additional demand on the local economy was reduced. Moreover demand made by the oil industry was mainly for existing goods and services, so that local suppliers did not have to introduce new products or production processes.⁸⁶

Lack of communication further reduced business between the indigenous industries and oil. But McNicoll showed that the percentage of supply base purchases made in Shetland increased from 15 percent in 1974 to 55 percent in 1976.

84. McNicoll, I., (1986) p.19.

85. *ST*, 15 May 1981, 'Sullom Voe 1981. A Shetland Times Special Colour Report.' p.13-14, and Wills, J., (1991) p.73.

86. McNicoll, I., (1986) p.13-14, and Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981) p.6-1, p.7-1 to 7-3, Moore, R., (ed) (1981) p.19, and McNicoll, I., (1981) p.116.

This has been attributed to increased liaison between the oil and local industries, and because Shetland firms have adapted to the requirements of the oil industry.⁸⁷ The Council tried to get oil companies to buy their goods locally, and to ensure oil maintenance contracts went to local firms.⁸⁸ A very minor attempt was made through a two-day symposium held in Lerwick in 1981, which brought representatives of the oil industry and Shetland firms together in a bid to develop business links between the two groups.⁸⁹

Therefore, oil made less of a contribution to the economy, because of the high proportion of imports, exports and 'leakage' of money from the economy. But, like the Second World War, oil-related activity encouraged extensive investment in the infrastructure. Roads and airports were improved, along with harbour facilities, electrical services, telephone networks, broadcasting links, industrial sites, schools, and recreation. Health centres and houses were built and other facilities for the community provided. The local authority was responsible for the cost of these improvements, and acquired a debt burden of £150 million, £60 million of which was underwritten by the oil industry. But, as Wills argues, 'if oil leaves

87. McNicoll, I., (1986) p.19-20.

88. Blackadder, A., (1986) p.48-49. The Development Officer expressed concern in April 1972, that Shetland firms should be involved in the oil-related industry. S.A., CO3/10/4 Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 13th April, 1972.

89. Zetland County Library, Pamphlet box No. 53, item No.8. Shetland Island Council Proceedings of the Symposium, 'Business Opportunities in the Oil Industry,' held in the Town Hall, Lerwick, 23rd and 24th June, 1981. (Research and Development Department, SIC July 1982).

nothing else, it will have provided an infrastructure from which to develop the traditional industries, the long-term foundations of the island economy.⁹⁰

Oil not only improved the infrastructure, but, like the Second World War, aided employment opportunities. Young people, for the first time, used their technical skills and education to get jobs in Shetland.⁹¹ In February 1972 it was suggested that opportunities created by oil should be advertised amongst seamen who wished to return home, and to Shetlanders living on the mainland. By 1974 queries from Shetlanders were received regularly, but lack of housing acted as the greatest constraint to return migration. However, some exiles were able to return from the mainland, and 'Educating for Export' was less of a problem.⁹² John Graham, the Headmaster at the Anderson High School, reported that almost 50% of Shetlanders who went to university were returning to the isles by the late 1970s, compared with the previous figure of 5 to 10%. But he expressed concern at the nature of employment, as the majority of skilled jobs went to experienced oil workers. Islanders, like the Second World War, had a choice of employer and their labour was in demand. The status of ordinary workers improved as a result, and individuals were no longer forced to work in the evenings to earn sufficient

90. Nicolson, J. R., (1977) p.173-185, Blackadder, A., (1990) p.49, [Anon] Sullom Voe Oil Terminal, (Scalloway 1982) p.1, and Wills, J., (1978) p.37.

91. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.302-305, Wills, J., (1978) p.30-31.

92. S.A., C)3/10/4 Minutes of a Meeting of the Development Committee of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 23rd of February 1972, and CO3/10/6 Minutes of a Meeting of the Development Committee of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 20th June 1974. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.302-305, and Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.194.

money for subsistence.⁹³ Like World War Two, oil was viewed as,

the greatest economic emancipation of the Shetlanders since they were freed from debt bondage to their landlords by the Crofters Act of the 1880s.⁹⁴

The higher wage-rates and opportunity to work overtime brought improved earnings. But, as already noted, the long hours and inflexibility of work patterns meant many Shetlanders were unable to continue their dual role as crofters and wage labourers. They abandoned crofts and worked in oil-related employment for the opportunity to earn high wages was short-term, as had been the case during the Second World War. For some people, these earnings were used to improve private houses, buy consumer durables, provide capital for small businesses, or invest in agricultural improvements.⁹⁵

In 1976/77 income per head of population in Shetland was £1,631 p.a., while the U.K. average stood at £2,009. In 1971 Shetland's income per head had been 69% of the U.K. figure, and increased to 81% by 1976.⁹⁶ In 1982/83 £102 million total income was paid to Shetland residents, which represented £4,376 per head. The equivalent figures for the UK and Scotland were £4,223, and £4,042, respectively. But retail prices were higher in Shetland which made the real

93. Mckie, R., 'Shetland Counts the Social Cost of the Oil Invasion,' in The Times Higher Educational Supplement, 7 July 1978 p.9, Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.306, and Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.194-196.

94. Wills, J., (1991) p.xvi.

95. The Times, 6th April 1978 p.4, and Wills, J., (1978) p.30-31 and p.36.

96. McNicoll, I., and Walker, G., (1979) p.10.

spending power of the average Shetland resident on a par with the UK.⁹⁷

In 1987/88 the total household income in Shetland was £143.6 million, or £6,269 per head. The U.K. per capita income for this year was £6,541, which suggests that Shetlanders received similar incomes to the rest of the U.K. But, once again, when retail prices are taken into consideration, Shetland's population had less purchasing capacity and hence a lower standard of living than that of the U.K. The average cost of living index in Shetland in June 1987 was 112 compared with 100 for Aberdeen, itself a relatively high-cost area.⁹⁸

Therefore, oil, like the Second World War, improved wages and incomes in Shetland. But, because incomes had been so low in relation to the U.K. average, oil simply removed the differential and brought Shetland in line with the nation. These figures, like all averages, hide the fact that not everyone, especially those in non-oil related jobs, benefited from the higher incomes in Shetland. The oil industry arrived, with its high wage incentives, at a time when there was a national wage freeze, and existing firms were not legally allowed to raise wages in response to the oil industry.⁹⁹ Shetland Island Council workers were

97. McNicoll, I., (1985) p.4-5.

98. The Shetland Economic Survey 1987/88, Report No.2: Shetland Regional Accounts 1987/88. (Fraser of Allander Institute, March 1990) p.4-5.

99. Hunt, D., 'The Sociology of Development: Its Relevance to Aberdeen,' in R. Parsler and D. Shapiro(ed) (1980) p.107, and MacKay, G. A., and Moir, A. C., North Sea Oil and the Aberdeen Economy. (c.1980) p.50-51 and p.70-72. One study showed that higher oil-related incomes placed upward pressure upon certain non-oil wages levels, and brought levels in line with those of the nation. McDowall, S., and Begg, H., (1981) p.25.

also affected, which made it difficult for non-oil related employees to retain a labour force.¹⁰⁰

CONCLUSION.

The demands brought by oil for labour caused the work force, and hence the population to grow. This was in contrast to both World Wars, when military circumstances and post-war economic conditions caused population numbers to drop. The long-term trend of population decline was finally arrested. In 1981, the population was higher (22,768) than in 1971 (17,327), and continuing to rise. These figures are for permanent residents, and do not include the temporary construction workers.¹⁰¹ The total number of employees rose from 4,985 in 1971 to 9,123 by 1981, and, once again, temporary construction workers were not included in these figures. The additional work force was made up of a combination of semi-permanent incomers, returning Shetlanders, and a growth in employment amongst Shetland women.

The greatest expansion took place in services and construction, while manufacturing declined. These industries grew, because of the requirements of oil-related construction, in a distorted way in relation to the other industries. A substantial sum of the extra jobs were taken up by local people, which was illustrated in the higher activity rate in 1981 compared with 1971, especially for women, and the lower unemployment rate until 1981. The 30%

100. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.310-313.

101. Census Returns for 1971 and 1981, and Registrar General's estimates published in Shetland In Statistics 1989.

drop in numbers employed by manufacturing was mainly from in fish processing and knitwear, as well as a degree of decline in agriculture. Fishing experienced only a small decline with the majority of its work force categorised as self-employed.¹⁰²

Oil, and especially oil-related construction, was important to Shetland. It altered the configuration of the island economy, which had been dominated by a combination of the traditional industries for centuries.¹⁰³ Shetland in 1987/88 was still highly dependent on oil, despite a decline in real 'output' for this sector since 1982. Agriculture, fishing and fish processing, and knitwear generated £29.24 million of income for local households, but this accounted for only 20.4% of the total island income.¹⁰⁴ The assumption, among Councillors and others, was that the future of the post-oil economy depended, once again, upon the traditional industries, but with the hope that oil revenue would provide sufficient capital, through the Charitable Trust, to put them on a more secure footing. Arguably, there was a hidden flaw in this approach, for there was often an implicit belief that there was a traditional way of life, to which the islands should ensure a return after the oil boom. But, as will be seen in the next chapter, the whole concept of a 'traditional way of life,' is dubious. Secondly, was it really desirable, or

102. Blackadder, A., (1990) p.46 and 52, Begg, H. and McDowall S. (1981) p.22-25, and McNicoll, I., (1986) p.15 and 21.

103. McNicoll, I., (1985) p.19-30.

104. The Shetland Economic Survey 1987/88, Report No.2: Shetland Regional Accounts 1987/88. (Fraser of Allander Institute, March 1990.) p.16-17.

possible to return in any case as the way of life was changing as time and the international economy moved on?

Therefore, the overall scale of oil-related activity was more extensive than either war, although the construction era showed similarities to the Second World War. The physical invasion of oil met with greater opposition than either war, and was carefully planned for under the assumption that oil activity, like war, would come to an end. The social impact of oil-related activity also generated concern, and it is to this the focus now turns.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF NORTH SEA OIL: THE CONSTRUCTION ERA

Unlike the two previous shocks of this century, the social impact of North Sea Oil attracted considerable interest. Wartime intervention had been based on military considerations with economic and social spin offs, whereas the oil boom was planned to a much greater degree with social consequences in mind. As a result, the social impact of oil was given attention in the planning stages; in contrast to war where military victory had been paramount. Moreover, because oil was geographically specific, unlike war which engulfed the whole country, Shetland became the focus of both national and international concern.

REACTION TO THE ADVENT OF NORTH SEA OIL.

The initial reaction of Shetlanders to oil ranged from excitement to anxiety. As in war, attitudes were influenced by the personal experience of particular groups. People who had lived through the depression and depopulation of previous decades believed oil should be developed at almost any cost. They welcomed economic prosperity, but were still concerned by changing traditions, and the potential effects of oil upon the 'way of life'.¹ Manual workers favoured oil as it brought employment and improved incomes. Local business personnel saw oil as a valuable alternative to the traditional industries. But a boom-bust situation was

1. Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.69 and p.81-82, Wills, J., (1991) p.27, Wills, J., (1978) p.33, and Mageean, D., (1979) p.164.

envisaged by some, whereby the traditional industries would be left in a depleted state to rebuild the economy after the oil boom ended. Professional workers were wary, as were incomers who had come to Shetland to escape industrial development. Some crofters feared losing the quiet pace of life, and fishermen felt their livelihoods were under threat.²

Moreover, oil made people aware of environmental issues, which coincided with the international growth of the conservation movement.³ Environmentalists and conservation groups, both internally and externally, feared loss of access to parts of Shetland's coastline. Oil spills, and subsequent pollution became a constant threat, with fish and colonies of birds most at risk.⁴ Members of the Shetland bird club expressed their concern, and those interested in wildlife established an 'anti-oil alliance'. A branch of Friends of the Earth was set up in Shetland which, 'prophesied wholesale pollution, leading to the end of Shetland civilisation as we knew it...'⁵ Mr J. K. Farquharson, a representative for the Highlands And Islands Development Board, expressed concern for pollution, at a meeting of the Development Committee of the Zetland County

2. Harris, A., Lloyd, G. M., and Newlands, D. A., (1988) p.77.

3. Environmental concerns were highlighted by television and the national press. Wills, J., (1991) p.45, and Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.112 and 136-137, and Hunter, F., 'The Visual Impact,' in Button, J., (ed) (1978) p.90-91.

4. Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.79, p.126-127 and p.134, and Fenwick, J. M., (1981) p.232.

5. Kinnear, P., 'Birds and Oil,' in J. Button(ed) (1978) p.92-98, and Wills, J., (1991) p.44-45.

Council, though he was convinced oil companies would take the necessary safety precautions.⁶

The County Council regarded oil developments as presenting both exciting possibilities and potential dangers. The Council aimed to encourage and assist developments, which would, in turn, broaden the base of the islands' economy. But the Council felt oil needed Shetland more than Shetland needed oil, so development would be on its own terms.⁷ This included protecting the community and environment.⁸

The County Council, recognising that it may be in the national interest that Shetland be used for oil-installations and having sought to devise policies and to provide machinery which recognise the national interest while protecting those of the Shetland community, will continue to have regard for the national interest but will give no encouragement to developments and will oppose proposals where these developments or proposals put Shetland at unnecessary risk or fail to provide available safe-guards and will at no time put commercial or industrial interests before the interests of the Shetland community.⁹

Furthermore,

the Government must realise that Shetland is a small county and that there was a great risk of violent disruption to the present way of life ... unless everything was planned.¹⁰

Three groups also concerned with the speed and nature of oil developments were the Shetland Civic Society, the Shetland Council for Social Services and the Shetland Fishermen's Association. The Shetland Civic Society was

6. S.A., CO3/10/4 Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 23rd February 1972.

7. ST, 25th February 1972 p.4.

8. Fenwick, J. M., (1981) p.227.

9. S.A., CO3/1/42 Minutes of the Adjourned General Meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 18th September 1973.

10. S.A., CO3/1/42 Minutes of a Special Meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 18th December 1973.

involved in planning, and the construction of buildings. It was one of the most active groups, and gained new life as a result of the threat of large-scale oil developments. The Shetland Council for Social Services, originally the Shetland Development Council, was interested in social issues.¹¹ The Chairman feared oil would cause, 'the eradication of unique ecology and way of life,' in Shetland.¹²

The Shetland Council of Social Services, previously the Development Council, published two broadsheets in 1973 entitled Shetland Lookout. The sheets were printed because, .. in Shetland in 1973 all sense and many fear what lies before us - we know that a great proportion of the industrial and financial power of the Western World stands poised to descend on our slender island community to reap the harvest of North Sea oil. There is no escape. Almost everyone in Shetland agrees - there must be no necessary harm - either to our economy or the type of society we have been privileged to enjoy. WE REALISE THAT IT IS NOW, RIGHT AT THE BEGINNING, IN THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE THAT THE GREATEST DANGER LIES. It is with this awareness that we go to press.¹³

The sheet emphasised that measures were required from the Minister of State for the Scottish Office, Lord Polworth, to

initiate now an investigation, on crash programme lines of the changes in local life style, the pressures on workmen living in primal conditions with possibly no outlets except alcohol. Tell the nation the steps you have taken to build up the police force - what plans you have for amenities for

11. The Shetland Civic Society was set up in 1968. S.A., Smith B., 'From Bourgeois Island,' in B. Smith, Gesamtausgabe, (c.1971-1992) p.10. Davies, D., 'Public and Not-So-Public Relations,' in J. Button(ed) (1978) p.51-52, and Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.75-76, and p.81.

12. The Shetland Council of Social Services fears for the way of life were also conveyed in ST, 14th June 1974. p.6.

13. S.A., D11/31 Shetland Lookout, A Shetland Council of Social Services Publication, No.1 October 1973.

the workers - how you propose to remedy the inadequacy of the Planning Laws in this last respect.¹⁴

The scale and pace of oil developments, therefore, generated concern for Shetland's future. Drastic social change was predicted, as the island community would be unable to absorb the impact of this huge invasion without substantial alterations in its character.¹⁵ A local publication stated that, 'the whole quality of life in these islands could be at stake. And that one social factor is perhaps the most essential for the survival of this or any other community.'¹⁶ Furthermore, 'the main issue in these islands, however, was how to protect a fragile social and economic structure from the explosive impact of oil, while deriving as much benefit as possible for the people.'¹⁷ A Shetlander not living in the isles predicted that, 'there will be fortunes made but very few of them by the indigenes. There is not a hope in hell of preserving the old way of life. Life is likely to become expensive, brutish and dirty.'¹⁸

The influx of workers was seen as the greatest threat to the 'way of life'. Islanders were 'terrified' Shetland would be 'swamped' by incomers.¹⁹ A local writer expressed the view of some Shetlanders who felt they,

might be outnumbered eventually and people with different values would dictate the way of life. In their wake would

14. S.A., D11/31 Shetland Lookout, A Shetland Council of Social Services Publication, No.1 October 1973.

15. Graham, J., (1990) p.141.

16. New Shetlander, No.99, 1972. p.5.

17. Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.192.

18. S.A., D11/31 Shetland Lookout, A Shetland Council Of Social Services Publication, No.1 October 1973.

19. Blackadder, G. A., and Baster, J., (1992) p.176, and The Times, 18th August 1972 p.11.

come all the ills that then plagued larger societies- drug-taking, vandalism, theft and even murder. A kind of klondyke situation would arise, and children would not be able to play outside without causing parental concern. Pressure on the existing services would cause a decline in medical services and a lowering of the standard of education. Even social functions would have to come to an end because village halls would be unable to cope.²⁰

It was feared that the majority of children in school classes would not be native speakers, and that the dialect would decline.²¹

The idea was that the sudden influx of large numbers of strangers must be destructive of local speech and would be a threat to traditional music and do-it-yourself entertainment and an attack on 'traditional' patterns of life in general. The 'soothmothers'- those who had come in to Shetland through the South Mouth of Lerwick Harbour- were about to descend like a plague of locusts.²²

EXTERNAL INTEREST.

The social impact of oil on Shetland also generated considerable external concern. It was noted that the parish of Delting, where Sullom Voe was situated had been,

studied by surveyors, engineers, conservationists, sociologists, newspaper and television reporters, all ranks and kinds of officialdom, and curious visitors from all parts of the globe who wished to see 'the effects of oil developments'.²³

Researchers came from mainland Britain, Northern Ireland, and America.²⁴ Government officials, private consultants and the national press reported on Shetland. One researcher noted that,

20. Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.79.

21. Wills, J., (1991) p.36, and Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.37.

22. Wills, J., (1991) p.33-34.

23. Johnson, L. M., 'The Parish of Delting,' in J. R. Coull(ed) (1985) p.33.

24. Moore, R., and Ardern, R., North of Scotland Register of Research in the Social Sciences. (1979), Moore, R., International Register of Research on the Social Impact of Offshore Development. (1979), Cohen, A., (1978) p.129-130, and Varwell, A., (c.1981) p.56.

the seventies saw a rapid increase of national interest in the Shetlands, for the islands were sinking under the weight of television crews and journalists, not to mention social anthropologists and sociologists.²⁵

A writer reminisced on his own experiences:

It was 1972. Everyone who could handle a typewriter was rushing out an instant book on North Sea Oil. Me too. When the London publisher Tom Stacey asked me to write 'Shetland's oil,' with my friend and university colleague, Ron MacKay, I was flattered, enthusiastic and, it must be admitted, eager to get my hands on some of Mr Stacey's cash.²⁶

Furthermore, an American anthropologist noted that,

After arriving in Britain in February 1977, I soon discovered that numerous scholars and students before me had besieged Shetland, hoping to study the impact of oil. There was even a joke circulating among British academics that one met more social scientists on the ferry to and from Shetland than islanders themselves.²⁷

Academic interest was such that the Social Science Research Council set up a special North Sea Oil Panel in 1975, to promote research into the social, economic and political impact of North Sea Oil developments on Scotland. One of the main areas of research was 'the way of life,' something referred to as under threat from oil.²⁸ The Social Science Research Council stated in 1975 that,

the scale of developments together with their practical and theoretical implications and the expressed fears concerning the erosion of the quality and the character of the Shetland way-of-life mean that the area merits research
....²⁹

25. Smith, R. J., (1987) p.4.

26. Wills, J., (1991) p.xiii.

27. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.22-23.

28. Varwell, A., (c.1981). The following publications developed from a series of five seminars held in Edinburgh. Jackson, A., (ed) Way of Life: Integration and Immigration, (c.1982) - No reference to Shetland. Jackson, A., (ed) Way of Life: Dominant Ideologies and Local Communities, (c.1982).

29. Social Science Research Council, 1975, Appendix B paragraph 2.2.

The first panel paper was a project funded by the Shetland Island Council, the Scottish Development Department and the North Sea Oil Panel, on the social impact of oil upon Dunrossness, a district in Shetland.³⁰ The panel also funded a follow-up study on an island community in Shetland.³¹ Other published work, although not specifically on Shetland, made reference to the experience of the isles.³²

Academic work on the impact of oil was not restricted to the North Sea Oil Panel.³³ The Institute of Sparsely Populated Areas at Aberdeen University published material on Shetland.³⁴ In the 1960s,

because change was gradual and indigenous it did not arouse the fear and anxiety of the people. Except for a few it was not seen as weakening the island's culture, indeed, if anything, having attained prosperity under her own steam Shetland was proud of its achievement. Oil however as a large, exogenous force threatening to bring disruption and massive change in its wake was seen as an immediate threat to the 'way of life'.³⁵

30. Byron, R., and MacFarlane, G., (c.1980), MacFarlane, G., (c.1982) and McFarlane, G., 'Shetlanders and Incomers: Change, Conflict and Emphasis in Social Perspectives,' in L. Holy and M. Stuchklik(ed) The Structure of Folk Models. (1981). Also Carter, I., (c.1982), which critically analyses the methodology used by Byron and MacFarlane in relation to two other studies.

31. Byron, R., (c.1981), and Byron, R., (1986).

32. A Planning Exchange Review of studies of the social impact of large-scale industrial developments. Scott, A., The Social Impact of Large-Scale Industrial Developments. (c.1982), Varwell, A., (c.1981), and MacKay, G. A., and Moir, A. C., (c.1980).

33. It included work by established academics such as A. Cohen, at the Sociology Department at Manchester University, now a Professor of anthropology at Edinburgh. Cohen, A. P., (1978), and a Social Scientist wrote about the Shetland Way Of Life in Withey, S. B., 'Values and Social Change,' in OECD Manpower and Social Affairs Committee: Working Party on the Social Indicators: 2: Subjective Elements of Well-Being, and MacKay, D. I., and MacKay, G. A., (1975), a general text which refers to Shetland.

34. Mageean, D., (1979), and Mackay, G. A., (1980).

35. Mageen, D., (1979). p.166.

Staff at Robert Gordon Institute of Technology referred to Shetland in their work, and specialised studies used it as an area for comparison.³⁶ Research students from various institutions wrote about Shetland.³⁷

Further work was undertaken by those associated with non-academic institutions.³⁸ The Church of Scotland commissioned a study into the impact of oil on Scotland.

The study's remit was,

to consider urgently whether significant damage to the way of life and natural environment of the North of Scotland may be caused by oil exploitation; to investigate whether overall planning safeguards are adequate.³⁹

The press also showed considerable interest in oil developments in Shetland, and Letters to the Editor in The Times reflected the concerns of people living elsewhere.⁴⁰

The Wall Street Journal wrote,

36. Grieco, M., 'Oil and the Council. A Study of the Changing Role of the Local Authority.' in The New Shetlander, No. 118-121, 1977-1978, and Grieco, M., (1980). Grieco was at the School of Business Management Studies, Robert Gordon's Institute of Technology, Aberdeen, then moved on to Nuffield College, Oxford. Also Hunt, D., (Hants 1980). Housing Research Unit, School of Architecture, University College Dublin - Geoghegan, P. B., (1982).

37. Beadly, A., Grainger, C., and Frisch, R., (1974), Hamilton, A., (1978), MacKay, H., (1975), and an American anthropologist Renwanz, M. E., (1981).

38. Fenwick, J. M., (1981), and (1978). J. Fenwick was attached to the British National Oil Corporation, Glasgow.

39. Francis, J., and Swan, N., (1973).

40. 'Oil Brings Crisis of Conscience for Shetland,' in The Times, 25th April 1973 p.1, 'Major New Oil Find off Shetland,' The Glasgow Herald, 8th August 1972 p.8, Perrott, R., 'Shetland: A Klondike Among the Crofts,' in The Sunday Times Magazine, 8th October 1978 p.64-72, 'Shetland Island: Assessment of Improvement as a Result of Oil Boom,' in Daily Telegraph, 15th January 1979 p.10, and Mckie, R., 'Shetland Counts The Social Cost of the Oil Invasion,' in The Times Higher Educational Supplement, 7th July 1978, p.9. A Professor from the Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva expressed concern for the impact oil developments upon the environment, and especially sea-birds in Shetland, The Times, 14th August 1972 p.13. A member of the Sea-bird Group in Aberdeen expressed similar concerns, which highlighted the potential problems of pollution, The Times, 14th August 1972 p.13, and A. F. Doulton, from London expressed fears that

Oil threatens to: (a) bring vast revenues- possibly \$25 million a year-into the rudimentary economy of these islands and (b) irrevocably change the special way of life on Shetland.⁴¹

Visitors to Shetland also voiced concern. For example, the 'wealthy Anglo-Scottish gentry' who were interested in the trout fishing, the landscape and tranquil 'way of life', were generally influential individuals who did not wish to see Shetland destroyed by oil. ⁴²

The Council's approach to oil developments also appealed to the Americans. In 1974, a delegation from the United States Senate visited the islands and were impressed with Shetland's plan to limit oil developments.⁴³ In 1974, the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare funded a long-term Health Study to investigate the impact of the North sea developments on health, and way of life in Shetland.⁴⁴ There was also interest from the United States in the role of local Government in Shetland.⁴⁵

oil would be seen as a means of civilizing Shetland, The Times, 29th September 1972 p.20.

41. S.A., D1/157 Northrup, B., 'A Mixed Blessing Oil-Or Prospects of It-May Bring Shetlands Vast Revenue and Threaten an Old Way of Life,' in The Wall Street Journal, 5th July 1973 p.20.

42. Wills, J., (1991) p.44. A large number of bird-watchers who came to Shetland also objected to oil developments.

43. Delegations from Eskimo and Red Indian communities also travelled to Shetland. Perrott, R., 'Shetland: A Klondike among the Crofts,' in The Sunday Times Magazine, 8th October 1978 p.68. The Ambassador of Germany, Herr Von Hase, visited Shetland in 1972. The Times, 18th August 1972 p.11.

44. Rosen, D. H., and Voorhees-Rosen, D., 'Shetland and North Sea Oil: A Study of Rapid Change and Health,' in The New Shetlander, No.123, 1978, p.6, Rosen, D. H., Voorhees-Rosen, D., and Suzman, R. M., 'Shetland and North Sea Oil: A Study of Rapid Social Change and Health- A Three-Year Follow-Up,' in The New Shetlander, No.133, 1980. p.24-26, and Suzman, R. M., Voorhees, D. J. and Rosen, D. H., (1980).

45. Todd, S., and Croghan, M., (1979), and O'Connor, J., 'British Rule in Shetland,' in Monthly Review 1979, an article in an American Marxist Journal, attacking the Shetland Islands Council.

THE TRADITIONAL WAY OF LIFE: - A ROMANTIC MYTH.

A great deal of interest in Shetland was, therefore, based upon fears for the 'way of life' and the potentially detrimental effects of oil. The sudden interest in this island location can be attributed to two factors. First the Highland and Islands have a disproportionate place in Scottish historiography. From the mid-17th century negative stereotypes of rogues, thieves and lawless rebels, associated with the Highlands became of national concern. The meanings attributed to these were then transformed, and replaced by romantic mythical notions. A 'Highlander' became a hero, and much of their supposed dress and customs formed the basis of Scotland's national identity. The peripheral status of the North, with its contentious history of clearances, also led to preferential treatment from national Government. As a result, the Highlands and Islands has special status in contemporary national consciousness.⁴⁶

There is a general impression that in a remote northern mainland and islands of Scotland there dwell small and scattered groups of people who live meagerly from the produce of the land and the surrounding sea and who are under a constant pressure to emigrate. ... There is frequently also an impression that the Highlanders are a particularly worthy people -no doubt because of their manifest personal virtues, and perhaps also because of an unconscious assumption that individuals who lead so spartan

46. Campbell, R. H., (1994), Womack, P., Improvement and Romance: Constructing the Myth of the Highlands. (1989), Withers, C., 'The Historical Creation of the Scottish Highlands,' in I. Donnachie and C. Whatley(ed) The Manufacture of Scottish History. (1992), Trevor-Roper, H., 'The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland,' in E. Hobsbawn and T. Ranger(ed) The Invention of Tradition. (1983), Pringle, T. R., 'The Privation of History: Landseer, Victoria and the Highland Myth,' in D. Cosgrove and S. Daniels(ed) The Iconography of Landscape Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use Of Past Environments. (1988), and Jarvie, G., Highland Games: The Making of the Myth. (1991).

a life must necessarily be of a higher moral stature than those who live in greater ease in the towns of the south.⁴⁷

This was also reflected in films such as Edge of the World, (1937) I Know Where I'm Going, (1945) Whisky Galore, (1948) and Brigadoon(1954).

Shetland was different from the Highlands, for it never had a clan system, and resisted kilts and Scotticisms. But southerners were not aware of the difference, and viewed Shetland in the same romantic and sentimentalised light as the Highlands and Western Isles. Shetlanders were astute and used this dual position to their advantage; the island council gained concessions from national government and the oil companies, as a result.

Moreover, encompassed in these ideas was the notion that the island community was 'vulnerable', and should be protected from the 'giant oil'.⁴⁸ As has been shown in previous chapters, this was an incorrect assumption based upon inadequate historical knowledge. Shetland society has always been resilient to change, and oil was only one of a number of external shocks experienced. But this did not stop an obsession with the 'way of life' in Shetland.

SHETLANDERS PERCEPTIONS OF 'THE WAY OF LIFE'.

Local writers were especially concerned with the 'way of life' in Shetland, something islanders found difficult to define.⁴⁹

What was the Shetland way of life? For some it was the crofts and hills, for others the boats and the sea, while

47. Collier, A., (1953) p.1.

48. Wills, J., (1991) p.33.

49. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.250-251.

for many it was the birds and the seashore. Some people stressed the absence of serious crime - one could leave a house or car unlocked and return to find the contents intact; children could play outside without fear and without causing parental worry. The Shetland way of life had many facets but linking all together was the identification with a small remote island group and a sense of kinship with 17,000 people including recent newcomers who called themselves Shetlanders.⁵⁰

The way of life was centred around crofting in the traditional sense, that of planting and harvesting crops, casting peats, milking cows, collecting water from the well, and fishing. Therefore,

the way of life which Shetlanders felt they led came to revolve around a new emphasis on Norse heritage, a new respect for their North Sea setting, and nostalgia for crofting and its attendant values such as resourcefulness, hospitality, and native intelligence.⁵¹

But as one academic noted,

In the midst of these developments the plea has been one for the preservation of the 'Shetland Way Of Life'. The fight to preserve their distinctive way of life against cultural and economic threats had begun to occupy the Shetlanders in '74 and is even more true today. But in a fight which is tinged with romantic nostalgia the difficulty is in separating the 'fact' from the 'fiction'.⁵²

OUTSIDERS BOLSTER THE MYTH.

Outsiders also portrayed Shetland in a romantic and idyllic manner, which bolstered the myth of a unique 'way of life', as in the following account from the Sunday Times:⁵³

50. Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.44

51. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.261-264.

52. Mageen, D., (1979). p.158.

53. Wills, J., (1978) Certain social scientists showed Shetlanders to be different from Scots, and undertook studies which they claimed were aimed at helping prevent the unique way of life from disappearing. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.276. Mageean, D., (1979), also argued that the economy, culture and 'way of life' in Shetland was unique and should not be lost. p.157 and 166. Cohen argued that the majority of studies did not engage in long periods of fieldwork, and that they made the mistake of thinking oil developments changed the Shetland way of life. Cohen, A., (1978) p.129-130.

Tradition and character have given Shetlanders a firm attachment to peace and quiet, a life-style based on the routines of fishing, crofting and sheep-tending, and a cottage industry in knitted woollens. ... In fair weather the unsullied charm of the place can enchant the visitor with a taste for the wild and the empty. Its rare multitude of sea-birds - auks, fulmars, guillemots - float across limpid skies or scatter in an astonishing snowstorm of wings from their nesting places on the cliffs. Still, there are times when the Shetlanders' contentment poses a mystery to be solved, winter days when indigo clouds scud across the landscape, sheep with a truly Shetland stoicism in their eyes crouch under the burden of wind and wet, and the rain comes at you sideways.⁵⁴

A local writer and journalist summed up the situation.

A cosy conspiracy to romanticise us and our islands was woven around the central theme that here was a simple way of life, untainted by the evils of 20th century urban existence ... From time to time stray journalists, radio interviewers and even, ... television film crews landed to interview the natives and carried south the a reassuring pastiche of island living, compounding the great lie at the heart of this arcadian libretto. 'Characters' queued to be interviewed, 'tunes' were obligingly performed on the fiddle for the cameras and microphones, the knitting needles clicked as the mawkish dialect poetry was recited - and local political worthies, with a small 'p', of course, pontificated about why Shetland was so very, very special.' After oil 'the myth-makers paid no heed ..., and ... continued to warble soothing and flattering scripts, from their concrete jungles in Lerwick and London, about the simple, self-reliant, noble savages of Shetland. It was what the outside world wanted to hear and, ... the inhabitants lapped it up with enthusiasm. It was pleasing to be thought of as a fine fellows, and charming and handily Norse with it.⁵⁵

A number of writers have pointed out that there was no such thing as a 'way of life' in Shetland. Rather there were numerous different ways of life, with various occupations such as crofting, working as a clerk and as either a docker or fish packer, involving very different routines. But even this was problematic as certain

54. Perrott, R., 'Shetland: A Klondike Among the Crofts,' in The Sunday Times Magazine, 8th October 1978. p.66.

55. Wills, J., (1991) p.31.

activities may have meant different things to different people.⁵⁶ Furthermore, like all other types of life,

the experience of continually changing patterns of rites and conduct meant the 'Shetland Way of Life' in 1979 was not the same as it was in 1879, nor will it be in 2079.⁵⁷

These writers went on to argue that the advent of North Sea Oil, and the perceived threats it brought, caused the fabrication of a 'way of life'. The greatest impact of oil came before any physical activity took place; it was when the possibility of structural change was first mentioned that 'cultural accounting' began. It was when the familiar norms were placed under threat that these were defined and considered worthy of retention.⁵⁸

Renwanz, an American anthropologist, followed a similar line that Shetlanders suddenly had a 'way of life' to protect only when threatened by oil. Furthermore, the Shetland Islands Council was involved in manufacturing the myth as part of the development of pro-Shetland politics.⁵⁹ This was not the view of one councillor, who

said he had never really understood what the 'Shetland way of life' was. In the old days, he said, it had been the dole and poverty with men away at sea and women having to knit to keep food on the table. 'Thank god that way of life has finished,' he said. 'What Shetland needed was a good injection of incomers and some new blood.'....⁶⁰

Wills believed that the 'unique' way of life in Shetland was contrived as a means of gaining special protection from

56. Wills, J., (1978) p.32, and Cohen, A., (1978) p.129-130.

57. Byron, R., and MacFarlane, G., (c.1980) p.9-10.

58. Cohen, A., (1978) p.129-131.

59. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.226 and 9. She also argues that the oil companies, local and national newspapers, radios programs and academics were involved in this process. p.268.

60. ST, 28 December 1979 p.7.

the adverse effects of oil. Other local writers argued that oil had simply made people appreciate their local culture and 'way of life' more. This was reflected in the level of interest in the Shetland dialect and folklore, the growth in local history groups and small museums. This growth was not peculiar to Shetland, as local studies were flourishing in other parts of Scotland.⁶¹

Therefore, the advent of oil brought very different considerations to those of war. Oil generated national and international concern for the 'way of life', and community in Shetland. War did not arouse the same level of interest or concern even though the short-term impact on the islands had been comparable to the oil 'shock'. The consequences of war were studied after the event, whereas those of oil would be the subject of anxious predictions throughout the oil era.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION: WHO HELD POWER?

The structure of Shetland society had changed dramatically since the turn of the century. The class system was no longer based on crofter/fishermen, the landed classes, merchants and businessmen. The power of the landed classes had been eroded, and small holdings were either consolidated, or lay under-utilised. Fishing had become a full-time occupation, and crofters combined land work with various forms of temporary wage labour. But the merchant class still remained important, and the expansion of the service industries meant various forms of blue and white

61. Wills, J., (1978) p.41, and Graham, J., (1990) p.141.

collar work were available in Lerwick. The advent of oil intensified the transition to capitalist wage labour relations, and a predominantly service-based economy. The construction era, like the Second World War, provided full-time wage labour, and once again increased the power of workers. Individuals had a choice of employer, and the relationship between employers and employees altered rapidly. This was very different from the previous relationship of 'debt-bondage', and informal power relations where local merchants and business offered the only source of employment. Oil developments also allowed for the growth of a new group of middle class entrepreneurs, managers and professionals.⁶²

Moreover, oil brought multinational companies into the island economy, a new and potentially powerful group.⁶³ Central Government had also become more involved through an increasingly interventionist approach since World War Two. But local government continued to achieve a level of autonomy, despite these changes.⁶⁴ As a result, the Shetland Islands Council exerted considerable control over oil developments, and was viewed as the new power group. In fact, it has been argued that the Council held the position of supreme influence in island affairs, irrespective of oil, to an extent not seen since the dominance of the great

62. Barclay, R. S., 'Shetland Occupations,' in ST, 4th January 1957. p.26-27, Heineberg, H., (1973) p.147, p.153, and p.132-134, Mageen, D., (1979). p.162-163, and Wills, J., (1991) p.12

63. These large firms also took over local firms. Wills, J., (1978) p.36-37, Perrott, R., 'Shetland: A Klondike Among the Crofts,' in The Sunday Times Magazine, 8th October 1978 p.71, and The Sunday Times Supplement, 13 March 1981, p.49.

64. Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.240, and Smith, H., (1977) p.82-83.

merchant capitalists in 1820-1840. The SIC was seen as the new laird of Shetland, after it purchased several estates and land for oil-related developments, under the compulsory purchase order.⁶⁵ This was reinforced by the single-tier structure of the Council, which meant power was concentrated in the hands of a few top officials. But it would be wrong to assume that the Shetland Islands Council was more powerful than the oil companies, for the two groups engaged in negotiations, and after the Zetland County Council Act, became business partners mutually concerned with the exploitation of oil reserves. The additional powers given by the Zetland County Council Act meant negotiations between the oil industry and the council were largely conducted in secret by the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance with the support of the Council's Convenor. Renwanz went as far as to argue that the oil companies were the new lairds and the Shetland Islands Council was the new laird's factor.⁶⁶

The Council set up a Development Department, commissioned various studies, and prepared detailed plans.⁶⁷ The Council was aware of the social requirements of oil and used its increased power to control the provision of housing, roads, schools, public halls, waterworks and new drains. It also ensured costs were shared by the oil companies. The Social Work Department

65. Wills, J., (1991) p.22, and Smith, H., (1977) p.81-82.

66. Williamson, L. 'Troubled Waters. A Study of Changes in Shetland 1971-80 Part 3 Changes and Divisions in the Power Structure,' in The New Shetlander No.139 1981-82. p.8, and Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.332, and p.336.

67. The details of these, and the additional powers gained through the Zetland County Council Act is outlined in the previous chapter.

played an important role in protecting Shetland society, and dealt with the problems brought by rapid industrial development. It also helped the elderly and disabled, a group unable to participate in the positive elements of oil, yet who were exposed to its harmful effects. The Council gave priority to Social Work spending and undertook a number of initiatives with grant aid from the Charitable Trust.⁶⁸

THE INFLUX OF INCOMERS: CONSTRUCTION WORKERS.

Oil-related activity involved the importation of, at its peak, over 7,000 construction workers to Sullom Voe.⁶⁹ Like war, national government was involved in the recruitment of labour, but economic incentives, not military compulsion acted as the prime mover.⁷⁰ The presence of these mainly single male migrants, although in smaller numbers than World War Two, once again caused concern.⁷¹ Members of the County Council and Shetlanders viewed them as 'trouble-makers' requiring policing and containment.⁷² As one Councillor recalled,

68. Wills, J., (1991) p.12. The council had a policy to provide equal services to all areas. This was particularly beneficial in isolated rural islands such as Out Skerries, where oil money was used to provide educational equipment. Dey, J., (1991) p.109-110, and Graham, J., (1990) p.142-3.

69. Sullom Voe was not the only site for temporary construction workers. There was a temporary work camp at Sumburgh and one at the North Staney hill, outside Lerwick. ST, 29th March 1974 p.11.

70. This was through the Bellshill Recruitment Centre. Jones, H., (1982) p.46-47. Also the government was sufficiently concerned to commission Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981).

71. In fact migrant labour in the oil industry was defined as a 'problem' in national social policy terms. Moore, R., (ed) ([1]1981) p.6.

72. S.A., CO3/1/43 Notes of a Meeting Of Members of the County Council to hear from the Consultants an explanation of the Livesey and

There was a fear in Shetland, when you had thousands of young men coming into the islands that there would be orgies, there would be drunkenness, there would be trouble, there would be fighting.⁷³

Construction workers, although not under military command, were exposed to various forms of social control. They were housed in self-contained camps, similar to those occupied by the servicemen during the Second World War, and floating accommodation rigs. The Shetland Island Council provided this accommodation, and insisted camps were of high standard with various amenities.⁷⁴ It was assumed that hotel-style accommodation would encourage respectable behaviour, reduce temptation to leave the camps, and minimise the disruptive effects on the community.⁷⁵ The Council was involved in the company contracted to run the camps. Any misconduct by residents meant displacement from accommodation, and usually led to the loss of employment, for the oil companies promised to transport any worker who committed a crime whilst in Shetland back to the mainland.⁷⁶

The Council requested Miller Construction Ltd. to include a clause in their contracts of employment,

Henderson Report and to ask questions thereon, 18th January 1974. One council member assumed construction workers would present the greatest social problem, and that they should be accommodated in a vessel moored in Sullom Voe, not on land. McFarlane, G., (c.1982) p.14.

73. 'Wasted Windfall,' Channel 4, September 1994.

74. Blackadder, G. A., and Baster, J., (1992) p.176, Glasgow Planning Exchange, The Social Impact of Large Scale Industrial Developments. A Literature Review Commissioned by the North Sea Oil Panel Social Science Research Council. (1978). p.18-19.

75. Grieco, M., 'Oil and the Council: A Study of the Changing Role of the Local Authority, Part Two,' in The New Shetlander, No.119 1977. p.14, Grieco, M., (1977-78) p.189, and Geoghegan, P. B., (1982) p.11.

76. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.1. Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.288-289, Wills, J., (1991) p.143, and Moore, R., (1980). p.27.

insisting on 'satisfactory' behaviour in the camp and local district.⁷⁷ The Council was also concerned that women of 'ill repute' would come to the camp on the pretext of engaging in regular paid employment, while in fact earning their living in a less salubrious fashion. As a result, the Council limited the number of women living on the camp, and preference was given to local women living outside the camp.⁷⁸ The level of control imposed by the Council was similar to the military regime during World War Two, but without the same sanctions.

Social control was made worse by the extreme isolation of sites, and the intense work routine. These men worked long shifts, with minimal spare time whilst in Shetland. Periods of leave were spent on the mainland, where it was assumed they would dissipate their social frustrations. Contact with the local population was, therefore, limited. Construction workers who arrived at the start were most likely to have met local people, particularly if they had lived in the community. Local people felt that the Irish workers mixed best, and one particular group attended local functions and befriended Shetlanders. But the majority saw almost nothing of Shetland, other than the work site and the camp.⁷⁹

77. S.A., CO3/1/43 Minutes of the Adjourned General Meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 17th September 1974.

78. Grieco, M., (1977) p.13.

79. Moore, R., (1980) p.26-27, *ST*, 15th May 1981, 'Sullom Voe 1981. A Shetland Times Special Colour Report.' p.14, and Perrott, R., 'Shetland: A Klondike Among the Crofts,' in The Sunday Times Magazine, 8th October 1978 p.71, Grieco, M., (1977-78) p.188-189, and Johnson, L. M., (1985) p.23

In contrast, servicemen had freely associated with islanders. These men were accepted as an unavoidable consequence of war, whereas construction workers came to Shetland for personal gain. There was two-way traffic during the war, for men arrived, but Shetlanders also went elsewhere. In the 1970s, the presence of these 'rough-necks' was viewed as a consequence of the invasion of oil, something Shetlanders could live without; whereas servicemen, unlike construction workers, spent periods of leave in Shetland when they could not get home and were defenders of their territory. Military camps were closer to townships than the isolated construction villages, which increased contact between servicemen and islanders. The majority of military personnel accepted Shetland as part of their war service. In contrast, construction staff were accustomed to travelling work, which involved minimal contact with the location and indigenous population.⁸⁰ A former petrochemical engineer who had worked in Shetland felt,

The people of the Shetlands, they are not funny ha! ha! They are funny peculiar. When I went to a bar , they used to give me an unpleasant look, and one of the things they used to say to me, 'You are only here for our money and our women.'⁸¹

SEMI-PERMANENT INCOMERS.

In addition to the temporary construction work force, oil brought operational and service staff to Shetland. Oil-

80. Wills, J., (1991) p.29, and Perrott, R., 'Shetland: A Klondike Among the Crofts,' in The Sunday Times Magazine, 8th October 1978 p.71.

81. 'Wasted Windfall,' Channel 4, September 1994.

related employment at Sumburgh Airport grew, and encouraged the settlement of mainly young English couples filling vacancies as pilots, engineers and controllers. The majority did not intend to settle in Shetland, and saw their stay as part of a longer-term career plan. The Shetland Islands Council and oil companies imported labour to operate and maintain Sullom Voe Oil terminal. These were mainly skilled and professional staff, who, unlike construction workers and the majority of servicemen, brought their families with them. The extent of immigration from mainland Britain was reflected in the population figures. The net migration from England and Wales to Shetland between 1972 and 1980, on the basis of National Health Service register data, was 1,862 which represented 105 per 1,000 of 1972 regional population. Net migration from the rest of Scotland to Shetland between 1972 and 1980 came to 1,582 which represented 89.2 per 1,000 of 1972 regional population.⁸²

Like the construction workers, the County Council perceived this group as a threat to the 'way of life'. It was noted that although Shetland was accustomed to the influx of people over the centuries, oil-related incomers were presumed to be different. The majority were in Shetland because of their jobs, and their stay was temporary. They had different life experiences, and regarded Shetlanders as 'peasants' or 'country hicks'. In other words, incomers were seen to be a 'problem' to the

82. Jones, H., (c.1982) p.28-29, p.64 and p.66, McFarlane, G., (c.1982) and Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.230-231.

Shetland community, or more of a problem than previous incomers.⁸³ It was felt that,

a thousand families setting in one part of Shetland in a short space of time would be something entirely different and might upset the whole social and economic balance of that district.⁸⁴

In response, careful consideration was given to accommodating these incomers. Livesey and Henderson, planning consultants, were aware that housing would be a problem. They decided that newcomers taking up permanent jobs at the oil terminal should be dispersed and integrated into existing communities rather than concentrated into one new settlement. Four of the largest crofting villages near Sullom Voe, Brae, Voe, Mossbank and Toft were targeted. The Shetland Island Council also commissioned a study to analyse the assimilation of incomers into Dunrossness, where the majority of airport staff had settled. The study was to assess the influx of incomers upon the area, and provide a basis on which to deal with these problems in the future. The Social Work Committee took further drastic action, and in November 1977 asked the ferry company to refuse travel to those Shetlanders would consider 'undesirable'. The ferry company refused, and the Committee then agreed to put posters in the bus and train stations throughout Britain emphasising that people should not travel to Shetland unless accommodation had been pre-arranged.⁸⁵

83. McFarlane, G., (1981).127-128, and McFarlane, G., (c.1982) p.27.

84. Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.113.

85. Blackadder, G. A., and Baster, J., (1992) p.176, Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.114, McFarlane, G., (c.1982) p.27, and Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.246-247.

Certain members of the indigenous population felt oil-related incomers were responsible for,

the death of a culture ... it will prove to be a terrible price for Shetland, the passing of a way of life - of the identity and dignity of a proud people, swamped under a tide of culturally deprived urbanites, a large majority of whom can only be described as arrogant, ill-mannered and ignorant. These same people will express surprise at our lack of appreciation of the favour they are doing us, 'dragging us,' poor backward souls, 'into the twentieth century.' They are, if we are to believe them, the vehicle of progress and as our crime, drug abuse, glue sniffing, knife carrying, mugging, neighbours ignoring statistics approach the urban norm we can be described as progressing. They have little to offer us.⁸⁶

Like construction workers, there was minimal contact between incomers and Shetlanders.⁸⁷ Not only did certain Shetlanders dislike incomers, but the climate, drinking habits, dialect, and sense of humour of islanders did not appeal to incomers. Instead, they established close networks of their own. Social integration was presumably easier for another group of incoming workers, 'return migrants'.⁸⁸

The influx of 'strangers', both temporary and semi-permanent, did not have the same effect on the marriage-rate as that of World War Two. The marriage-rate for Shetland dropped, and continued beneath that of Scotland during the construction era. Minimum contact between

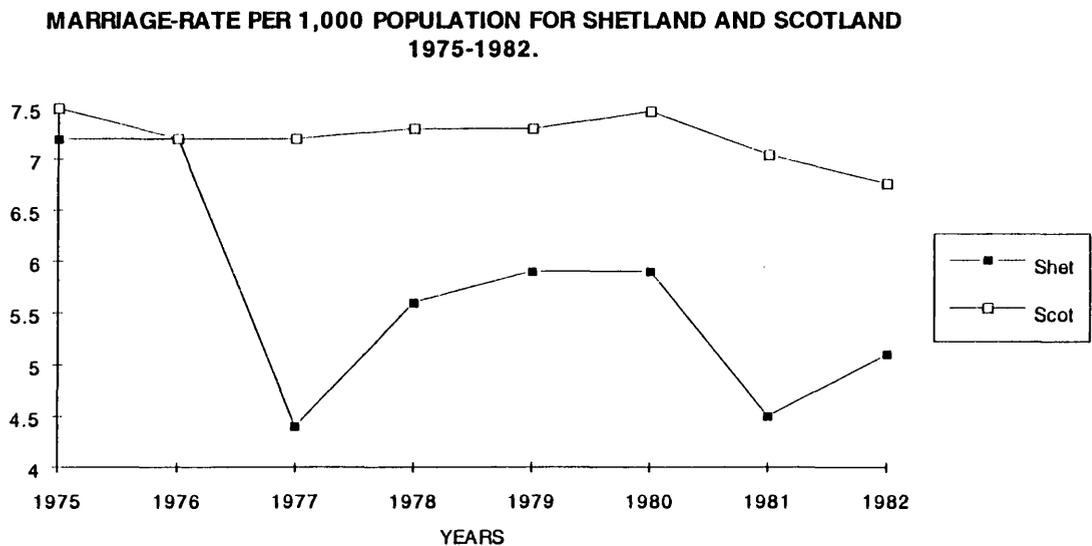
86. 'Da Wadder Eye, A Quarterly Commentary By Nort Moother,' The New Shetlander, No.133, 1980. p.22.

87. A branch of the 'National Housewives Register' was established by four women who moved to Shetland because their husbands were employed in the oil industry. The majority of members husbands' were employed in oil-related jobs. A few local women were members, but the majority were did not join. Jerman, B., The Lively-Minded Women: The First Twenty Years of the National Housewives Register, (1981). p.110-112.

88. Wills, J., (1978) p.30-31, Renwanz M. E., (1981) p.267, Blackadder, G. A., and Baster, J., (1992) p.176, Byron, R., and MacFarlane, G., (c.1980) p.42-86, Jones, H., (c.1982) p.28-29, and Scott, A., (c.1982).p.28.

islanders and the migrant construction work force reduced the chance of marriage, and unlike the Second World War, there was less of an imbalance amongst the sexes.⁸⁹ Increased employment opportunities for women in Shetland may also have reduced the desire to marry.

Figure 7.1



(Source: Annual Reports Of The Registrar-General For Scotland, 1975-1982)

The average age of marriage for men and women in Shetland was lower than during the Second World War, and much closer to the Scottish average. By the end of the construction era, the average age of marriage for both sexes in Shetland had dropped beneath the Scottish average, for the first time this century.

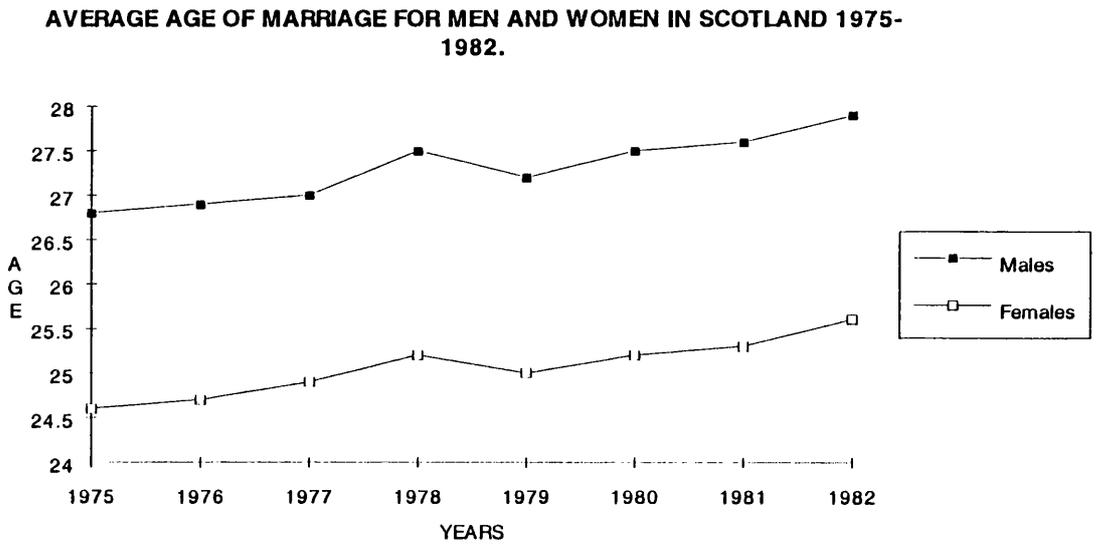
89. See Figure 1.3

Figure 7.2



(Source: as Figure 7.1)

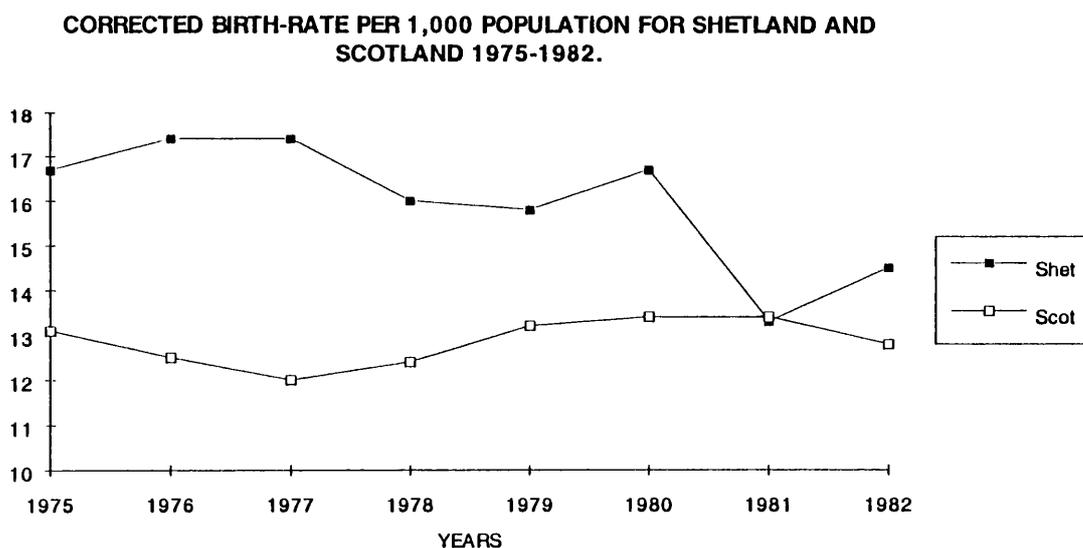
Figure 7.3



(Source: as Figure 7.1)

The birth-rate for Shetland, in contrast to both wars, was above that of Scotland's except in 1981. This could possibly be linked to the influx of semi-permanent families, a group of reproductive age.

Figure 7.4



(Source: as Figure 7.1)

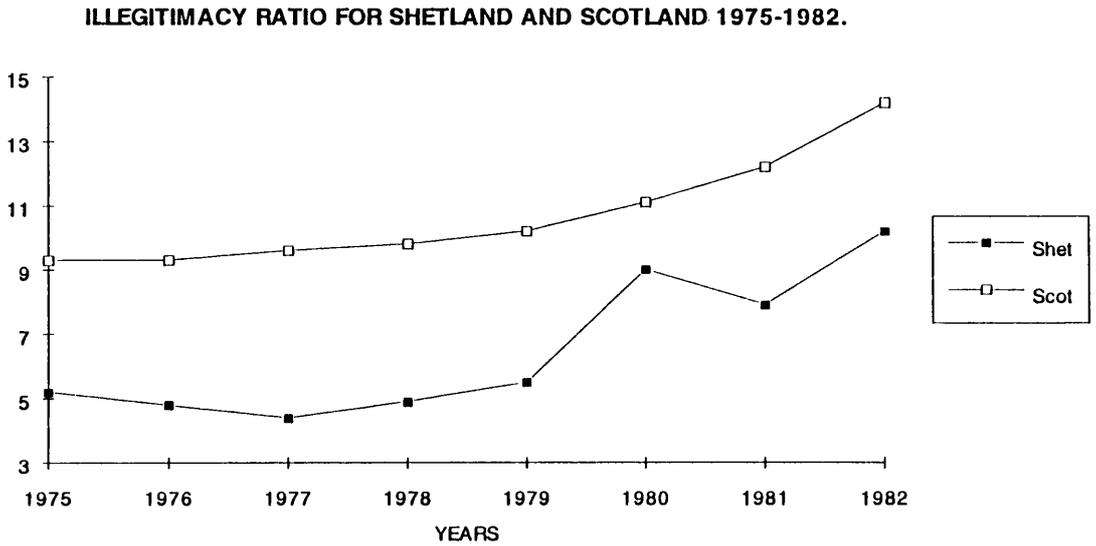
Fears were, once again, expressed over the moral standards during the construction era. In 1975 a consultant sociologist for the Scottish Office undertook a study of the impact of a large resident male work force upon girls aged between 14 and 17. It was reported that,

girls in the study age group stood in considerable social danger when attending rural dances. Dances ... were not the community functions they once were and few parents attended them. Many of the girls, ... did not fully understand that the incoming male workers had very different social codes, and might quite easily place quite erroneous interpretations on, for instance girls coming to dances late in the evening. At a dance in Brae, ... there had been excessive drinking in a packed hall ... [and] there ... was abuse of young girls.⁹⁰

Such fears were not reflected in the number of children born out of wedlock, as the illegitimacy ratio remained below than of Scotland's throughout the construction era, with a slight rise in both.

90. Minutes of a special meeting of the Executive Committee of the Shetland Council of Social Service, 28th August 1975.

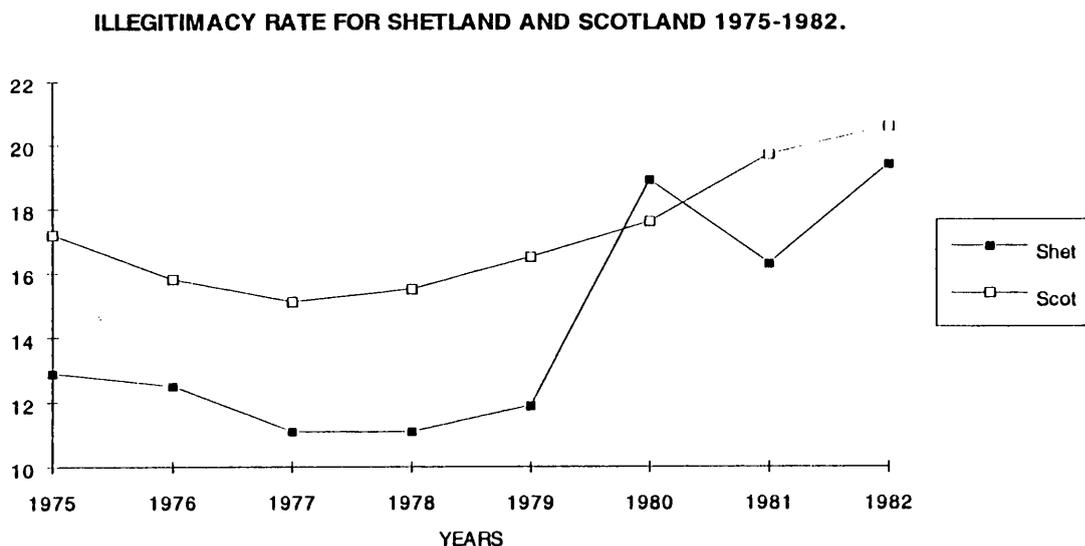
Figure 7.5



(Source: as Figure 7.1)

On the other hand, the illegitimacy ratio, that is the number of illegitimate births per 1,000 unmarried women aged between 15 and 44, for Shetland rose considerably from 1979. But, as was the case during World War Two, this is deceptive as the actual numbers are small. In 1975 there were 15 illegitimate births in Shetland, rising to 35 by 1982, compared with 6,314 rising to 9,395 in Scotland. The rise in births out of wedlock, as the Scottish figure shows, was part of a national trend, rather than specifically linked to oil.

Figure 7.6



(Source: as Figure 7.1)

To what extent the influx of oil workers, improved employment opportunities for both men and women, and increased affluence undermined the family unit is difficult to tell. It certainly was part of the perceived impact of oil.⁹¹

Work for women, shift work, the seven-day week, and the high-spending habits of unattached work mates, could all cause a certain amount of strain in family life. Most families thus affected adjusted well; some did not. Several marriages broke up during this period. This caused general regret in the local community, where marital separation and divorce had never been common, although they were not unknown.⁹²

WOMEN AND OIL.

Oil, like military service, was a male-dominated industry, associated with heavy manual work and a tough mentality. There was considerable animosity towards female involvement. Women were either omitted from employment, or

91. 'Shetland's Social Problems,' New Shetlander, No.158, 1986 p.3, and Graham, J., (1990) p.142.

92. Johnson, L. M., (1985) p.24.

restricted to secondary occupations. With respect to the wives and children of male workers, the phrase 'we hire workers, not families' was echoed. Unfortunately, studies relating to women and oil have been limited. The impact of oil on female onshore employment has been neglected, and to my knowledge, no work has been undertaken specifically on the impact of North Sea Oil upon women in Shetland.⁹³

Oil, like the Second World War, brought new openings for women. Military compulsion directed women to essential posts usually outside the isles, whereas oil brought employment to various groups in Shetland. But, because of the heavy male dominance women, once again, were concentrated in the traditionally female sectors of the economy.⁹⁴ Despite this, oil-related opportunities drew women, many for the first time, into wage labour relations.⁹⁵

Women worked in camps or site canteens. The first woman on the construction site was Marabelle Murray, a

93. Lewis, J., Porter, M., and Shrimpton, M., (ed) Women, Work and Family in the British, Canadian and Norwegian Offshore Oilfields. (1988) p.2, p.23 and p.194. It did not include material on Shetland, despite its 'British' content. Sim, G., 'The Long Wait-Life as an Offshore Wife,' in 'Twenty-Five Years of Oil,' Special Feature of Press and Journal, 22 September 1994 p.11, Moore, R., and Wybrow, P., Women in the North Sea Oil Industry. (1984), and Flin, R., and Mearns, K., 'Women in the Offshore Oil Industry,' paper given at Women And Higher Education Conference, University of Aberdeen 23-26 June 1994.

94. Women were usually employed in the traditional female sectors of catering, cleaning, and clerical work. But because of the high wages and migrant nature of work in camps on construction sites, and offshore, even the catering jobs were taken over by men. For example, only 29% of the applicants for catering at Sullom Voe were women. Taylor, P., and Hutton, A., 'Some Labour Market Characteristics of Oil-Related Travelling Workers,' in R. Moore(ed) ([1]1981) p.107.

95. Williamson, L. (1981-82) p.10, and MacKay, G. A., and Moir, A. C., (c.1980) p.45. The situations vacant column in The Shetland Times illustrated the extent of demand for female labour during the construction era.

secretary from Graven, who started work with JMJ, a firm employed to shift peat and rock, in early 1975. Women of all ages took jobs at Sullom Voe; some were relatively elderly and had not worked outside the home since marriage. There were nearly as many locally-recruited women as men working at Sullom Voe. In the third quarter of 1980, 472 locally-recruited women worked at the construction site compared with 521 men. The majority of women, 408, worked in catering. They worked as catering assistants and supervisors, with slightly fewer employed as chambermaids.⁹⁶ This was a similar situation to the Second World War, when women undertook domestic tasks in NAAFI canteens. The nature of work was comparable, although the majority of women were single and lived in the camps only returning home on days off.⁹⁷

Female employment also increased as a result of the growing traffic at Sumburgh Airport. Women worked as cooks, waitresses and cleaners for companies servicing the needs of the oil workers. Business was so lucrative that young girls could earn £80 a week in the late 1970s, often more than the male breadwinner.⁹⁸

It was feared that high wages would encourage girls to leave school prematurely, but this was not the case. Oil

96. ST, Sullom Voe 1981 A Shetland Times Special Colour Report, 15th May 1981. p.9, Johnson, L. M., (1985) p.23, Byron, R., and MacFarlane, G., (c.1980) p.99, and Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981). p.4-2, and p.8-5.

97. The Council limited the number of women living in the construction villages, and preference was given to local women who lived at home. Grieco, M., 'Oil and the Council: A Study of the Changing Role of the Local Authority, Part Two,' in The New Shetlander, No.119 1977. p.13.

98. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.11, and Perrott, R., 'Shetland: A Klondike Among the Crofts,' in The Sunday Times Magazine, October 8th 1978 p.71.

provided lucrative employment in low skill sectors for statutory school leavers, while the majority with better qualifications continued in further education.⁹⁹ According to the headmaster of the Anderson High School,

Such was the shortage of local labour needed to cater for the construction workers at their camps near Sullom Voe that fifth and sixth year pupils were bussed there to act as cleaners. For one and half hours' work, five days a week, these 16 and 17 year-olds were paid an incredible £50 a week.¹⁰⁰

so pupils could combine school and manual labour.

Women, as was the case during the Second World War, took in lodgers in response to the high demand for accommodation. Economic incentives, rather than military compulsion acted as the driving force. Such activity was particularly suitable for women tied to homes. The extent of activity for all groups was reflected in a comment made at the end of the construction era, 'surely never again will there be so much work for women.'¹⁰¹ But such boom conditions caused problems for the traditional sectors in the economy.

The knitwear industry, as already noted, suffered from loss of labour. The output of certain firms suffered, despite only a slight drop in the number of home-knitters. Women took full-time jobs outside the home so had less 'spare-time' to knit, and the higher male wage reduced the pressure to knit as a means of adding value to the family

99. The Times, 6th April 1978 p.4, and Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study. (1981) p.3-9.

100. McKie, R., 'Shetland Counts the Social Cost of the Oil Invasion,' in The Times Higher Educational Supplement, 7 July 1978 p.9.

101. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.226-227, Byron, R, and McFarlane, G., (c.1980) p.97-98, and Johnson, L. M., (1985) p.24.

income. Furthermore, oil, like the war years, provided a captive market for hosiery and the knitter traded directly with the buyer.¹⁰²

To what extent conditions experienced during the construction era altered the position of women is difficult to assess. The majority remained in the traditionally female sectors of cooking, cleaning, and clerical work.¹⁰³ The construction boom did not allow women to enter male sectors of the economy, as had been the case during World War Two. Rather, oil offered a period of full-time lucrative unskilled labour for women. It released them from the toil of unpaid crofting duties, and knitting. Working outside the home, once again, provided companionship, friendship and greater financial independence.

Moreover, there were additional openings for married women during the construction era.¹⁰⁴ It also brought escape from the home, companionship and additional incomes. But paid employment outside the home aroused some criticism, as it did nationally, and voluntary activities

102. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.324, Byron, R, and McFarlane, G., (c.1980) p.97, Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981) p.5-2, and Johnson, L. M., (1985) p.23.

103. Although there has not been a study for women in Shetland, Teresa Turner's work on the onshore oil fields of Alberta showed that women working as contract staff in the labour camps had to cope with a transiting work-force of men, working in relative geographic isolation. They had to deal with employer exploitation and with abuse and bullying from men. Turner, however was studying the oil fields, not the bases from which the oil industry was serviced and administered. Lewis, J., Porter, M., and Shrimpton, M., (ed) (1988) p.194.

104. It has been argued that Shetland women were keen to work outside the home, as part of a more general atmosphere of the emancipation of housewives in Shetland and the U.K., and that oil simply provided the opportunity to do so. Byron, R, and McFarlane, G., (c.1980) p.97-98.

were said to be under threat.¹⁰⁵ As in war, the majority of oil-related jobs were temporary, and women, especially those with families, returned to the home at the end of the construction era. A rise in the service sector, and the local authority as an employer has meant increased opportunities for both single and married women in Shetland.¹⁰⁶

Oil, unlike war, had changed the overall structure of the family unit, and the role of women within Shetland society. Oil provided regular lucrative wage labour, which meant men no longer had to leave Shetland for long periods in search of employment. In addition, unlike the previous economic boom, when men were forced to leave for military service, the majority were able to take advantage of the prosperous circumstances. Women no longer had to work to compensate for the absence of their male counterparts, nor did they have the financial burden of providing for their families. The male breadwinner earned sufficient to sustain the family, and women became dependants in the true sense. The working women of Shetland, therefore, became consumers, with time and money at their disposal. Expanding female employment of this new kind helped to reinforce the transition from a family-based unit of production. Women engaged in wage labour, rather than crofting and knitting,

105. Johnson, L. M., (1985) p.23-24, Byron, R, and McFarlane, G., (c.1980) p.97-98, 'Shetland's Social Problems,' in The New Shetlander, No.158 1986 p.3, and Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.280.

106. Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981) p.8-13, and p.8-16, McNicoll, I., (1985) p.22-24, and Manpower Services Commission, The Shetland Manpower Study, (1981) p.5-3.

and this provided further prosperity to individuals and the family.¹⁰⁷

ATTITUDES AND IDEAS OF ISLANDERS.

Shetlanders kept in touch with the events of oil in a similar way to that of war. The press, once again, provided an invaluable source of information, as did the wireless. A BBC local radio station, Radio Shetland, was established in 1977. It broadcast a thirty-minute programme which reported oil developments on a daily basis. This was an important addition to the weekly publication of the Shetland Times. Information on oil, unlike war, was not censored. But an informal selection process ensured negotiations remained undisclosed. This created animosity, as the public were not prepared to accept the degree of secrecy tolerated during war.¹⁰⁸

The construction era did not bring the same degree of disruption to everyday lives as war, but the pace of life, as in war, quickened. The situation was described by a local writer.

The oil industry itself was the dominant force for a considerable period. ... It was a wartime type of situation, with all-out effort, lavish use of materials and men, and an overall cost figure of £1,200,000, which was the kind of astronomical sum which has little meaning to the average individual, but did convey the impression that

107. Improved employment opportunities and higher wages men, meant the standard of living of the household increased. Byron, R, and McFarlane, G., (c.1980) p.97 Part of the process of Shetland workers becoming more proletarianised. Williamson, L., 'Troubled Waters. A Study of Changes in Shetland 1971-80 Part 4: The Shetland Movement,' in The New Shetlander No.140 1981-82. p.17.

108. The New Shetlander, No.120, 1977. p.5, Graham, J., (1990) p.141, Williamson, L. 'Troubled Waters. A Study of Changes in Shetland 1971-80 Part 3: Changes and Divisions in the Power Structure,' in The New Shetlander No.139 1981-82. p.8, and Grieco, M., (1977-78) p.195.

the roads to Sullom might well be paved with something like gold. In the town the traffic multiplied, the accents in the crowded pubs in the evenings were less Shetland than Scottish or English, minor fights were common-place, and the shops did a roaring trade while the hotels overflowed. It was all right as long as everyone remembered that the whole thing was only temporary.¹⁰⁹

Sociological surveys have suggested that oil, like the Second World War, undermined certain traditions. The sacred nature of the Sabbath already eroded by war, came under threat. Oil-related construction involved working on a Sunday, despite objections from some denominations of the church.¹¹⁰ But as one local writer noted, oil simply accelerated changes already under way. Sunday, as in other parts of the U.K., was no longer a day of rest and worship. People worked in gardens, played football or continued with crofting duties. Church attendance, therefore, had suffered prior to oil.¹¹¹

According to sociologists, the old tradition of visiting neighbours, also threatened by war, was undermined by oil. It was further suggested that new employment practices caused a separation of work and leisure. Long hours in paid employment made casual visiting less easy, and co-operation between crofting neighbours difficult.¹¹² But the advent of television, independent of oil, had

109. Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.299.

110. S.A., CO3/1/43 Minutes of the Adjourned General Meeting of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 19th November 1974, ST, 22nd November 1974. p.1, Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.282, and Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.280.

111. Nicolson, J. P., 'The Parish of Tingwall, Whiteness and Weisdale,' in J. R. Coull(ed) (1985) p.175.

112. Byron, R., and MacFarlane, G., (c.1980) p.103-108, and Coull, J. R., (ed) (1985) p.xx.

further intensified a decline in interaction between households, although this is difficult to prove.¹¹³

The older generations felt the traditions of thrift and desire to avoid debt had been destroyed by oil.¹¹⁴ Materialism and consumption replaced the urgency to save for the inevitable bust conditions. Younger members, influenced by television and incomers, used their higher incomes to buy consumer durables. This had not been a problem during the war when rationing restricted consumption. The divergence of feeling is reflected here,

It was sad to see fishermen work as well paid menials, crofters giving up a traditional pattern of life to work long hours with the oil industry and the whole pace and attitude of life in Shetland changing. Others, especially the young, were less gloomy. If it had not been for oil, I was told, Shetland would by now have returned to the old rut in which fishing and knitwear were depressed. The oil had produced new faces, new interests and a lot more money. Who could complain about that?¹¹⁵

Affluence, therefore, caused concern for alterations in the attitudes, life-styles and expectations of Shetlanders, especially the young. It also helped to improve health. An study of health in the Sullom Voe area showed that higher incomes reduced stress levels and improved the health of individuals in these households.

113. Lumb argued that television had more to do with the decline in traditional activities in the Highlands and Islands than incomers. Lumb, R., Migration in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Research Report 3. p.32. Byron, R., and Macfarlane, G., (c.1980) p.70, Rosen, D. H., Voorhees-Rosen, D. J., and Suzman, R., (1980) p.25-26, and Harrison, P., 'The Shetlands' Separate State,' in New Society, 27th of January 1977 p.160.

114. Byron, R., and MacFarlane, G., (c.1980) p.99-101, and Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.283-285.

115. The Times, 6th April 1978 p.4.

This was especially the case for young and middle-aged women.¹¹⁶

Affluence also brought social problems. Of greatest concern was alcohol abuse, including amongst the young. In response, the Council's Social Work Department established an Alcohol Resource Centre, funded by the Charitable Trust.¹¹⁷ But oil alone was not to blame, Shetland already had a strong tradition of excessive drinking, encouraged by its seafaring history.¹¹⁸

A further social problem attributed to oil was the rise in crime. Incomers, unlike those of the Second World War, were perceived as 'trouble-makers', and blamed for the rise in crime. The number of reported crimes more than doubled in the 1970s, and the police force was increased in number.¹¹⁹ Like the war years, the increase in crimes and policing was small in relation to other parts of industrial Britain, but was significant to the island community.¹²⁰ It was the process of change, rather than the actual numbers that concerned islanders. Construction workers received

116. Fenwick, J. M., (1981). p.233, and Rosen, D. H., Voorhees-Rosenm D. J., and Suzman, R. M., (1980) p.26.

117. 'Shetland's Social Problems,' The New Shetlander, No. 158, 1986 p.3-4, Wills, J., (1978) p.33-34, Graham, J., (1990) p.142, and S.A., CO3/11/3 Minutes of a Meeting of the Social Work Committee of the County Council of the County of Zetland, 30th May 1974, Appendix One Bi-Monthly Report, 17th May 1974.

118. Graham, J., (1990) p.142, Wills, J., (1978) p.33-34, and Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.281.

119. 'Shetland's Social Problems' in The New Shetlander, No.158 1986 p.3. In 1973 there were 12 policemen in Shetland, rising to nearly 50 by 1981. Fenwick, J. M., (1981). p.233-234. Blackadder, G. A., and Baster, J., (1992) p.176.

120. Like the Second World War, a Police Station was opened at Brae in 1979, where a sergeant and two constables are based there. Three constables were based at Firth, and in 1978 a detachment of a Sergeant and six constables was sent to Sumburgh. Johnson, L. M., (1985) p.24, and Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.292-3.

most blame, although the semi-permanent professionals were not excluded. The media sensationalised crimes committed by outsiders, while local writers and British social scientists, suggested erroneously that Shetland had a crime-free past. This was part of the process of re-writing Shetland's past in the light of current events.¹²¹

Illustration 7.1 Media Obsession with Rise in Crime.



"Onything guid ida da paper dis week?"

(Source: Walterston, F. S., Gaf It Aff Cartoons. (1984) p.17)

In fact, close scrutiny of the crime statistics showed Shetland did not experience a 'crime wave' during the construction phase. Inspector Pat Douglas, one of the officers in charge of the Shetlands' Police force noted in 1978, that the isles were as law-abiding as any comparable

121. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.230-243.

rural Scottish county.¹²² Rather many of the offences were for 'trivial infractions', and involved Shetlanders. Changes in Scottish Law meant that action which previously received a warning had become a criminal offence. For example, in 1972 578 crimes were reported, and in 1974 1,303, but 1,030 of the 1,303 crimes were minor class 7 offences. Similarly, between 1976 and 1977 the total number of crimes committed in Shetland rose from 1,374 to 3,103. Once again of the 3,103 crimes in 1977, 2,781 were class 7 offences. More serious crimes, such as rapes, and murders had been committed by Shetlanders a century before, when a violent sailor-dominated society prevailed. Therefore, a rise in crime did not represent a real threat to the isles, especially compared with the 19th century.¹²³

CONCLUSION.

It is difficult to assess the overall effects of the construction era. Social change is not easily measured, and it is difficult to separate the effects of oil from other forces.¹²⁴ All too often commentators have attributed change to oil, with little consideration for other factors. The Second World War, the prosperity of the 1960s, and the advent of television ensured that economic and social

122. Perrott, R., 'Shetland: A Klondike Among the Crofts,' in The Sunday Times Magazine, 8th October 1978 p.71.

123. Renwanz, M. E., (1981) p.5, and p.229-245.

124. Glasgow Planning Exchange and North Sea Oil Panel, The Social Impact of Large-Scale Industrial Developments. A Literature Review Commissioned by the North Sea Oil Panel Social Science Research Council. (1978) p.18, and Cohen, A., (1978) p.138, p.140-141, and Blackadder, G. A., and Baster, J., (1992) p.177.

change was already underway. The scale and nature of the construction era intensified this process.¹²⁵

The clearest long-term effect of oil has been the level of social and welfare facilities provided by oil revenue. The Charitable Trust's main principle,

has always been to seek benefit for Shetland and its inhabitants. In particular, the Trustees set out to improve the quality of life for Shetlanders, especially in the areas of social need, leisure, environment and education, support the traditional industries, ... build on the energy and initiatives of local self-help groups, utilise the funds in order to provide large-scale facilities which would be of long-term benefit to Shetland.¹²⁶

Pensioners have benefited from improved welfare provisions, young and old have benefited from the expansion of leisure facilities such as swimming pools, leisure centres and community halls. In 1994, for example, £4 million was spent by the Charitable Trust on various Social Work projects, such as care centres, improvement of homes, and specialised aids for the Disabled. Oil has also improved the infrastructure, transportation and communications in Shetland.¹²⁷

Therefore the impact of the construction era upon Shetland was not nearly as serious as envisaged. Most of the concerns expressed at the start never came to fruition.

125. Mageen, D., (1979). p.160-165, Pearson, A., 'The Parish of Walls and Sandness,' in J. R. Coull(ed) (1985) p.191, [Anon], Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. (Scalloway 1982) p.16-17, and Graham, J., (1990) p.141.

126. Shetland Islands Council Charitable Trust Annual Report for the Year ended 31st March, 1993 p.28.

127. Editorial, The New Shetlander No.192 1995 p.5, Fenwick, J. M., 'The Shetland Islands And The Impact Of Oil,' in Cairns, J., and Rogers, P. M., (1981). p.232, Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.273, Blackadder, G. A., and Baster, J., (1992) p.177 and p.190, and Smith, H., (1977) p.81.

In fact, as was the case for both wars, Shetland proved more resilient to change than outsiders thought.

It is difficult to shift out and quantify the various elements of social change, but it can be said that, despite all the gloomy predictions, the fabric of local society has borne the brunt of the onslaught surprisingly well. And that in itself is a tribute to the robustness of the social structures.... All in all, Shetland society has emerged more adaptable, more enterprising, more dynamic, and in many ways better equipped to face a testing future.¹²⁸

Their history involved continually adapting to new economic circumstances. This is reflected in the words of a local writer, who, despite the permeable nature of society and the impact of oil, still views Shetland and Shetlanders in a sentimentalised way.¹²⁹

It is difficult to shift out and quantify the various elements of social change, but it can be said that, despite all the gloomy predictions, the fabric of local society has borne the brunt of the onslaught surprisingly well. And that in itself is a tribute to the robustness of the social structures.... All in all, Shetland society has emerged more adaptable, more enterprising, more dynamic, and in many ways better equipped to face a testing future.¹³⁰

128. Graham, J., (1990) p.141. Coull, J. R., (ed) (1985) p.xx, and Johnson, L. M., (1985) p.33. both put forward a similar view.

129. Wills, J., (1991) p.33-34 and p.45, Blackadder, G. A., and Baster, J., (1992) p.165, Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.28, ST, 31st March 1972 p.8, and Moore, R., (ed) ([1]1981) p.12, Cohen, A., (1978) p.132, and S.A., D1/85/4 Scrap Book of newspapers cuttings, Shetland Times, 20th October 1972.

130. Graham, J., (1990) p.141. Coull, J. R., (ed) (1985) p.xx, and Johnson, L. M., (1985) p.33. both put forward a similar view.

CONCLUSION.

Once again Shetland is of interest to the national press, but this time over the feared closure of Sullom Voe Oil terminal.

Orkney has beaten Shetland in the closely fought contest to handle the oil from the first commercial field to be developed in the deep Atlantic waters west of the Northern Isles. ... The decision is seen as a blow to Shetland's Sullom Voe terminal, the future of which was put in doubt recently when Shell, one of its main users, announced that it was studying alternative ways to ship its oil to markets. ... Offshore loading (a possible alternative) would make Sullom Voe redundant and deprive the island of a source of revenue which has enabled it to accumulate reserve funds of about £180 million.¹

H. Smith writing in 1977 argued that oil developments would continue until the year 2000, or 2100, as did A. Blackadder. A group of consultants writing in 1991 predicted Sullom Voe Oil terminal would be closed by 2007.² It would therefore appear that the predictions made may be accurate.

There has never been any doubt that the oil era would come to an end, and considerable planning has been undertaken for the event. But whether the classic boom-bust conditions, of high unemployment and out-migration, will follow remains to be seen. Preparation for the post-oil era has been made, but it is questionable whether the Charitable Trust has sufficient money, a total fund of £130,529,000 in 1993, set aside to sustain the traditional

1. Financial Times, 29 April 1995 p.18.

2. Smith, H., (1977) p.80, Blackadder, A., (1986) p.58, and Piedad, Planning Economic and Development Consultants, The Economic Impact Of Declining Oil-Related Employment In Shetland. (1991).

industries, nor is it clear what will happen to the expanded service sector dependent largely on oil.³ This thesis has shown that the experience of Shetland in the 20th century is much more complex than core-periphery relationship of exploitation and dependency would imply, and the periphery can be resilient in the face of change. Hopefully this will ring true in the next chapter of Shetland's history.

The level of resilience should be qualified, as the Shetland economy, with the exception of both World Wars, was plagued by recession until the 1960s. The islands suffered a century of depopulation, for the economy was unable to sustain it at previous levels. This was probably part of a painful rationalisation process, which seemed to be levelling out in the 1960s. A degree of stability and prosperity had therefore been reached before the onset of North Sea oil, with funds from central government consciously diverted to aid peripheral regions. It is not surprising then that oil-related developments, which the islanders knew would be short-term, were met with such resistance. A balance had apparently been reached where the economy could sustain its population, admittedly aided by central government finance, and oil threatened to disrupt this.

By concentrating on the impact of external shocks, it has been possible to compare World War One and World War Two with the construction era of oil developments. This has

3. Shetland Islands Council Charitable Trust Annual Report for the Year ended 31st March, 1993 p.7.

proved a useful medium in which to understand the oil boom, for the experience of both wars was an important forerunner to the impact of oil, which was carefully planned for in the light of these previous shocks. It has also illustrated the fusion of economic and social factors, and questioned the classic core-periphery relationship. In the case of both World Wars, the economic impact has been generally short, followed by economic depression. Both World Wars, and the construction era of the oil boom, temporarily suspended persistent problems faced by the island economy. Both wars expanded the internal and external market for goods, and this led to higher prices and increased profits. Additional capital and labour were also brought into the economy. But such conditions were not sustained, although this is less predictable for the oil era which has a much longer time span. One possible lasting benefit has been the scale of investment in the infrastructure, something a traditional economy would never have been able to undertake.

But lack of long-term economic change does not automatically lead to minimal social change. The Second World War encouraged substantial social change, while oil with its longer-term economic consequences did not bring the degree of change that was feared. This, therefore, questions whether economic peripherality necessarily leads to an insular and static society, for an important theme of this thesis has been to question the outsiders' view of Shetland, and the idea that a traditional economic base necessarily leads to a peripheral society. Outsiders

believe, because of its northern location and island status, that Shetland had and has a simple way of life based on toil by land and sea, a place where the sense of community is seen to be strong, and where society is untouched by evils of the industrial world. But arguably the cultural representation of Shetland is better made in W. Forsyth's film, Local Hero(1983), where the modern and traditional society appear to co-exist, than the truly 'traditional' society portrayed in Edge of the World, (1937), where communal values cannot be sustained against external pressures, and the island becomes uninhabited.

Shetlanders have sometimes used the outsiders' view of the islands to their advantage, for the periphery can have symbolic meaning in the consciousness of the core. In the case of Shetland this is expressed through H.I.D.B. funding, and the special powers given to the Council. Islanders ensured that maximum benefit was gained from the invasion of oil-related activity, and exploited the opportunities of expanded markets and capital brought by war. The periphery also displayed considerable resourcefulness, and was by no means backward in coping with the invasion.

Contrary to popular belief, Shetland does not have an insular society. It has an acute, alert, history of movement of people, and interaction with the wider world through trade, something outsiders appear to have overlooked in their perception of Shetland on the eve of the oil boom. As one local historian wrote in 1975,

Shetland's history can be interpreted as a succession of peoples who came by sea, who settled and built up a way of life only to have it replaced by the culture of new arrivals. Superimposed on this pattern are the smaller groups of people like the German merchants, the Dutch fishermen, the Norwegian freedom fighters and the British soldiers who came as visitors, stayed for a short time and did not impose their ways of life on the islanders although they cause modifications with their new ideas. It remains to be seen in which category future historians will place the oil men.⁴

The last word might rest with a local writer, J. W. Irvine, who in his book on Lerwick summed up the islanders' view, resigned to the impact of yet another external shock.

As oil settles into being simply another facet of the contemporary Shetland way of life, the people of Shetland can look back over the past years, just as they did at the end of the Second World War, and say with equal conviction, 'Shetland will niver be da sam again.' So much has happened in the intervening years. ... but the people have weathered the storm, the community has absorbed the oil and all its trimmings rather than the other way round, and whatever pattern life now follows it will be of the people's making.⁵

4. Nicolson, J. R., (1975) p.28.

5. Irvine, J. W., (1985) p.287, and p.303.

Appendix 1

ORAL INTERVIEWS.

Seventy-four interviews were undertaken in total, stretching from Horley, outside London, to the most northerly island of Unst. These were recorded over three time periods, March and April 1992, January and February 1993, and June and July 1993. Each candidate was interviewed once, although contact was made before, and often after the meeting. The candidates were chosen from extended family ties, personal acquaintances, and recommendations from the interviewees themselves. A few also replied to advertisements in the local and national press, though this received a poor response.

For interviewing purposes, three sets of questions were devised, copies of which are included in this appendix. The majority of candidates were aged in their seventies or eighties, though some were ninety years and over. Where possible, information was gathered on memories of the First World War. (Thirteen candidates provided details on World War One) The questionnaire directed, rather than dictated the interview.

All interviews were recorded, and a large proportion have been transcribed in dialect. Although problematic, direct speech has been used in the text as a means of capturing individual experiences. Spelling was modified as an aid to understanding.

Material has also been used from an oral project undertaken in 1989 as part of an under-graduate dissertation, 'The Role Of Women In The Shetland Economy In The Inter-War Years,' when twenty-four women were interviewed. These have been referenced by placing 1989 after the initials and date of birth of each individual.

WOMEN.IMPACT OF WAR UPON SHETLAND.PERSONAL DETAILS.

1. NAME
2. DATE OF BIRTH
3. PLACE OF BIRTH
4. MARRIED DATE(S)
5. FAMILY SIZE DATES OF BIRTH

OCCUPATION.

6. WHAT DID YOUR HUSBAND DO FOR A LIVING?
7. WHAT WAS YOUR FATHER'S OCCUPATION WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG?
8. WHAT WAS YOUR MOTHER'S OCCUPATION (IF ANY)?
9. WHAT DID YOU DO FOR A LIVING?
10. WHAT DID YOU DO DURING, AND AFTER THE WAR?

REACTION TO WAR.

11. HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN WAR FIRST BROKE OUT, AND DID YOUR ATTITUDE TO WAR CHANGE AS WAR PROGRESSED?

WAR AND WORK.

12. CAN YOU GIVE MORE DETAILS ON THE TYPE OF WORK YOU DID DURING THE WAR AND HOW IT DIFFERED FROM BEFORE THE WAR? I.E GIVE DETAILS OF AN AVERAGE DAY AT WORK DURING WAR CONDITIONS.

13. HOW MUCH DID YOU GET PAID, AND DID WAR AFFECTED YOUR WAGES?

14. DO YOU REMEMBER ANY CHANGES IN YOUR STANDARD OF LIVING DURING THE WAR, AND WERE YOU BETTER OFF AFTER THE WAR THAN BEFORE?

KNITTING INDUSTRY.

15. DID YOU KNIT DURING THE WAR?

16. WHAT TYPE OF GARMENTS DID YOU MAKE, AND WHO DID YOU SELL THEM TO?

17. CAN YOU REMEMBER THE PRICES YOU RECEIVED FOR YOUR GOODS AND WERE THEY SIMILAR TO THOSE OBTAINED BEFORE THE WAR?

18. WERE YOU A MEMBER OF THE SHETLAND HANDKNITTERS TRADE ASSOCIATION?

19. WHAT BENEFITS DID YOU RECEIVE FROM THEM?

20. DID THE INCOME BROUGHT FROM KNITTING HELP THE FAMILY BUDGET OR WAS IT ONLY FOR EXTRAS?

21. DO YOU REMEMBER ANY MACHINES BEING INTRODUCED TO THIS SECTOR OR ANY OTHER DURING THE WAR?

GENERAL SECTION.

22. HOW DID PEOPLE IN SHETLAND KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE EVENTS OF WAR?

23. DID THE WAR MAKE THEM MORE AWARE OF EVENTS OUTWITH SHETLAND?

24. DID WAR BRING ANY IMPROVEMENT IN COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN THE ISLES, AND BETWEEN SHETLAND AND THE MAINLAND?

25. DO YOU REMEMBER ANY GOVERNMENT RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON SHETLAND, SUCH AS TRAVEL OR MOVEMENT WITHIN THE ISLES?

26. HOW DID RATIONING AFFECT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY?

27. WAS THERE ANY FORM OF 'BLACK MARKET' IN THE ISLES, IF SO, HOW WIDELY WAS IT USED?

28. DID YOU HAVE MUCH TO DO WITH THE TROOPS STATIONED IN THE ISLES?

29. HOW DID SHETLANDERS REACT TO THE TROOPS?

30. DID PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES BECOME CLOSER DURING THE WAR, OR DID THE ARRIVAL OF SO MANY STRANGERS BREAK THE CLOSE TIES IN LOCAL AREAS?

31. WHAT TYPES OF ENTERTAINMENT WERE AVAILABLE DURING THE WAR, AND DID THIS DIFFER FROM BEFORE THE WAR?

POST-WAR PERIOD.

32. WHEN THE WAR ENDED DID YOUR LIFE SETTLE DOWN TO 'NORMAL', OR HAD THE DISRUPTIONS BEEN SUCH THAT THIS WAS NOT POSSIBLE?

WOMEN AND THE FAMILY SPHERE.

33. WAS YOUR LIFE ALTERED AS A RESULT OF WAR? (FOR EXAMPLE, DID THE ATTITUDES AND ASPIRATIONS CHANGE?)

34. DID YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE FAMILY CHANGE DURING THE WAR?

35. DID YOU TAKE OVER THE POSITION OF 'HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD' WHILE THE MALE MEMBERS' OF YOUR FAMILY WERE SERVING IN THE WAR?

36. HOW DID YOU, AND OTHER WORKING WOMEN, COPE WITH CHILDREN DURING THE WAR?

37. WHEN THE MEN RETURNED HOME DID THEY TAKE UP THEIR FORMER POSITION AS HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD OR WERE YOUR FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES MORE EVENLY DIVIDED?

FINALLY.

38. IS THERE ANY EXPERIENCE OF WARTIME LIFE IN SHETLAND THAT YOU REMEMBER PARTICULARLY?

MEN WHO STAYED IN SHETLAND DURING THE WAR.IMPACT OF WAR UPON SHETLAND.PERSONAL DETAILS.

1. NAME
2. DATE OF BIRTH
3. PLACE OF BIRTH
4. MARRIED DATE(S)
5. FAMILY SIZE DATES OF BIRTH

OCCUPATION.

6. WHAT DID YOUR WIFE DO FOR A LIVING?
7. WHAT WAS YOUR FATHER'S OCCUPATION WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG?
8. WHAT WAS YOUR MOTHER'S OCCUPATION (IF ANY)?
9. WHAT DID YOU DO FOR A LIVING?
10. WHAT DID YOU DO DURING, AND AFTER THE WAR?

REACTION TO WAR.

11. HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN WAR FIRST BROKE OUT, AND DID YOUR ATTITUDE TO WAR CHANGE AS WAR PROGRESSED?

WAR AND WORK.

12. CAN YOU GIVE MORE DETAILS OF THE TYPE OF WORK YOU DID DURING THE WAR AND HOW IT DIFFERED FROM BEFORE THE WAR? I.E GIVE DETAILS OF AN AVERAGE DAY AT WORK DURING WAR CONDITIONS.

13. HOW MUCH DID YOU GET PAID, AND DID WAR AFFECTED YOUR WAGES?

14. DO YOU REMEMBER ANY CHANGES IN YOUR STANDARD OF LIVING DURING THE WAR, AND WERE YOU BETTER OFF AFTER THE WAR THAN BEFORE?

15. DO YOU REMEMBER ANY MACHINES BEING INTRODUCED TO HELP WITH WORK DURING THE WAR?

GENERAL SECTION.

16. HOW DID YOU KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE EVENTS OF WAR?

17. DID THE WAR MAKE YOU MORE AWARE OF EVENTS OUTWITH SHETLAND?

18. DID WAR BRING ANY IMPROVEMENT IN COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN THE ISLES, AND BETWEEN SHETLAND AND THE MAINLAND?

19. DO YOU REMEMBER ANY GOVERNMENT RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON SHETLAND, SUCH AS TRAVEL OR MOVEMENT WITHIN THE ISLES?

20. HOW DID RATIONING AFFECT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY?

21. WAS THERE ANY FORM OF 'BLACK MARKET' IN THE ISLES, IF SO, HOW WIDELY WAS IT USED?

22. DID YOU HAVE MUCH TO DO WITH THE TROOPS STATIONED IN THE ISLES?

23. HOW DID SHETLANDERS REACT TO THESE TROOPS?

24. DID PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES BECOME CLOSER DURING THE WAR, OR DID THE ARRIVAL OF SO MANY STRANGERS BREAK THE CLOSE TIES IN LOCAL AREAS?

25. WHAT TYPES OF ENTERTAINMENT WERE AVAILABLE DURING THE WAR, AND DID THIS DIFFER FROM BEFORE THE WAR?

POST-WAR PERIOD.

26. WHEN THE WAR ENDED DID LIFE SETTLE DOWN TO 'NORMAL', OR HAD THE DISRUPTIONS BEEN SUCH THAT THIS WAS NOT POSSIBLE?

WOMEN.

27. WHAT ROLE DID WOMEN PLAY IN THE WAR (LANDWORK, KNITTING, MILITARY ACTIVITY)?

28. DO YOU THINK WAR CHANGED THE WORK UNDERTAKEN BY WOMEN, ESPECIALLY AS SO MANY OF THE MEN FOLK WERE AWAY?

FINALLY.

29. IS THERE ANY EXPERIENCE OF WARTIME LIFE IN SHETLAND THAT YOU REMEMBER PARTICULARLY?

13. WHERE WERE YOU BASED?

14. WHERE DID YOUR WAR SERVICE TAKE YOU?

15. CAN YOU REMEMBER ANY OF YOUR PERIODS HOME ON LEAVE IN SHETLAND?

16. DID YOU NOTICE WHETHER WAR DISRUPTED THE 'TRADITIONAL' WAY OF LIFE IN THE ISLES, IF SO, IN WHAT WAY?

POST-WAR PERIOD.

17. WHEN WAR ENDED WERE YOU ABLE TO SETTLE DOWN AND LIFE RETURN TO 'NORMAL', OR HAD THE DISRUPTIONS BEEN SUCH THAT THIS WAS NOT POSSIBLE?

18. WERE YOU, AND THE OTHERS RETURNING FROM THE WAR, LESS PREPARED TO ACCEPT YOUR LOT, AND THE LIFE-STYLES OF YOUR PARENTS AS A RESULT OF THE EXPERIENCES BROUGHT BY WAR?

19. WHAT WERE THE MAIN CHANGES IN SHETLAND WHICH STRUCK YOU WHEN YOU RETURNED HOME FROM SERVICE?

20. WHAT DID YOU DO WHEN THE WAR ENDED? (RETURN IMMEDIATELY TO SHETLAND? GET A JOB EASILY?)

21. WHAT WERE THE PROSPECTS LIKE FOR MEN AND WOMEN RETURNING FROM WAR?

22. DO YOU THINK WAR BROUGHT ANY IMPROVEMENT IN COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN THE ISLES, AND BETWEEN SHETLAND AND THE MAINLAND?

23. DO YOU THINK SHETLAND AND SHETLANDERS BECAME MORE INVOLVED WITH BRITAIN AND BRITISH AFFAIRS THAN HAD BEEN THE CASE BEFORE?

Appendix 2

PROFILE OF TOWN AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS IN 1913 AND 1920.

An outline of the Town and County Councillors has been drawn from a number of sources, and like all record linkage involves a margin of error. The sources used to compile this list include, Manson's Shetland Almanac for the members of the councils. The Register of Confirmations (Shetland Archives SC12/37) and Inventories and Testaments (Shetland Archives SC12/36) for dates of death and estates. The register of death was also utilised, and further information was sought from obituaries in the Shetland News, articles in the New Shetlander and Shetland Life as well as information from, Margaret Robertson, Sons And Daughters Of Shetland 1800-1900, (Shetland 1991) and Lerwick During The Last Half Century (1867 - 1917), by Thomas Manson (2nd ed Lerwick 1992). Finally, valuable information was given by Mr B. Smith, Dr M. Manson, Mr L. Robertson, Mr J. Morrison, Mr C. Lawrence and various parish registrars.

TOWN COUNCIL 1913.

NAME	OCCUPATION(S)	ESTATE
A. L. Laing (b.1858 d.1942) (Provost)	Pharmacist	£1,120/10/-
P. S. Goodlad (b.1858 d.1936) (Senior Bailie)	Proprietor of Shoe Shops	£1,005/15/3
R. Stout (b.1842 d.1915) (Junior Bailie)	Postmaster	£1,418/15/5
R. D. Ganson (b.1856 d.1936)	Transport Business (Carters and Hirers)	£16,127/11/7
A. R. S. Ratter (b.1863 d.1943) (SOCIALIST)	Printer, Librarian and Curator	£193/10/6
W. Sinclair (b.1876 d.1945) (LABOUR/SOCIALIST)		

	Supervisor of Bakers	£479/13/9
J. Laing (b.1859 d.1946) (LABOUR)		
	Stone Hewer	£2,566/7/11
A. Smith (b.1842 d.1917)		
	Ship Broker, Merchant & Fish Curer	£1,652/7/8
J. Smith (b.? d.?)		
	? Partner in Local Business	?
W. S. Smith (b.1849 d.1920)		
	Shipping Agent & Clothing Trade	£390/-/1
J. C. Grierson (b.1863 d.1915)		
	Partner in Solicitors	£799/10/9
R. H. Ramsay (b.1875 d.1957)		
	Photographer	£11,003/5/4

COUNTY COUNCIL 1913. (where not detailed as above).

Unst, N -

C. G. D. Sandison
(b.1856 d.1931)

General Merchant, Boat
Building & Fishcurer £8,236/17/1

Unst, S -

J. P. Sandison
(b.1858 d.1936)

Flock Master £8,858/15/5

Fetlar -

Sir Arthur Nicolson Bart
(b.1842 d.1917)

Landlord £21,274/17/7

North Yell -

H. Mouat
(b.? d.1942)

Manager of Lerwick Firm £3,182/18/6

Mid and South Yell -

G. W. Hoggan
(b.? d.?)

Pearl Insurance Agent

?

Whalsay and Skerries -

J. Shearer
(b.1867 d.1949)

Fish Curers & Ice
Manufacturers

£1,853/13/5

Northmavine, N -

T, Anderson
(Vice- convenor)
(b.1853 d.1936)

General Merchant, Fish Curers
& Livestock Dealer

?

Northmavine, S -

J. W. Robertson
(b.1878 d.1958)

Shipping, Trade, Merchant,
Ship Building Marine Work
& Other Business

£2,764/17/6

Delting, N -

J. P. Henderson
(b.? d?)

Dentist and Shipping

?

Delting, S -

L. Robertson
(b.? d.?)

? Lerwick Merchant

?

Nesting and Lunnasting -

J. A. Loggie
(b.? d.?)

Publican

?

Sandsting -

H. J. Henderson
(b.1869 d.1932)

Draper, Shipping Agent &
Merchant

£2,380/7/3

Aithsting -

J. C Grierson
(Convenor)

Walls -

J. Thomason
(b.? d.1924)

Factor of Vaila and
Burrastow Estate

£1,773/16/2

Sandness -

D. Sutherland
(b.1850 d.1928)
(SOCIALIST)

Jeweller

Tingwall -

L. J. Garriock
(b.1878 d.1938)

Fish Curing and Trade,
Landowner & Businessman ?

Whitnass and Weisdale -

P. Anderson
(b.1861 d.1914)

Butcher, General Merchant
& Livestock Dealer £1,012/7/4

Bressay -

R. D Ganson

Burra and Quarff -

R. Inkster
(b.? d.1919)
(LIBERAL THEN UNIONIST)

Factor, Fishcurer, Merchant,
Boat Owner
& Businessman £4,77/19/-

Lerwick (Landward)

S. W. Fordyce
(b.1855 d.1921)
(LIBERAL)

Plumbing Business £287/13/10

Lerwick (North) -

W. A. A. Tulloch
(b.1858 d.1943)

Draper, Hosiery Merchant,
Boat Owner
& Fish Trader £4,840/17/7

Lerwick (Central) -

J. R. Jamieson
(b.? d.?)

? Florist, Confectioner
and Butcher ?

Lerwick (South) -

C. B. Stout
(b.1845 d.1928)

Pharmacist £1,429/14/3

Cunningsburgh -

F. H. Pottinger
(b.1875 d.1918)

(SOCIALIST)

Commission Agent

£263/13/10

Sandwick -

W. H. Shand

(b.1842 d.1929)

(CONSERVATIVE)

Shipping Agent

£17,834/16/10

Dunrossness, N -

J. Budge

(b.1867 d.1940)

Farmer

?

Dunrossness, S -

Rev.

W. Fortheringham

(b.? d.?)

Baptist Minister

?

TOWN COUNCIL 1920.

P. S. Goodlad

(Provost)

R. D. Ganson

(Senior Bailie)

A. Ratter

(Junior Bailie)

W. Sinclair

J. Laing

M. L. Manson

(b.? d.1943)

(SOCIALIST/LABOUR)

Law Clerk

?

J. Smith

R. H. Ramsay

J. T. J Sinclair

(b.? d.1935)

Herring Exporter

£12,709/4/9

J. J Pottinger

J. Morrison

(b.1876 d.1937)

(LABOUR/LIBERAL)

Stone Mason ?

R. Ollason
(b.1888 d.1961)

Stationer
and Newsagents

£1,208/1/10

COUNTY COUNCIL 1920.

Unst, N -

C. G. D. Sandison

Unst, S -

J. P Sandison

Fetlar -

Sir Arthur Nicolson, Bart

North Yell -

G. Jamieson
(b.? d.1932)

Retired Sea Captain

£872/9/5

Mid and South Yell -

T. R Manson
(b.? d.1940)

Merchant, Livestock, Dealer,
Farmer & Publican

£5,148/5/3

Whalsay and Skerries -

E. T. Hyde
(b.? d.?)

Governor of the Poor House ?

Northmavine, N -

A. B. Garriock
(b.? d.1946)

Import Agent and Bill &
Bullion Broker
in China

£3,414/17/9

Northmavine, S -

J. W. Robertson

Delting, N -

J. Hay
(b.? d.?)

Auctioneer

?

Delting, S -

J. Peterson
(b.? d.?)

?

Nesting and Lunnasting -

J. Hunter (b.1872 d.1920)	Merchant	£1,508/3/11
Sandsting - R. A. Sutherland (b.? d.?)	? General Merchant	?
Aithsting - T. A. Anderson (b.? d.1920)	Farmer, Curer, Manager of a Hotel, Local Businessman Factor of Vementry Estate	£5868/6/11
Walls - A. W. Groundwater (b.? d.?)	? Minister	?
Sandness - D. Sutherland		
Tingwall - J. P. Mouat (b.1867 d.1937)	Commission Agent and Land Surveyor & Valuer	£2,085/8/7
Whitness and Weisdale - W. Sinclair		
Bressay - T. J. T Anderson (b.1861 d.1938)	Merchant and Farmer	£4,377/3/-
Burra and Quarrf - (vacant)		
Gulberwick - S. W. Fordyce		
Lerwick (North) - W. J. Greig		
Lerwick (Central) - J. J. Pottinger (b.? d.?) (SOCIALIST)	Commission Agent & Printer in Edinburgh	?
Lerwick (South) -		

J. Laing

Cunningsburgh -

L. Anderson
(b.1870 d.1929)

Publican & Restaurant
Proprietor

£4,805/15/3

Sandwick -

W. Jamieson
(b.1872 d.1937)

General Merchant

£1,066/7/3

Dunrossness, N -

J. Budge

Dunrossness, S -

W. L. McDougall
(b.? d.1937)

Factor of the Sumburgh
Estate

£1,844/4/8

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D11 Shetland Library Collection.

D21 Papers of H. M. F. Clark, Lerwick.

D31 Hay and Company Papers.

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