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TILL THE SEA RUNS DRY: THE IMPACT OF NORTH SEA OIL
DEVELOPMENT ON AN EAST COAST SCOTTISH VILLAGE AND TOWN

City University of New York

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TILL THE SEA RUNS DRY: THE IMPACT OF
NORTH SEA OIL DEVELOPMENT ON AN
EAST COAST SCOTTISH VILLAGE AND TOWN

by

JANE HURWITZ NADEL

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate
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Abstract

TILL THE SEA RUNS DRY: THE IMPACT OF
NORTH SEA OIL DEVELOPMENT ON AN
EAST COAST SCOTTISH VILLAGE AND TOWN

by

Jane Hurwitz Nadel

Adviser: Dr. Joan P. Mencher

This dissertation examines the impact of a North Sea oil support base upon the relationship between an east coast Scottish village and town. In 1973, the Montrose commercial elite and a multinational shipping company decided to construct an offshore oil support base upon the foreshore of Ferryden village. The villagers did not organize collective opposition to this decision, and town dwellers believed that nearly everyone in Ferryden approved of it. Research has shown, however, that many villagers objected strongly to the base and resented the ways in which they were excluded from the decision-making process. Two main questions arise: Why do town and village versions of village response contradict each other, and why did

collective protest not (apparently) occur. The dissertation seeks to answer these questions through an analysis of Ferryden's historically subordinate relationship to the town of Montrose, whose elites have long dominated the political and economic life of the region. It also analyzes the development of village social structure, which was conditioned largely by Ferryden's stigmatized identity as a poor fishing village.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to extend my thanks to Dr. Joan P. Mencher for supervising this dissertation, as well as for her help and guidance throughout my graduate career. I also thank Dr. Eric Wolf and Dr. Jane Schneider who made many valuable criticisms and suggestions on the dissertation. I owe special thanks to my parents, Dr. and Mrs. George Hurwitz, for never questioning the importance of a graduate education. Lastly, but most importantly, I thank my husband, Stanley Nadel, for his love and patience as well as for his scholarly advice.

PREFACE

In 1975, having read about the North Sea oil boom in the American and British press, I set out for Aberdeen, the "Houston of Scotland," to consult with scholars at the University of Aberdeen about a possible research site. I left London on an early morning train hoping to reach Scotland's northernmost city in time to secure a bed and a meal. The train was noisy and crowded with fans headed for the 1975 International Open Golf Championship which was under way in the town of Carnoustie, about fifty miles south of Aberdeen. Despite the collective wish of hundreds of golf enthusiasts to reach Carnoustie sooner than possible, the train moved slowly, and by the time we passed Edinburgh, it was creeping along the tortuous North Sea coast route. It was late autumn, cold and drear, and the overcast sky looked ominous. About halfway between Edinburgh and Aberdeen, I began to worry that I'd arrive too late even to find a place to stay. The train began to make sudden and inexplicable stops. Finally, word trickled through the compartments that the train ahead of ours had derailed at the town of Stonehaven, and that we

were unlikely to reach Aberdeen before late evening.

I had fallen into a conversation with a college student from the town of Montrose, which we were then approaching, and as we pulled into the station, I made a quick decision. It would be better to get a night's sleep thirty miles from my destination than to be stranded in the Aberdeen station. I reached the Montrose tourist office minutes before their doors closed, and was directed to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ingalls, who did bed-and-breakfast accommodations. Their hospitality proved to be the best introduction I could have had to the area. They took pity on the young "American lassie" who was travelling all alone, and saw to it that I had company, and more food than I could eat. They urged me to stay in Montrose for the weekend, and took me for a drive up into the glens and around the neighboring inland villages. Our last stop was Ferryden, the village across the river from Montrose. As we crossed the bridge, my hosts pointed out the new Sea Oil Services Base which lay on the village's northern flank. It was at this point that the possibility of Ferryden as a research site first crossed my mind.

The following Monday I went to Aberdeen. I spent a month there, conferring with regional planners, reading about the local area, and about North Sea oil. I also

spent a number of valuable hours consulting with several people at the University of Aberdeen. The Institute for Sparsely Populated Areas and the Sociology Department were keenly interested in North Sea oil related research, and had a number of their own projects under way. In addition to much good advice, they confirmed my suspicions that Peterhead, my original research target, was already being intensively studied by British researchers. The Montrose area was as yet untouched, however, and they welcomed the addition of a newcomer to the scene.

In January of 1976, my husband joined me in the flat I had rented in Montrose. (No housing had been available in the village.) I commuted daily to Ferryden by bicycle. I conducted interviews, visited people in their homes, attended public gatherings, "participating" and "observing" in traditional anthropological fashion. I spent hours poring over the local newspaper files, reconstructing the sequence of oil development events. Then I went to old records, and devoted several weeks to the local history section of the Montrose library and the old parish registers in the town Registrar's office. My first goal was to map out roughly the history and underlying social structure of Ferryden. My next goal was to try to reach some understanding of how this "fishing

village" (as it is described locally) had responded to the introduction of the offshore oil support base, which since 1973 has stood between it and the town. The question which kept recurring to me was this: how could such a radical physical transformation of the village's environment pass without apparent significant comment? Why did Ferryden appear so passive to the outside observer, at once swept up in the tides of change, and frozen in the identity of the past?

All my training in anthropology had led me to believe that a major change in one part of a social system must have some impact upon other parts of the system. Yet most Montrosians and many Ferrydeners continued to insist that the oil base had merely added money and excitement to the local scene, and that it had subtracted or altered nothing. Comments on its impact were generally restricted to remarks on the view. I was skeptical, but for quite a while was unable to substantiate my feelings. It began to appear that I must accept what I was told at face value--perhaps I was inventing a problem where none existed. Not until I learned more about the history of Ferryden and Montrose, and of the longstanding relationship of economic and political dominance and dependence did the mystery begin to unravel. The oil base development began to take

shape within the context of past years. I learned that in many ways it did in fact not represent a striking departure from previous experience, that the social, political, and economic matrix within which it had grown was closely tied to centuries of local and regional history. It then became my task to try to piece together the place of Ferryden in a world where "plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose."

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The Problem

This dissertation is a case study of social power, and of the impact of the quest for energy upon the powerless. Its main goal is to examine the relationship between the small, one-time fishing village of Ferryden, on the east coast of Scotland, and its dominating neighbor, the town of Montrose. In 1973, an offshore oil support base was constructed on Ferryden's doorstep. The people of Ferryden have had very little to say about this development. They have derived few benefits, and considerable annoyance, from the base and its activities. Most villagers, however, have been very reticent in expressing their feelings publicly, and most Montrosians have claimed that Ferryden was unanimous in approving the base, "except for a few crackpots and holiday-home owners."

Ferryden has been almost totally dependent upon Montrose for economic survival since its birth, some 250 years ago. The village was established by a landowner, who wished to expand his capital by entering the herring fishing trade. To do so, he had to import skilled

fishermen from the Moray Firth (about 150 miles north/northwest). He persuaded several families to move to the southern edge of the South Esk River mouth, and set them up with cottages, boats, and gear. Over the next few decades, the villagers also entered the local inshore white fishing trade, selling their catch through small-time middlemen from Montrose. By the middle of the nineteenth century, however, the small-time middlemen had been replaced by fish-curing companies which could market greater quantities of fish at greater distances. By the late nineteenth century, only one of these Montrose companies survived, but its monopoly made it very powerful. The Company exercised control over the village economy, as well as over village politics. By the turn of the century, Ferryden could in many ways be called a "company village."

Ferryden's dependence upon fishing, and upon the Company as its sole market outlet and source of credit made the village not only an occupational community, but a stigmatized and socially isolated one. In common with other Scottish fishing villages in the east and northeast, its relationship with town dwellers and landward communities was uneasy. Outsiders looked down on fisherfolk and labelled them inferior and untrustworthy. In response,

the fisherfolk resented and distrusted outsiders, and their social and religious institutions remained almost entirely separate from those of Montrose. Ferrydeners had no access to political power or economic independence; they did develop a strong sense of village and fisherfolk identity, and a kind of defensive pride.

Between the two World Wars, Ferryden's fishing base failed. The Company withdrew from herring and white fishing to concentrate upon salmon, sea trout, and mussels, which required far less labor. The villagers were forced either to emigrate, or to work in Montrose itself, mostly as builders' laborers or factory workers. While the fishing economy dissipated, Ferryden's sense of community solidarity and insularity did not. The village remained dependent upon the town, but continued to be excluded from Montrose's political processes and economic improvements. Administratively, Ferryden was part of the civil parish of Craig, which was dominated by its landward, agricultural area, controlled by farmers and wealthy landowners.

With continuing emigration, and the contraction of local employment prospects, more and more of Ferryden's young people left the village, and "incomers" took their places. Incomers included not only in-marrying spouses of Ferrydeners, but holiday-home owners, and retired persons

looking for seaside housing. By the 1970's, roughly one-half of Ferryden's population fell into the Incomer category. Ferryden's actual demographic composition and occupational base were now at odds with its public and self-proclaimed identity as a "fishing village" composed of "fisher folk." This contradiction between statistical reality and social definition proved to be a crucial factor in the political processes surrounding the oil base development.

The Montrose Harbour Board is responsible for managing the harbor, its activities and development. The membership of the Harbour Board is drawn primarily from representatives of local businesses which have strong interests in seagoing trade. Only one Ferrydener sits on the Harbour Board, and his constituency is composed almost exclusively of older people, descendants of the fishing folk. His role on the Harbour Board appears to be largely confined to legitimating its decisions to the villagers, rather than in representing village interests to the Board. When he does represent village interests, he defines those interests on his own. As he is not now an elected representative, there is no official forum in which he can gather or be pressured by a variety of village opinions. When the oil base development was proposed, he gave it his

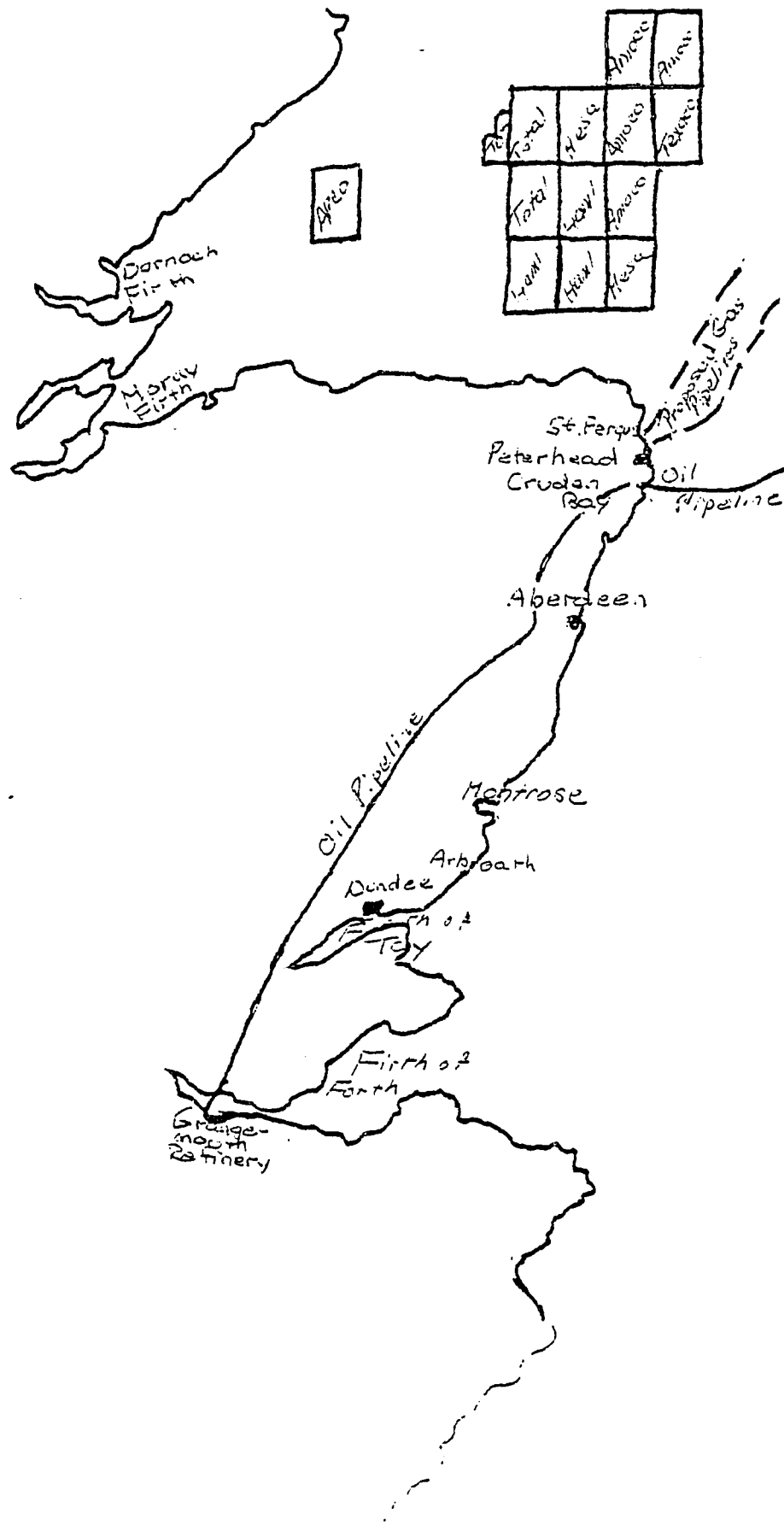
unqualified support and approval, and was very active in promoting it throughout the village. He also scoffed publicly at those who questioned the nature of its potential impact upon Ferryden. His role as information and patronage broker between the Board (and allied interests) and the village, proved very important in smoothing the way for base construction. He was able to employ the fishing village definition of Ferryden in dividing the population and in undercutting village opposition to the base. Those Ferrydeners who doubted or opposed the base were identified with the Incomer (and therefore, illegitimate) group, while those who supported it were included in the True Ferrydener (legitimate) group. Thus, village social structure, which had developed largely as a response to domination and stigmatization from Montrose, was manipulated for Montrose-based interests and the economic advantage of the local commercial elite.

I chose to study the impact of the North Sea oil boom in Scotland because of my interest in several closely related social processes. One is the process of rapid change within complex, stratified societies. Another is the range of responses of communities within such societies to exogenous developments, constrained by the demands of the "modern world-system."¹ A third is the exercise of

power by local elite groups, and their articulation with local communities. The decision strategies of local elites may have serious and far-reaching effects upon the social structure and boundaries of these communities. All these processes are connected to the phenomenon of social power, exercised through formal and informal political channels, economic institutions, and subtle cultural and ideological manipulations.

North Sea oil exploitation provides a very apt context in which to study these power processes. The North Sea countries adjacent to oil-bearing waters are all well-established parts of the European core. However, all have regions which have suffered from incomplete participation in national development. Scotland, as a region/nation of the United Kingdom, has been especially problematic in this respect, and attempts to define the entire country as core, semi-periphery, or periphery falter in the face of striking internal differences. Both Hechter² and Nairn³ have attempted to grapple with the problem in different ways. Whether Scotland's marginality rests upon issues of ethnicity or class (in my opinion, both are crucial), specific local developments must be analyzed according to their own specific histories. Each oil-affected community has responded differently, according to its needs, past

MAP 1 Scotland and the North Sea



experience, and decision-making structure.

While multinational corporations did maintain a near-monopoly over the highly capital-intensive phases of offshore oil production, in the case of Ferryden and Montrose, the local elites were able to keep control over construction and siting decisions and the distribution of smaller-scale entrepreneurial benefits. They employed local government and planning mechanisms, the local press, the employment and potential employment situation, and manipulated Ferryden's community boundaries (both cultural and physical) and Ferryden's internal divisions. They adapted very quickly to the demands of the offshore oil industry, which requires a complex of onshore services as well as the most sophisticated and expensive technology (backed by multinational corporate organizations). In order to elucidate this context further, brief preliminary discussions of North Sea oil and of local authority structures are required.

Background: North Sea Oil and Its Onshore Demands

In the mid-1960's, commercially recoverable reserves of natural gas were found beneath the waters of the southern North Sea. Most of these gas fields were located in the British sector. A small amount of oil was also discovered, and the excitement over the North Sea's

untapped potential led to a feverish exploration period. Great Yarmouth, an old East Anglian fishing port, was developed as Britain's first offshore support site. The trend of new finds led northward, however, and Great Yarmouth gradually lost ground to Aberdeen. Aberdeen, also a major fishing port, quickly became known as the "Houston of Scotland." The oil boom made a strong and immediate impact upon Aberdeen's economy. The cost of housing, services, food, and waterfront property skyrocketed. Oil and oil-related companies from all over the world established offices, warehouses, and dock facilities at Aberdeen Harbour. Downtown streets were filled with tall strangers wearing ten-gallon hats, and speaking the dialects of Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma. Little Scottish boys could be seen swaggering down Union Street, thumbs hooked into their belts, uttering their own versions of a Southern drawl.

By the early 1970's, however, Aberdeen was becoming too crowded. Expensive delays at the harbor became commonplace, and the costs of labor and space were becoming prohibitive. Thus the push for additional supply bases in other northeast and east coast Scottish ports got underway. By 1975, supply bases had been established in Leith (the port of Edinburgh), Dundee, Montrose, Peterhead, Lyness in

Orkney and Lerwick in the Shetlands.⁴ Cruden Bay, near Peterhead, was chosen as the site for a pipeline landfall. Major construction centers were established at Clydebank (near Glasgow), at Nigg Bay, in the Cromarty Firth⁵, and at Kishorn in Wester Ross. Apart from platform and drill-ship construction yards, however, the major impact of North Sea oil has been felt most directly on the north, northeast, and eastern coasts of Scotland.

Much has been written, by both scholars and journalists, on the onshore effects of offshore oil in Scotland. Mackay and Mackay⁶ discuss the potential effects of North Sea oil from the standpoint of political economy, as does Smith.⁷ Deirdre Hunt⁸ looks at the impact on the Aberdeen business community from oil-related developments at Aberdeen Harbour. Moore⁹ discusses the significance of oil for the economies of Scotland's underdeveloped northern regions. Baldwin and Baldwin¹⁰ provide a general survey of onshore developments in Scotland from a planning and environmentalist viewpoint. There have also been countless articles in newspapers, journals, and magazines which examine the North Sea oil picture from many different aspects. There have, however, been no anthropological analyses of specific communities and their responses to offshore oil-related change. In that respect, this

dissertation breaks new ground.

Local Government
and Planning Authorities: a brief background

Now we turn to a short discussion of the structure and organization of Scottish local government and planning procedures. The events covered in this dissertation span the periods both before and after the reorganization of local government enacted in 1975. Throughout the initial proposal, planning, and development procedures, the oil base involved authorities at local, district, regional, and national levels. Crucial economic decisions were dominated by the international oil market and by P&O, the primary developer, and local planning and entrepreneurial decisions were controlled by the Montrose area elite. However, all these decisions were constrained by the laws and planning requirements of Scotland and the United Kingdom.

Prior to the nation-wide reform of local government (enacted by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973), Scotland was divided into thirty-three Counties, each managed by a County Council. There were also 200 Town Councils, and 198 District Councils (responsible for rural, or landward areas). County Councils were elected by resident adults (over eighteen years of age). The Town Councils also sent representatives to the County. The Town

Councils themselves were elected directly by town-registered electors. Thus, Montrose was managed by its Town Council, which also sent a representative to the Angus County Council (with headquarters in the town of Forfar). The County Council's main responsibilities lay in setting rates (property taxes), providing social services, and supervising local development under the aegis of its Planning Committee. The Planning Committee was aided by a professional Planning Department. All proposed construction, alteration, and rezoning of property fell under the Planning Committee's veto power.

In 1975, the Counties were replaced by Districts (in many cases, including Angus, coterminous with former County territories). The Town Councils and small landward District Councils were abolished, and new electoral divisions were created to provide District Representatives. Above the Districts were superimposed the Regions. Scotland was organized into twelve Regions, and each has its own Regional Council, elected from the Districts within it. Angus District was included in Tayside Region, with headquarters at Dundee.

The Regions were instituted primarily as development and planning areas. Each is different in population and territorial size. Many regional functions appear to

be more analytical than administrative. Local planning and development proposals are still reviewed at the District (former County) level. For the Montrose/Ferryden oil base, proposals falling outside the autonomous domain of the Montrose Harbour Board were sent to Forfar. The mechanisms for public query and objection were also centralized at Forfar. The District retained much of its former bureaucratic structure and personnel. Since the Montrose-based elite was well represented on the District Planning Committee, local control over planning decisions was kept within the boundaries of a rather small circle or network.

The Ethnology of Scotland

Why should Scottish ethnology be separated from that of England? Until 1707, Scotland was an independent nation-state, with its own Parliament. Even after the Parliaments were united, Scotland continued to have separate legal and religious institutions, as well as a different system of local government. Linguistically, Scottish history is also different. For many years, Gaelic was the first language of those Scots living in the Highlands and Islands area. In the Lowlands, a variety of dialects incorporated words and usages distinct from those

of England. Finally, Scotland has never lost its sense of cultural distinction, of latent and overt nationalism. From both the Scottish and the outside observer's points of view, therefore, Scotland represents more than merely a region of Britain.

Scottish ethnology has two major weaknesses. Firstly, there has not been nearly enough basic ethnographic description. Littlejohn's Westrigg: the Sociology of a Cheviot Parish¹¹ remains the only full-length published ethnography of a Scottish community. Far more has been written on communities in England, Ireland, and Wales (although enormous gaps in that literature exist too). Many volumes which purport to discuss Britain omit or gloss over Scotland. Frankenberg's Communities in Britain: Social Life in Town and Country¹² does not include a discussion of a Scottish community. Several recent scholars have appeared to begin remedying the situation, however. One study is Foran's¹³ excellent and comprehensive analysis of kinship and land tenure on a small Hebridean island.

Some shorter articles have appeared recently. Prattis¹⁴ looks at lobster fishing, economic development, and social structure in the Western Highlands and Islands; Cregeen¹⁵ discusses the role of clan and class in the history of Argyll; Baks and Postel-Coster¹⁶ survey east

coast Scottish fishing communities from a perspective on tradition and change; Ian Carter, a sociologist, analyzes agricultural development and the social position of agricultural workers in the eastern Highlands¹⁷; Knipe¹⁸ examines the social structure of a Scottish fishing community on the northeast coast. For the most part, however, anthropologists have tended to bypass Scotland as a research area. Of the work which has been done, Littlejohn's is the only one which looks at an inland, as opposed to a coastal area. It is also the only study of a community outside the Highlands and islands. This is partly because most of Scotland's population lives on the coast. (There may also be an unconscious bias towards the Highland regions as the romantic vestiges of the old kin- and clan-based social systems so dear to anthropological hearts.)

Scottish ethnography has suffered also from a lack of synthesis. There have been no systematic attempts to assess the extent of general knowledge about Scottish society and culture, outside the realm of social history. Questions about similarities and differences among Scottish communities have not been raised. While different areas may contrast strikingly in religious, economic, occupational, geographical, historical, and linguistic respects,

there are also broad regions in which fruitful comparisons can be made. Moreover, communities from the Borders to John O'Groats, and from the North Sea to the Clyde share in a common sense of Scottish ethnicity, which deserves examination. As with the ethnographies of England and Wales, the main emphasis has been laid upon the community study. Each village, city district, New Town, and suburb tends to be presented in a cultural vacuum. The strong persistence and recent resurgence of Scottish nationalism may prompt some attempts to fill the gap.

Entrepreneurial Elites and the Management of Change

The focus in this dissertation comes to rest upon the role of local economic and political elites in managing new opportunities to their own advantage, and upon the effects of their domination upon a marginal, dependent community. By and large, British class structure has been scrutinized by sociologists who take a national, centralized perspective. Urry and Wakeford¹⁹, Guttman²⁰, Stanworth and Giddens²¹, Worsley²², and Goldthorpe²³, among others, have looked at the educational, kinship, occupational, political, and geographical backgrounds of Britain's ruling elite. Local-level analyses, however, have been rare. One must leave Britain altogether to find

useful anthropological models of elite systems and their operations. To mention but a few: Vincent²⁴ examines ethnicity, entrepreneurship, and local politics in the township of Teso, in Uganda; Bailey²⁵ brings forth the notion of the "elite council", a concept which can be usefully applied to the role of the Montrose Harbour Board; Barth²⁶ discusses the entrepreneurial process and the relationship of the entrepreneur to his community in northern Norway; Schneider, Schneider, and Hansen²⁷ analyze the role of regional elites in economic change in the European Mediterranean.

In the following five chapters, I trace the origins and growth of Ferryden and Montrose, the development of the Montrose commercial elite and its impact upon the social structure and organization of Ferryden, and the role of offshore oil in putting a modern face on an old situation. In the seventh, and concluding chapter, I discuss and analyze the significance of the power relationship for Ferryden's community identity, and for Ferryden's future.

FOOTNOTES

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²³John H. Goldthorpe, "Social Inequality and Social Integration in Modern Britain," The Advancement of Science XXVI No. 127 (1969).

²⁴Joan Vincent, African Elite: The Big Men of a Small Town (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1971).

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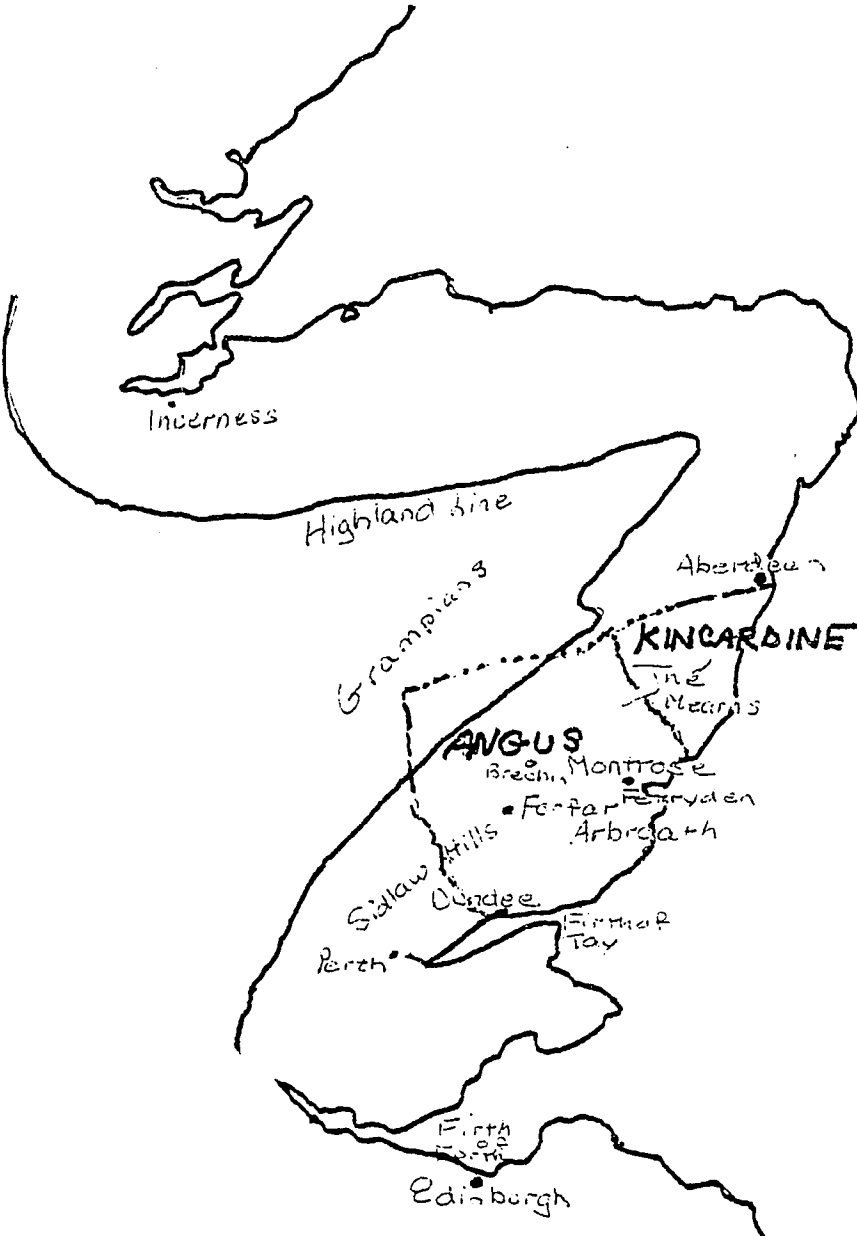
CHAPTER TWO: MONTROSE AND THE RISE OF A COMMERCIAL ELITE

Introduction: The Regional Context

In this chapter, I will describe the town of Montrose, its geography, history, and economy. I will place it in a regional context, identifying the town as a center for a wider system of production and exchange which both guided and was guided by the nature of the town's development. I will describe the town's hinterland, or "region," which includes the village of Ferryden, in order to elucidate Montrose's role as a dominating center, an upper-level node in a three-dimensional world. I will also discuss the development of this role, in order to lend perspective to my view of recent events in Ferryden, and its relationship with the town.

From its earliest days, Montrose has served as the funnel and outlet for the productive activities of its region. It has also served to link the region with wider levels of socioeconomic integration. Through their economic and political activities, as well as through other kinds of social links, the elite groups of Montrose have tapped the resources of Scotland, England, the Continent,

MAP 2 The Region: North Angus and the Mearns



and the far-flung corners of the British Empire. They were instrumental in drawing the valleys and fishing villages, the town proletarians and the agricultural laborers into what Wallerstein has dubbed "the Modern World-System."¹ The constraints of this world-system led to the expansion and contraction of various sectors of Montrose's region, which brings me back to the central theme of this dissertation--the satellite relationship of the village of Ferryden to the town of Montrose. Further chapters will deal with the ramifications of this dependency, in both historical and contemporary terms. This chapter will provide the background which will reveal the basis of Montrose's power, and highlight the groups which have held and perpetuated that power by responding aggressively to changing world conditions.

In this discussion of Montrose as a regional center, I am guided by Carol Smith's explanation of "central-place theory," in her introduction to the second volume of *Regional Systems*:

. . . regions are more than passive receptacles of human activities; they are meaningful partitions of space that subdivide large portions of the earth's landscape. Functionally defined regions represent several levels of integration, within a hierarchy of human settlements, that theoretically culminate in a single all-inclusive system; the nation, a continent, the world. Lower level regions are seen as transactionally defined components of larger systems . . .

central places are the organizing features of territorial systems (regions) that tie communities to one another through both hierarchical and horizontal links . . . the particular patterns and forms in which central place systems are organized will have direct consequences for the adaptation, identity, and survival of the communities linked together by the central places that define a regional system . . .²

The Region

Because regional systems are ultimately only parts of larger encompassing systems, my definition of the Montrose region must be somewhat arbitrary. I place the boundaries of the Montrose region roughly around the area known as North Angus and the southern portion of the Howe of the Mearns, in the neighboring ex-county of Kincardineshire. This area centers around the northern part of the Strathmore (Gaelic for Great Valley), which parallels the Highland Fault. The Highland Fault is a deep rift which separates the Highlands from the Lowlands of Scotland. Both Strathmore and the Fault run diagonally from southwest to northeast. Strathmore begins at the base of the Sidlaw Hills (which rise between the Tay River cities of Perth and Dundee), and runs northeastwards to the rocky outcrops of the Howe of the Mearns. The Howe (dale) thus forms an upland extension of Strathmore. The Howe and Strathmore have been divided politically along County lines, until the recent Reorganization of Local

Government (1975), which placed them within new administrative bodies known as Districts (frequently coterminous with Counties) and Regions (which embrace several Districts). (These new administrative and political units will have little to do with my discussion of events in Ferryden and Montrose, but readers should be aware of their existence.)

Strathmore and the Howe can also be distinguished agriculturally. The soils of Strathmore are rich and loamy. A variety of crops, including raspberries, strawberries, potatoes, barley, wheat, oats, and legumes flourish there, along with herds of dairy and beef cattle (among them, the famous Aberdeen-Angus breed). Trees are thinly scattered, but reach a respectable height, and the ground swells gently around the central plain. The land of the Mearns is a striking contrast. Tough, clayey soils studded with rocks support some crops--turnips, oats, and potatoes, for the most part--but much of the land is given over to rough grazing for cattle and sheep. As one passes through the Howe going north toward Aberdeen and the Buchan peninsula, the land grows more rugged, and the sky is grayer. The fields and farmsteads are noticeably smaller, the houses meaner:

Netherhill's ploughman swore the rest of the stones

must have been torn up and broadcast over the arable land, the parks were as stony as the heart of the old wife herself . . . But it was no bad place for turnips and oats, the Netherhill, sometimes the hay was fair to middling but most of the ground was red clay and over coarse and wet for barley . . .³

Stretching back of the Howe and the vale of Strathmore, a line of hills rises up in the north west. These are the edge of the Grampians, the mountains of the eastern Highlands. Rocky and barren, stripped of trees for many centuries past, their slopes are covered only by gorse, heather, and rough hill grasses. The long-haired Highland sheep make narrow trails along their sides. Piercing the edge of this bleak expanse are the glens, the wooded river valleys which lie like green arrows in the folds of the hills. Narrow and sheltered, the glens provide homes for small clustered villages or hamlets, the only human settlements to be found this far inland. In winter, the glens are often cut off from the market villages and coastal towns for weeks at a time.

The land of North Angus and southern Kincardine is drained by the streams and rivers which flow out of the lochs (lakes) of the interior uplands. From Loch Lee, which is fed by the streams of Glen Lee, the North Esk River flows eastward. Running through wide Glen Esk (whose main settlement is the village of Tarfside), the

river winds through the village of Edzell (site of a major United States Navy communications base). From the point where it leaves the mountains, just above Edzell, to its North Sea outlet, the North Esk forms the northern boundary of the old County of Angus (now Angus District), and marks the end of Strathmore, and the beginning of the Mearns.

The South Esk River has its origins in the Grampians, above Loch Esk. Fed by numerous small streams which empty into it on its way down from the Highlands, the South Esk flows through Glen Clova, angling down to the town of Brechin, which lies about fifteen miles west of Montrose. After leaving Brechin, the river broadens, and takes a slower and smoother course to its mouth at the Basin of Montrose.

The Montrose Basin is one of Britain's foremost wildfowl centers. Roughly two and one-half miles across, and nine miles in circumference, this shallow tidal estuary fills up with seawater twice a day, and twice a day empties out again. When drained, it becomes a broad and fetid expanse of mud. When full, it is transformed into a blue lake, patrolled by squadrons of swans, which ride the tidal current in and out. The Basin also holds the town's main sewer outlet, and the same swans which look so regal floating on the tide, can often be seen with only their lower bodies visible, their long necks snaked

up into the sewer pipe in a search for food.

The greater Montrose area includes the town itself, (about two and one-half miles long and one mile wide) and the adjacent settlements: Rossie Island and Ferryden to the south, and the village of Hillside to the north. From Ferryden on southward, the substrata of Old Red Sandstone are overlain with lava flows, making the overlying soils extremely rich. The town itself rests upon sandstone layers, and the beach is lined by a long ridge of sand-dunes. These dunes stretch for miles along the coast, forming a series of crescent beaches interspersed with rocky headlands. The sea-winds blow continuously along the sandy ridges, remolding their contours like an insatiable sculptor. The fine white sands spill out over the roads, causing drifting problems unmatched by coastal snows.

The coastal climate is quite mild. Although Montrose lies at a latitude of between fifty-six and fifty-seven degrees (north of Goose Bay, Labrador, and about the same latitude as Riga, in the Soviet Union), the temperature seldom dips below freezing, even in mid-winter. Snowfalls are rare, and do not lie long on the ground. Two palm trees grow in the center of Montrose, and roses bloom in December. Summer temperatures, on the other hand, seldom rise above seventy-five degrees, and average in the

sixties, and nights may get quite chilly. Precipitation averages between twenty-five and thirty inches per year, with the heaviest rains falling during the winter months. Rainfall is generally light, but frequent, (and this is one of the driest parts of Scotland). The most dramatic feature of coastal weather is the sudden appearance of the haar, the dense white fog which blows in from the North Sea, and which can cover the coast within minutes. All vision beyond a few feet is obliterated when the haar moves in, and warm air quickly turns chill.

Inland and upland, the climate changes radically. Winters in the Highlands are long and severe. Each spring, unwary hikers are trapped in late-falling snowstorms, and die from exposure (sometimes less than fifteen miles from the palm trees of Montrose). The sun is rarely unobscured, and the treeless slopes offer no protection from the wind.

Montrose: 'Mare ditat, Rosa decorat' . . .
'The sea enriches, The rose adorns.'

--Town Motto, engraved above
the Public Library

The town of Montrose occupies a narrow sandy peninsula. It is bounded by the Basin, its tidal estuary--the South Esk River, and the North Sea. The town is quite flat, and as one approaches it by road, rail, or

sea, the 220 foot high Town Steeple comes into view long before the town itself. Montrose has a permanent population of slightly fewer than 11,000 people, augmented every summer by a flock of summer tourists, holiday-home owners, and visiting relatives. The High Street is the central commercial thoroughfare, and is lined with small shops: butchers, bakers, electrical suppliers, grocers, confectioners, florists, newsagents and booksellers, clothiers, shoe vendors, and gift shops. There are also two supermarkets (a recent innovation). The High Street merchants form the backbone of the Montrose branch of the Dundee and Tayside Chamber of Commerce.

Turning east, past the quiet residential districts with their eighteenth century town houses, and blocks of Council flats, one approaches the old textile mill, now used as a bonded warehouse. Nearby, their backs to the harbor, stand the two factories which are presently the largest individual employers of labor in the greater Montrose area. These are the Glaxo pharmaceutical plant, and the Cadbury-Typhoo cannery (known locally as Chivers, or 'the jammie'). I will return later to these two factories, and their significance to Montrose. Both of them are relatively new on the local scene. The real basis for the town's prosperity, and the key to its history, lies by

the docks. Montrose's heart is in its harbor. Waterborne trade--coastwise, Continental, and trans-Atlantic--spurred the town's expansion from a small market center to an important international port. As the fortunes of trade have waxed and waned, so have the size and significance of Montrose. The history of maritime trade can be read in the names of the streets which surround the docks: America Street, Baltic Street, California Street, India Lane, Marine Avenue, Meridian Street, Seagate, and Wharf Street. From salted salmon, linen cloth and herring, to potatoes, grain, beer, and most recently, oilfield supplies, Montrose has relied on the produce of its landward and seaward region to fill its ships' holds and town coffers. With the new and unanticipated North Sea oil boom, the harbor and its merchants have found themselves thrust into a totally new enterprise and they have not been backward in taking advantage of new opportunities.

The merchants of Montrose have a long history of successful adaptation to new resources, and offshore oil has appeared as the most recent in a long line of developments. In order to understand the functions and greater social significance of this "strategic elite"⁴ it is important to examine the evolution and diversification of Montrose's harbor-based economy. Without this examination,

the fate of Ferryden village lacks dimension and significance. The development of Ferryden has depended upon the needs and opportunities of the Montrose commercial elite, and the historical perspective is critical to an understanding of Ferryden, both past and present.

The Beginnings of a Burgh

Bonny Munross will be a moss, [bog]
 When Brechin's a borough toun;
 An' Forfar will be Forfar still,
 When Dundee's a' dung down!⁵

According to one authority⁶, the name 'Montrose' does not, as is frequently supposed, derive from the French, 'Mont Rose', or Mountain of Roses, but rather from the Gaelic, 'Moine a ros', meaning a bog or moss on a promontory or point between two waters. The origins of the town itself have also given rise to controversy. Its site has been inhabited for at least 800 years, and evidence of human habitation in the surrounding countryside leads back at least to 1700 B.C.⁷ Popular legend asserts that Montrose, with its Royal Castle, was flourishing as early as the tenth century, and that it was ravished by the Danes in 980. The origins of this account appear to stem from the historian Hector Boece, the imaginative first Principal of the University of Aberdeen in the early sixteenth

century.⁸ Boece also maintained that the original name of the town was 'Celurca.' Duncan Fraser (Montrose's late local historian) believes Boece's version to be entirely spurious:

Montrose, with its walls and its stronghold, its public buildings and its old name Celurca, are all historical fiction. There is no real evidence that it was founded before about 1100 A.D., or that it ever bore the name Celurca. But still his story may contain a grain of truth. We can be sure that the Danish sea captains knew the safe anchorages along the coast and the estuary of the South Esk was one of the safest of them all . . . By the twelfth century, life had returned to the coast and for the first time we hear of the town of Montrose. We hear too of a village or district nearby, called Sallork, from which Boece invented his Latinized 'Celurca'.⁹

Despite other published accounts to the contrary¹⁰, Fraser also maintains that Montrose did not receive its first royal charter until 1385, when Robert II granted the town merchants exclusive trading privileges, and transformed the market town into a Royal Burgh. This transformation paved the way for Montrose to expand its hegemony over the economy of the surrounding countryside, and marked its establishment as a regional center. As early as the fourteenth century, the burgesses of Montrose were beginning to lay the groundwork for their class's domination over North Angus (then known as Forfarshire) and the Howe of the Mearns.

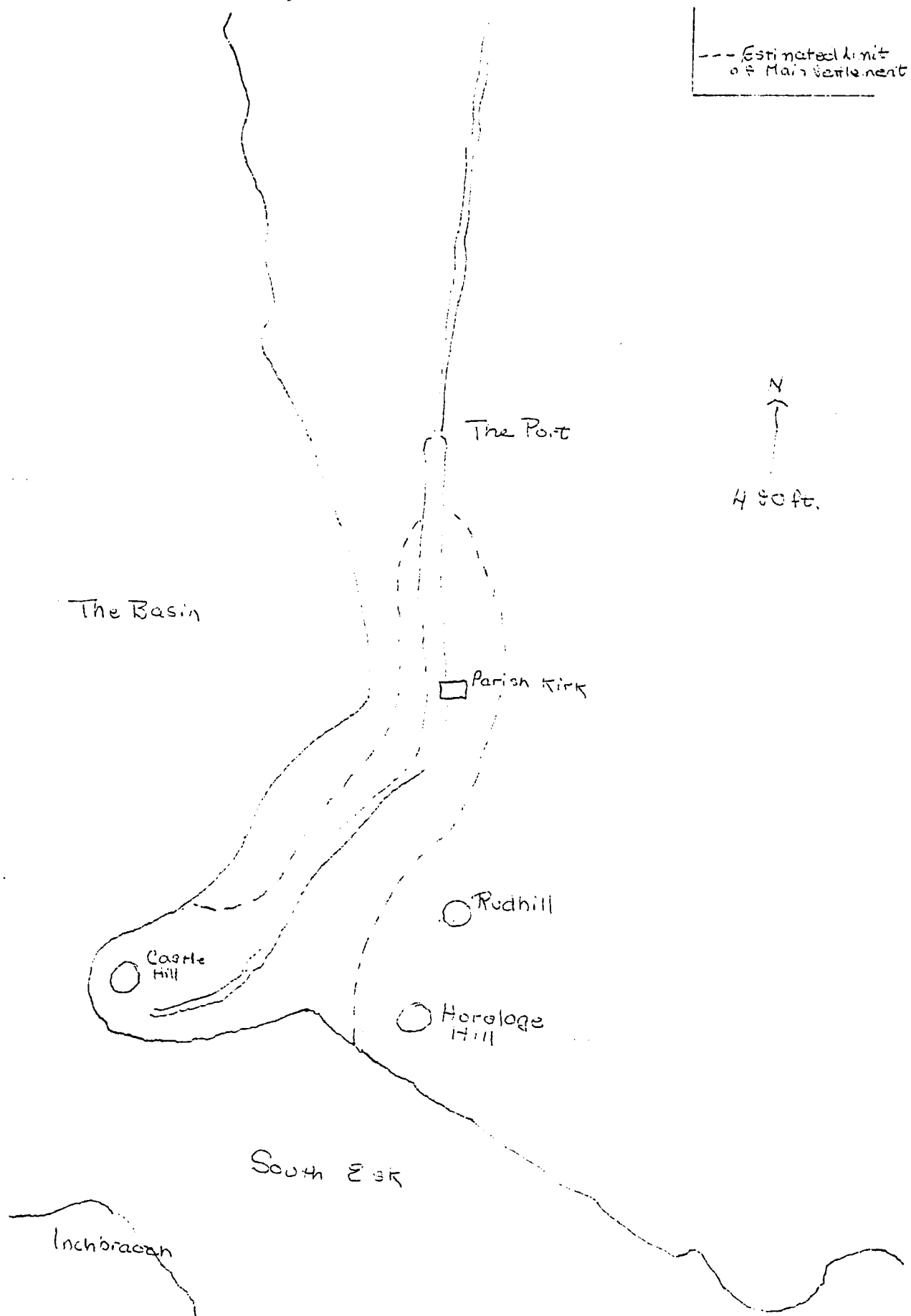
The establishment of Royal Burghs as enclaves of

power and merchant privilege became a widespread phenomenon throughout Lowland Scotland during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. This period also saw the rise of a number of 'burghs of barony,' generally smaller, weaker centers chartered directly by local noblemen, attempting to rival the power of the Crown. Royal Burghs provided a source of protected influence from the surrounding landowners and feudal nobility:

Essentially the burgess lived by commerce. He derived his subsistence from the difference between the price at which he bought and the price at which he sold; or between the capital lent and the amount of repayment. And since the legality of such intermediate profit-- unless it were merely a question of the wages of a workman or a carrier-- was denied by the theologians and its nature ill-understood by the knightly society, its code of conduct was in flagrant conflict with prevailing moral notions . . . In the last resort the collective independence which was the ideal of so many eager communities rarely went beyond varying degrees of limited administrative autonomy; but in order to escape the unintelligent restrictions of local tyrannies another course was available to the burgesses which, although it might seem little more than a desperate remedy, was often proved by experience to be the most effective. This was to place themselves under the protection of the great royal or princely governments, guardians of law and order over vast areas. Their very concern for their finances gave these authorities--as they came to appreciate more and more-- an interest in the prosperity of rich taxpayers . . .¹¹

Fraser makes it clear that the merchants of Montrose needed all the protection they could get. They were surrounded by hostile landowners (generally referred to as "lairds"), who disputed their rights over such

MAP 3 Montrose About 1500



Drawn from Butchart, 1968.

resources as the mussel beds of the Basin, and the salmon in the rivers. The lairds of Dun, an estate lying west of the Basin, became notorious during the fifteenth century for raids upon the town:

It was towards the end of the fifteenth century that the townspeople fell foul of their powerful neighbour, John Erskine, the Laird of Dun. The trouble began in 1492, over some salmon fishings in the North Esk. The burghers brought an unsuccessful court action against the laird's son, and from then on, life was unbearable in the town. In the early autumn of 1493 the Erskines raided the town's crofts and carried off the corn for their own use. Then, armed with dirks, spears and bows, they came by night to the Provost's house and threatened to pull the roof down on his head unless he came out at their bidding . . . All through the next year, the Erskine gang was the terror of the town . . .¹²

Apart from the incursions of the Erskines and others, the burgesses of Montrose enjoyed a number of privileges denied to the rest of the population, and were able to build a solid base for commerce. Their Royal Charter gave them a number of special trade privileges:

A burgh enjoyed valuable rights, for its burgesses were granted freedom from tolls throughout the kingdom, they held markets and fairs at regular intervals, they had monopolies on the making of certain goods for sale, such as bread, beer, cloth, and they also had exclusive rights in the export of local produce . . . The opportunities thus opened up appealed to foreigners. Flemish wool merchants settled in burghs on or near the coast . . .¹³

According to Smout, the burgesses enjoyed the sense of "belonging to a state within a state,"¹⁴ and as the state's

rulers, they were not above encroaching upon the rights of other "states":

The merchants of Montrose, not content with the wide privileges they already enjoyed, went gate-crashing regularly into a great fair in Aberdeen, which was reserved exclusively by a royal charter to King Alexander III for merchants who lived beyond the mountains to the north. They invaded this fair so persistently and so infuriatingly, that in 1289 the magistrates of Banff could stand it no longer. "Sorely complaining," they sent a protest to the Guardians of the Kingdom 'that these fairs are obstructed and every year disrupted by the burgesses of Montrose to the no small prejudice and injury of the aforesaid burgh of Aberdeen and indeed of the whole northern province.'¹⁵

Socially, the Royal Burghs were rigidly stratified.

There were two main classes of residents: burgesses, who were citizens, and "indwellers," who were not. The class of burgesses was itself divided into two parts, the merchants and the master craftsmen. The merchants held the upper hand, and controlled Burgh politics. They governed the Burgh through its Council, whose members could re-elect themselves perpetually. They also belonged to exclusive guilds, which restricted new members to the sons or sons-in-law of previous members. Organized into tight social cliques, the merchants were loath to relinquish any power to the master craftsmen. The latter were unable to alter this situation before the middle of the fifteenth century, and even then, their gains were minor. This restriction of power to a well-organized few brought a

certain amount of bitterness, which even the social changes wrought by the Reformation were unable to eradicate:

Inevitably, corruption followed in the wake of untrammelled privilege; town contracts went to Provosts' friends, the property of the burgh was let at derisory rents to relatives, and burgess rights were sold for private gain. Long after 1690, the Scottish town councils remained notorious for their graft.¹⁷

Montrose faced competition from the towns in Strathmore, and Sir Thomas the Rhymer's ditty may reflect the defiance of the landward communities against domination from the coast. A particular source of trouble was the cathedral town of Brechin, which was not a royal burgh. In the mid-fourteenth century, the Bishop of Brechin decided to seize burgh prerogatives, and ordered a market cross to be set up in the town, signalling that trade could be conducted there:

When the King heard about the Brechin market cross, he sent word to the Montrose merchants in 1362 that they had his authority to go to Brechin and pull down the cross. He told the Brechin merchants too that they must no longer deal in those staple commodities . . .¹⁸

By the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Montrose was doing a brisk trade with various parts of the Continent, exporting mainly salmon, and cod. The fish were cured with Portuguese salt, as the locally available salt was considered unfit for the purpose. Salmon, in particular, emerged as a pivotal commodity in the rising fortunes of

local entrepreneurs. Salted salmon was a delicacy favored by both the English and Continental aristocracies, and both the North and South Esk rivers were noted breeding grounds for the red fish:

When James I was eventually ransomed and allowed to return to his kingdom, he quickly got into the habit of paying only partly in cash for the goods he bought from England and overseas. The rest he paid in salted salmon. And Montrose was then one of the three main salmon ports of Scotland, with Aberdeen and Banff the other two. He arrived back in 1424. Between that year and 1429, shiploads of salmon were regularly exported from Montrose 'For the King's use . . .'¹⁹

Fish exporting helped to strengthen Montrose's position as a regional center:

As a royal burgh, it was the connecting centre for villages all along the coast. Not even Arbroath could export its own fish in those days.²⁰

Now that we have seen how the Burgh of Montrose got its start, it is time to turn to the period just before the Industrial Revolution, in which the Burgh as a whole increased in size, and the merchants expanded the scale and scope of their activities, and began to make alliances with the formerly hostile landed interests.

1600 To 1820: Consolidation and Expansion

Between the opening of the seventeenth century and the early years of the nineteenth century, the face of Scotland was radically changed. The Protestant Reformation,

the Union of the Crowns in 1603, the Union of the Parliaments in 1707, and the Industrial Revolution all left their marks upon burgh and village, lowland farm and Highland croft. During this period, Montrose ranked briefly as one of Scotland's fifteen largest towns, and its port became one of the busiest and most important on the east coast. The burghesses began to join ranks with the nearby lairds, consolidating wealth and family for the sake of prosperity. A new middle class emerged, and the pattern of social stratification became more complex.

The expansion of foreign markets and the exigencies of war led to new sources of wealth for the merchants of Montrose. Among those commodities which played a crucial role in Montrose's rise as a regional center were textiles, slaves, and tobacco. Smuggling was also an important eighteenth century endeavor, and according to Fraser²¹, many a respectable fortune was made in illicit rum, tobacco, and other "duty-free" luxuries.

Prior to the eighteenth century, wool was the only textile produced in commercial quantities on the east coast of Scotland. Both raw wool and coarse woollen cloth were brought to burgh markets from surrounding farms, and exported from there to the Continent. However, the Union of the Scottish and English Parliaments in 1707 had serious

consequences for the east coast woollen trade, and therefore for the prosperity of the burghs:

An important consequence of the Union was that Scotland was included within the English commercial system, which meant that the Scots had access to English colonies, but another consequence was that legal barriers were raised against many older Scottish overseas trades. For example, the export of wool to the Netherlands was simply illegal under English law, mainly to deprive the Leyden cloth industry, a serious rival to the East Anglian woollen industry, of vital raw material. After 1707, despite a great deal of smuggling, the new laws and the new customs service enforcing them managed severely to reduce the export of wool and coarse woollens from ports like Dundee to the Netherlands.²²

Under these circumstances, the linen trade eventually emerged as at least the temporary savior of the east coast textile ports. Flax and hemp had been grown in the fields of Angus as early as the seventeenth century, but only in small quantities. At this time, linens and ropes were produced in peasant households for domestic consumption and local sale, rather than for overseas export.²³ By the eighteenth century, however, large quantities of flax were imported from the Baltic provinces of the Russian empire, and Montrose became a major outlet for the linen production of Strathmore. In the 1740's, at the annual linen fair each May, linen yarn was sent to Montrose from Angus, the Mearns, and even from Aberdeenshire, for shipment to London and Manchester.

However, the rise of the linen trade was a relatively slow process. It was greatly assisted by the help given by a state-sponsored body, the Commissioners and Trustees for Improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland, which was set up in 1727, but not until the failure of the last Jacobite rebellion in 1746 were political conditions in Scotland stable enough to encourage rapid economic growth . . . Scots linen was largely produced in eastern Perthshire and in the counties of Angus and Kincardine, and north Fife. Here the specialty was relatively coarse linens, especially the kind known as osnaburgs, which appear to have been introduced first in Arbroath . . . but which rapidly more than replaced the old plaiden or coarse wool manufacture in east-central Scotland . . .²⁴

While Montrose never developed on its own as a major center for linen production (as did its southern rival, Arbroath), it played an essential role as a port for flax imports, and for the export of finished goods. As roads in the interior were still very primitive, and railways had not yet made their appearance, the sea was the one viable trade route.

This situation first revitalized and then seriously strained the capacity of the ports of the region. Montrose coped with the situation with less difficulty than most of the other significant ports because the harbor there was naturally rather a good one, and industrial growth in the port and its hinterland was not as spectacular as elsewhere. Partly this was because Montrose had always been very consciously the capital of the surrounding agricultural region . . .²⁵

During the second and third quarters of the eighteenth century, linen exports became "Scotland's premier industry."²⁶ Montrose was in the forefront of the

east coast export centers, and activity at the port began to increase dramatically. At the end of the eighteenth century, the burgh still outranked Arbroath, which was officially merely an outpost in the Montrose customs territory.²⁷ Luckily for Montrose, textiles were not the sole basis for its prosperity:

Montrose remained essentially a port for its rich agricultural hinterland, importing Scandinavian wood and iron, as well as coals and lime from elsewhere in Britain, and exporting grain and salmon . . . In 1789 Montrose was . . . still a significant east-coast port with a merchant fleet of fifty-three vessels whose total tonnage amounted to 3,543 tons . . .²⁸

By the 1780's, cotton was beginning to supersede linen in the west of Scotland, although not in the east. However, the spread of mechanization throughout the linen industry was giving impetus to its growth in such centers as Dundee and Arbroath, while the cottage and hand laborers of the rural hinterlands were being undercut. Montrose did not develop an industrialized linen industry of sufficient strength to withstand the competition.

Thus, while linen came to be more and more the staple of Arbroath and Dundee, it began to lose importance in Montrose around the turn of the nineteenth century. Other commodities remained valuable exports, however. After 1745, the salmon trade had reached a new high. By 1794, Montrose was exporting an average of 2400 barrels of

salmon per year, to such ports as Venice, Bilbao, Dieppe, LeHavre, Dunkirk, Cork, London, and Campvere, "the Scottish staple port in Holland."²⁹

Grain also remained a profitable export:

There was no lack of surplus grain. In the latter years of the seventeenth century the county of Angus was producing a great deal more than was ever needed for home consumption. But unlike the salmon, it went east instead of south. For well over a century Montrose supplied most of the grain and malt that Norway bought from Scotland . . . For a period of about forty years, in the first half of the eighteenth century, not even Leith was sending as many ships into the Baltic.³⁰

In return for the grain, the Norwegians sent out shiploads of wood:

The merchants needed wood, prefabricated in Sorlandet for easy assembly into salmon barrels or herring barrels, wine pipes or firkins. The landowners, farmers, and tradesmen needed some too, for an endless variety of uses, including vast numbers of oak cart spokes, now that roads were improving, and horses and carts were replacing the old pack mule.³¹

Many local fortunes were made on the grain and timber exchange. Local landowners began to experiment with new farming methods to improve their grain harvests. Field enclosures, and the construction of limekilns for fertiliser were among the more significant of these improvements.

Grain to some of the landowners around Montrose was no longer just a food. Like salmon and slaves and tobacco it was becoming more like coin of the realm instead, a tasty part of big business . . .³²

The Millars were a local family who got their start in the timber business. Robert Millar ran a thriving timber and shipping business in Montrose during the latter years of the eighteenth century. His son, Edward, carried on the business after his father's death in 1830, while his elder brothers moved on to Edinburgh and London, establishing new ventures in the Scottish and English financial capitals. While their father had married a Norwegian woman (with the surname of Hoyar), the sons married into English families. Their social standing rose, until the Millars became firmly meshed with the local landed gentry, although the family never became truly wealthy by upper class standards. One of their descendants is the present "laird" of Craig, the estate which lies southwest of Ferryden village.

Another local family which rose to prominence during this period were the Coutts. They made their original fortune in the triangular trade in which Montrose was an important node: salmon, slaves, and tobacco. Ships from Montrose exported salmon to the Mediterranean, loaded slaves bound for the New World, and returned with tobacco. According to Fraser, the Coutts family apparently monopolized the Montrose tobacco trade between 1715 and 1730:

One of the reasons for the rise of the tobacco trade in Montrose was very probably the fact that--in the early years at least--its merchants could be sure of a cargo all the way . . . It could be highly profitable . . . It has been said that if you sent three shiploads of slaves to America and two of the ships sank in the outward voyage, you could still recoup your losses and make a handsome profit on the proceeds of the third . . .³³

Like the Millars, the Coutts also sent sons to the cities of Edinburgh and London, while one stayed at home to mind the original family enterprise. This appears to have been part of a fairly widespread pattern. Smout³⁴ speaks of the growing Scottish middle class during the mid-eighteenth century, and the tendency for professional and commercially ambitious Scotsmen to emigrate, at least temporarily, to the larger centers, particularly to England and the Continent. By doing so, and by marrying into upwardly mobile families in their new homes, they forged ties which proved very important between their native towns and the centers of capital. Frequently, the influence of the home-bound branch rose commensurately with the success of the emigre branches.

Well over two and a half centuries have passed since the Coutts family first began to move to Edinburgh and then to London, and in all that time the municipal record which they set up has never been equalled. In two generations they held the Provostship of Montrose for no less than twenty-two years, at a time when there were plenty of other wealthy merchants on the Council . . . In the next generation one of the sons was building up a banking business in Edinburgh, with a branch in London. For two years in the early 1740's,

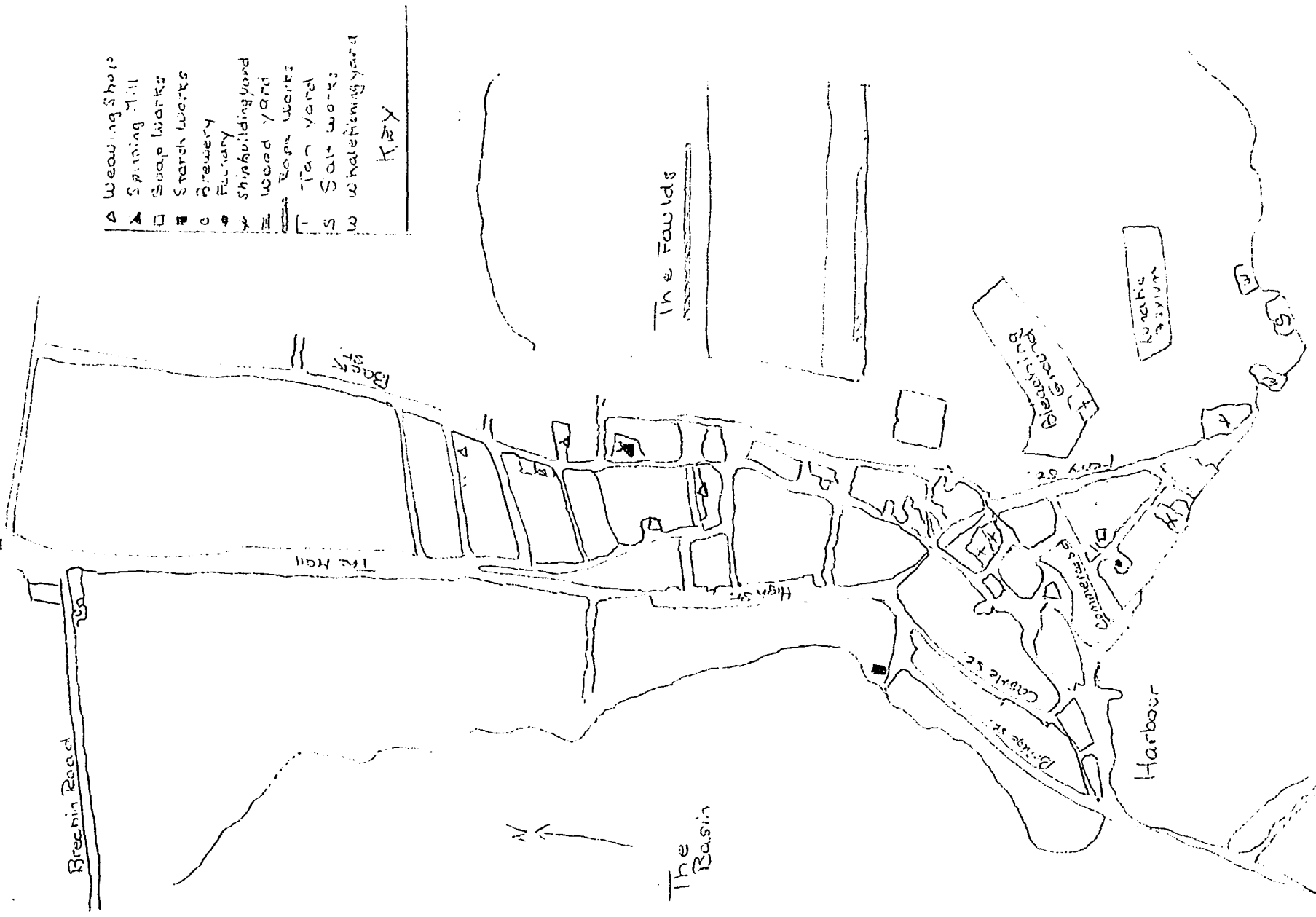
this John Coutts was Lord Provost of Edinburgh.³⁵

(The Coutts family is no longer represented in Montrose, but is known throughout the world of finance for Coutts Bank, in London.)

Smuggling was a lucrative enterprise in the Montrose area, and its rise appears to date from the seventeenth century. King James VI of Scotland and I of England (since the Union of the Crowns in 1603) banned the import of tobacco into Scotland in 1618, declaring that, "'this weade, so infective as all young and ydill persons ar in a manner bewitched thairwith.'"³⁶ Merchants were fined for importing the plant, but many considered the game worth the candle, and Scottish tobacco consumption rose steadily throughout the seventeenth century.³⁷ After 1715, the ban was lifted, but customs duties were onerous, and many importers preferred to avoid them, if possible.

Other popular smuggled items in the eighteenth century included brandy, rum, gin, Canary, Madeira, French, Spanish, and Portuguese wines, beer, soap, tea, and a number of assorted luxury goods. According to Fraser, "With the sole exception of Edinburgh there was not a town in Scotland that was a better shopping center."³⁸ The game became increasingly risky after the Union of the Parliaments in 1707. The English-run Customs department was

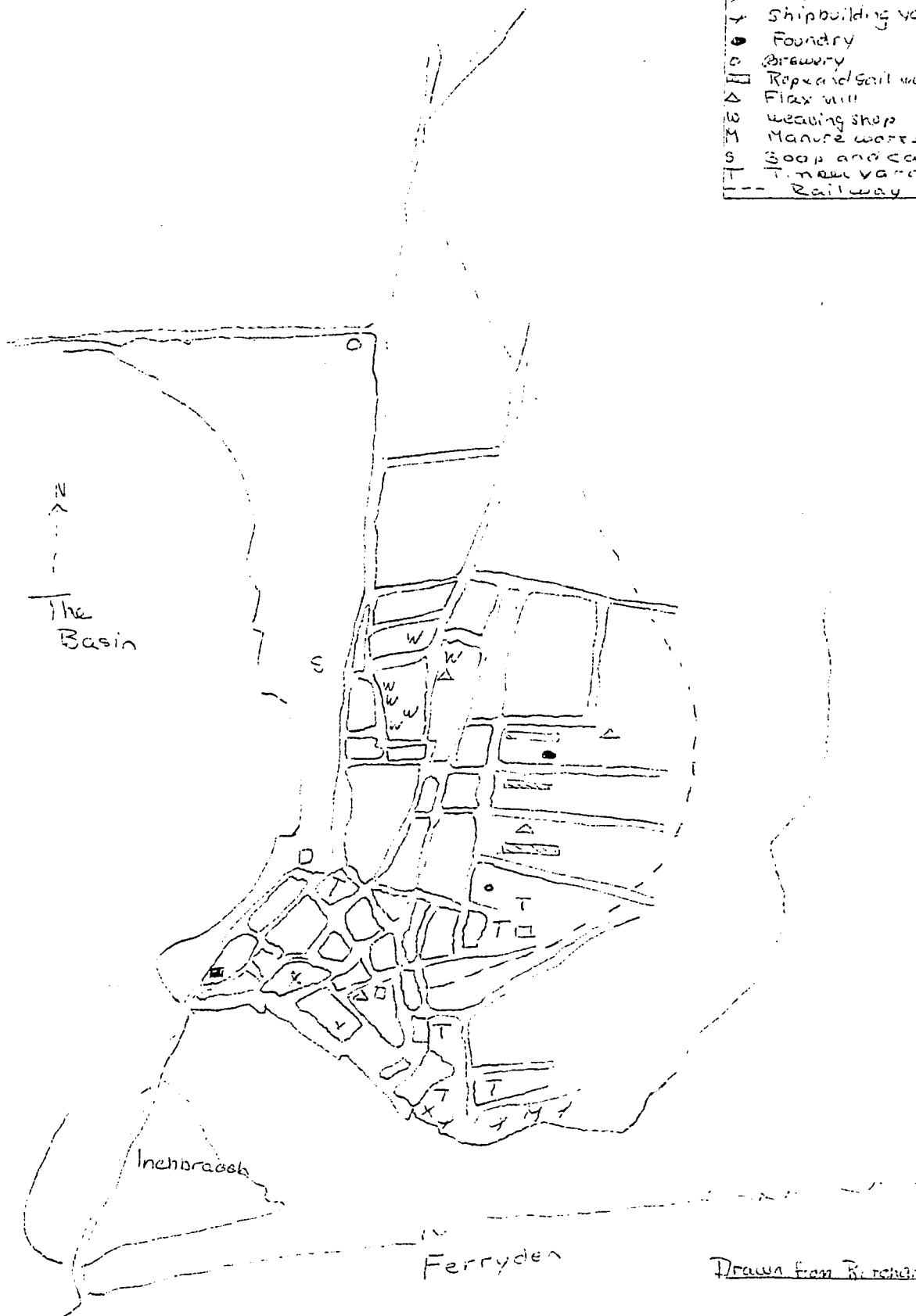
MAP 4 Montrose 1822



Drawn from Burdett's 1768.

MAP 5 Montrose 1865

- Flour Mill
- Starch works
- x Fish curer
- Y Shipbuilding yard
- Foundry
- Brewery
- ▢ Rope and sail works
- △ Flax mill
- W Weaving shop
- M Manure works
- S Soap and candle
- T Tannery
- Railway



Drawn from Research 1962

better manned and better financed than its Scottish predecessor, and the Customs records from eighteenth century Montrose portray a continually active and perpetually harassed Customs staff. Customs officials got little cooperation from the local population, and the fishing villages and coves along the coast were natural landing places for smuggled goods.

While the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries saw the expansion of Montrose as a regional center with a well-organized and well-connected commercial elite, the following 150 years saw a change. Increasing industrialization, the obsolescence of certain commodities, such as linen, and the decline of the slave trade, and the rise of competing centers led to a gradual stagnation in the port of Montrose.

1820 to 1970: The Burgh Becomes a Backwater

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Leith (the port of Edinburgh), Dundee and Arbroath all outstripped Montrose as east coast ports. According to Lenman³⁹, Montrose had lost much of her overseas trade by 1845. Most of her ships were now small, coastal vessels, and the harbor needed repair. Nonetheless, the total volume of coastwise trade was still rising, and a number of

new industries (primarily processing) had been established in the town. Lemnan's phrase for Montrose at this time is "quietly prosperous."⁴⁰

Moreover, certain key industries remained afloat. The timber trade was particularly active between 1860 and 1880:

Montrose ranked second in Scotland to Greenock on the west coast as a timber exporting port. Nearly all the timber came from Scandinavia and the Baltic lands, but as Montrose had no Glasgow in its hinterland, much of it was sawn, planed, and grooved, mainly for re-export to London. Two firms, Robert Millar & Sons and Charles Birnie, dominated the Montrose wood yards. Thanks to these firms, very few ships left Montrose in ballast. Most outgoing ships were loaded with deal flooring for London, and many returned from England with coal. At one stage, Montrose was even exporting timber on a large scale to the Australian colonies.⁴¹

The dependence of the timber trade upon Scandinavian exports left it somewhat vulnerable to changes outside Montrose's domain, however. According to Lenman, the Scandinavian countries, which had previously lacked their own timber manufacturing and finishing industries, embarked upon a new phase after 1879. At this time, they began to invest heavily in steam-driven sawmills and related activities, and began to rival Britain as a wood processing center. This led to a concomittant reduction in timber exports, as the raw material was now needed at home.⁴²

Trade in Montrose began to suffer in other ways.

While the agricultural output of the region remained high in the late 1840's, Montrose's role as its primary outlet began to face serious competition from the railroads.

Salmon exports, for example, had always been shipped to their destinations. Now a good portion went to London on a special fish train, which originated in Aberdeen. The train reached London in twenty-four hours, thus beating the seagoing time by several days.⁴³ The salmon-selling merchants were able to make as good or better a profit but the port paid the price in reduced volume. Expansion of port facilities was becoming increasingly expensive, and Montrose lost more and more ground to Dundee. It was not the only small port to suffer:

The reasons for the decline of the smaller ports were clear enough. Rising costs necessitated mechanical handling to secure a quick turnaround of vessels, but only the larger ports could afford the expensive equipment required. On top of this, the steadily increasing size of ships placed a premium on ports which had, or could afford to build very expensive docks.⁴⁴

During this period of stagnation or contraction on the part of several major industries in Montrose, one enterprise stands out as having reached its peak--that is, fishing, and fish processing and marketing. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, fishing appears to have been one of the mainstays of the burgh. The main species included herring, "white fish" (cod, ling, turbot, etc.,

caught both offshore and inshore), and salmon, which were caught primarily along the coast and in the rivers.

Herring in particular were very important, requiring the largest number of boats and men, and stories are told today of the days when the face of the harbor was covered from shore to shore with the herring boats.

The fishing industry also required the services of boat-builders, coopers, rope and sailmakers, and curing laborers. Most of the fishermen were recruited from the nearby fishing villages, including Ferryden and Usan, and the industry was dominated, and ultimately controlled by a single company, Joseph Johnston & Sons. According to a maternal descendant and current chairman of the firm, the company's founder came to Montrose from Berwickshire in the 1880's. He bought salmon fishing rights all along the Angus coast, down into Fife, and even in the Isle of Skye. (The right to fish for salmon in Scotland is a heritable, private property, like land. One may own or lease salmon fishings. The Crown derives considerable revenue from the rents on their extensive salmon holdings throughout Scotland.)

Joseph Johnston & Sons did not restrict their business to salmon. They also built herring boats, and sent them to the herring grounds off Northern England and

Shetland. They sent a number of local women to Sweden to study Scandinavian methods of herring curing, and they employed a large part of the female population of the area in gutting, salting, and packing the catches brought back from the North Sea. The company attempted to control as many phases of the fishing industry as possible. As well as building their own boats, they also employed coopers (who had to build one extra barrel a week in order to pay for the oil for their lamps at work). They constructed their own ice-houses and bothies (huts for the salmon crews and storage sheds for gear). They paid fishermen's wives to weave cotton yarn into nets.

Members of the Johnston family became very prominent in Montrose. Among the public bodies on which he served, James Johnston (who died in 1903) served as a member of the Craig Parish Relief Committee. This committee was responsible for administering public assistance (both "outdoor" and "indoor", i.e. institutional) to the residents of Ferryden village. James Johnston, although not a resident of Craig parish, was a major employer of the Ferryden fishermen, and was thus considered suitable to administer their welfare. When he died, James left a charitable bequest of five hundred pounds, to be administered by the Town Council, "for the benefit of necessitous

orphans and widows in Ferryden."⁴⁵ (The special relationship between the fish curing company and the fishermen of Ferryden will be discussed in the next chapter. James' service to the Relief Committee and his legacy to the widows and orphans did not save him from being openly hated by nearly everyone in the village.)

Herring and white fishing continued to bring large profits to the fishing company until the beginnings of the First World War. However, the new large steam trawlers were making it increasingly difficult for smaller boats to compete. The trawlers were almost entirely based in Aberdeen, and required large capital investments. Johnston's decided not to risk such investments, but rather to contract their scale of operations, and rely more and more heavily upon the still-lucrative and relatively scarce salmon resource. By the 1920's, herring and white fishing had nearly disappeared from the Montrose area, and the Depression of the 1920's and 1930's all but put an end to local participation in offshore and inshore commercial fishing. The fishing crews, the coopers, the rope and sail makers and the curers were now forced to turn to alternative ways of making a living. (See Chapter III)

In 1919, a shipbuilding company based in Glasgow, the Coaster Construction Company, opened a yard on Rossie

Island. The high hopes of the immediate post-war period were doomed to failure, however, and the shipyard closed in 1927. A number of local men who had previously gone away to the heavy industrial center on the Clyde, had returned to work at the shipyard as riveters and laborers, and many were forced to emigrate again when the yard closed down. From the 1920's to the beginning of the Second War, the port of Montrose grew increasingly quiet.

As Montrose's textiles industry has tended to be small and shrinking in the twentieth century, the port was left without any real major staple. Between 1918 and 1939 it imported sawn wood, fertilizer, and flax, while exporting very little apart from agricultural produce. As early as 1905 the trustees of the harbour had decided to cease to retain a tug in the port, on the ground that the volume of shipping hardly justified the expense. Throughout the inter-war period the total value of imports and exports was unimpressive. In the decade before 1930 they were usually worth between £100,000 and £150,000 annually, but in the decade to 1939 the figure slumped to £45,000. Imports always exceeded exports in value and volume. Fortunately Montrose was a relatively cheap port to maintain. It had little expensive handling equipment, only one dock, and riverside wharves automatically dredged by the current.⁴⁶

Despite a slight resurgence in activity during and immediately after the Second World War, when both fishing and shipbuilding enjoyed a brief renaissance, Montrose had become something of a backwater, its days of glory preserved only in memory. Two factories provided a high proportion of local jobs. One of these was Paton's mill,

which employed hundreds of people, (mostly women) from Montrose and Ferryden, to spin flax and jute, and later, artificial fibers, into linen yarns, ropes, etc. The other concern was Chivers jam works, which opened in Montrose in 1925, on a site bought from J. Johnston & Sons. This factory also hired mainly female labor. Many of the men worked for the building firms which had managed to keep afloat by taking on contracts from various parts of the Highlands. The men had to travel hundreds of miles to work, but preferred the trips to being unemployed. When a severe trade slump hit the building industry in 1920 and 1921, many of these men were forced onto parish relief. An alternative was emigration, and large numbers (the exact figures are not available) left for the United States, Canada, South Africa, Rhodesia, and Australia, where many of them already had relatives. A number of others left for the Clyde Valley, or for various parts of England.

Numerous small businesses disappeared into bankruptcy or obsolescence during these years. These included: a brick and tile works, candle-makers and tallow merchants, clay pipe makers, cartwrights, coachbuilders (one firm transformed itself into a car dealership), cork manufacturers, cutlers, milliners, hatters, dressmakers, tailors, glaziers, millers, rope and twine manufacturers, starch

manufacturers, tinsmiths, bookbinders, cobblers, basket-makers, cabinet-makers, and manufacturers of aerated water. Many of these businesses were replaced by the availability of cheaper, mass-produced substitutes, or by new outlets of English-owned chain stores.

In 1952, Montrose was overjoyed to learn that a new employer was entering the town. This was Glaxo Pharmaceuticals, manufacturers of cortisone. The new firm bought several acres of land next to the harbor, and built a small factory, which employed approximately fifty people. According to the current manager of the Montrose plant, the town was chosen for its clean air and good harbor. Glaxo prospered, and expanded its Montrose operations, until today the firm employs more than 400 people.⁴⁷ Today, Glaxo is part of the English-based multinational Glaxo Group, one of the world's largest suppliers of corticosteroids, with subsidiaries in thirty-three countries and five continents. A recent financial report⁴⁷ ranks Glaxo as seventh from the top in a list of the top fifty companies in Britain.

During the years since its opening, the Chivers "jammie" also underwent a number of high-level changes. In its first year, the company processed twenty-seven tons of raspberries and two and one-half quarts of strawberries,

almost entirely with manual labor. The Chivers company was taken over by Cadbury's, which merged in 1959 with Schweppes, and recently with Typhoo, so that it is now officially known as the Cadbury-Typhoo Company. In Montrose, however, it continues to be called Chivers (pronounced Shivers), or just "the jammie," despite the fact that jam and jelly production were transferred to an English plant several years ago. Today the jammie specializes in canning vegetables, such as peas and carrots, most of which are locally grown in Chivers-owned fields. The jammie also boasts a research and development department, which works to develop new products. (Recently, a line of soya-based meat substitutes was formulated at the Montrose plant.) The jammie employs between 300 and 750 people, depending upon the season. Unlike Glaxo, which employs mainly men, the jammie continues to be a major employer of female labor (whose wages, despite recent Sex Discrimination acts, remain lower than those of their male counterparts.)

Seasonal agricultural work has long been an important part of the Montrose region's economy. Until the last few years, most of the local crops (raspberries, strawberries, potatoes, and daffodils) were picked by hand. When Chivers first opened its doors in Montrose, trainloads

of unemployed men and women came up from Dundee to help with the fruit harvests.⁴⁹ Today, much of the annual harvesting is done by schoolchildren (who receive an annual autumn "tattie-howking," or potato-lifting holiday of two weeks), Old Age Pensioners (wages from crop-harvesting are seldom, if ever, declared in income statements to the government), and otherwise-unemployed women. There are also a few of what the local people call "tinks," or tinkers. (While the term is pejorative, marking its targets as pariahs, these "tinks" are not gypsies, or other true itinerants, for whom the term is generally reserved, but very poor and socially isolated families who appear to have few or no kinship links with the local population.)⁵⁰

The farms of the Montrose region are, for the most part, highly commercialized, and many of their owners are also engaged in other business enterprises (such as marketing and exporting their own produce). One local farmer, R. Robertson, started a food processing business a few years ago, freezing and selling fish and vegetables. After a few difficult periods, the firm now seems well-established, and employs between 50 and 150 people (the number fluctuates seasonally). Many of the summer workers are foreign (largely Malaysian and Chinese) students eager for jobs which do not require working papers. A few years

ago, several of these attempted to organize a strike to protest their low wages, but after the leaders were summarily fired, the protest was stilled.

A look at Table 1 on employment estimates in Montrose indicates the importance of farming, fishing, and food processing in the local economy. The farmers and merchants of Montrose have remained crucial to the economic life of the region, and exert a great deal of influence in economic and political decision-making in the area. (Their role in the region's response to offshore oil development will be examined in a later chapter, as the discussion is too lengthy to be pursued here.) They form an integral part of the region's commercial and political elite, which must be examined now in its own terms.

The Social Organization of Business in Montrose

The well-to-do businessmen and farmers of Montrose form a distinct social set. The boundaries of this set are not rigid, but most of its members may be identified by the possession of several of the following characteristics: 1) they are engaged in enterprises which link them directly to higher levels of socioeconomic integration, whether through trade or contract; 2) they own, or at least control, their own businesses and land; 3) they live on the outskirts

TABLE 1

Employment Estimates - Montrose - 1971

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Total</u>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	1,217	229	1,446
Mining and Quarrying	1	-	1
Food, Drink and Tobacco	439	423	862
Coal and Petroleum Products	-	-	-
Chemical and Allied Industries	327	36	363
Metal Manufacture	19	2	21
Mechanical Engineering	108	21	129
Instrument Engineering	-	-	-
Electrical Engineering	1	-	1
Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering	15	-	15
Vehicles	-	-	-
Metal Goods not elsewhere specified	35	3	38
Textiles	177	125	302
Leather, Leather Goods and Fur	-	-	-
Clothing and Footwear	-	-	-
Bricks, Pottery, Glass, Cement, etc.	33	27	60
Timber, Furniture, etc.	38	2	40
Paper, Printing and Publishing	20	20	40
Other Manufacturing Industries	-	-	-
Total Manufacturing	1,212	659	1,871
Construction	467	32	499
Gas, Electricity and Water	66	11	77
Transport and Communication	307	75	382
Distributive Trades	283	405	688
Insurance, Banking, Finance and Business Services	70	41	111
Professional and Scientific Services	361	710	1,071
Miscellaneous Services	268	367	635
Public Administration and Defence	200	109	309
Unclassified	139	139	278
Grand Total	4,591	2,777	7,368

From "Tayside," the report on a study done
by the Tayside Regional Council, 1970.

of the town, on farms, estates, or large suburban houses; 4) their origins are at least middle-class commercial or farming families; 5) most belong to or vote for the local Conservative Association (with a few maverick Liberals); 6) they participate in local government, through seats on the former Town Council, the current District Council, Regional Council, and Montrose Harbour Board; 7) they administer justice, as Sheriffs, or Justices of the Peace; 8) they sit on the boards of directors of local charitable and financial institutions, such as the Trustee Savings Bank (the commercial banks are all English-based), Dorward House (now a convalescent home), the Rossie School for Boys (a List D Reform School); 9) their wives are also active in the women's branches of local organizations, or act as Justices of the Peace, charitable board members, etc., themselves); 10) they belong to the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary or the Round Table (the latter two are smaller and more restrictive than the Chamber).

Members of this set interact socially, as well as in their economic and political domains. They attend each others' dinner parties, they belong to the same Golf Clubs (usually the Royal Albert or the Victoria), they host fêtes to raise funds for a variety of causes, and attend them, and a number of men drink together at the Links Hotel

or at Sandy Gordon's pub. Many of them speak with an upper-class English accent, though not all. They are also conspicuous by their absence from the more middle-or working class organizations of the town, such as the Bowling Clubs, Masonic Lodges, Football Clubs, or the Operatic Society (except occasionally as honorary officers). They appear to share a special culture of the elite, which sets them apart from the rest of the community. This culture is marked as much by its constraints as by its privileges. Their relationships with those outside the set are marked by condescension or discomfort on their part (depending in part on the ease of identifying the class of the outsider), and by deference or hostility on the part of others. They cannot have a truly informal chat with their social inferiors, because to do so would jeopardize their standing in their own eyes, and in the eyes of others. They wear business suits at work, with a few exceptions, thus setting themselves apart immediately from the workmen around them.

They are fairly predictable in responding to certain linguistic cues. When speaking of the Labour Party or the Scottish Nationalists, they assume a tone of dislike, ranging from the mild to the nearly apoplectic. When they wish to conclude a topic of conversation, they may say, "Quite." This is a signal that the message has been

received, but that the subject is to be avoided. (Members of other classes do not appear to use this signal, in my experience.)

Along with a shared set of commercial and political values, and a shared cultural understanding, members of this set also share information and opportunities. They act as reciprocal patrons, forming a network of business connections and social alliances. There is a kind of latent organization which underlies the explicit or formal structures through which they operate. When new information enters the field, the network is activated, and the news spreads quickly throughout the set.

The Montrose commercial elite is also linked by ties of contract, kinship, and clientship to elites at higher levels, in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and England. They possess a direct link to higher-level authority through the Member of Parliament for North Angus and Mearns, Alick Buchanan-Smith, who owns farmland near Edinburgh, and who is married to a descendant of an old Montrose cabinet-making family. They interact through committee membership, Conservative Association fêtes, and other ties, with members of the local aristocracy. The Earl of Southesk and the Earl of Dalhousie have large estates in the Montrose area. The Duke and Duchess of Airlie patronize local

charitable organizations, lending their names and prestige to fund-raising efforts.

Only one member of the Montrose commercial elite can be said to rank as a member of the British national upper class himself. John Crawford of John Crawford and Sons, Builders Merchants, is an accepted member of the "County" set, and is invited to local hunt balls, and other social gatherings of the gentry. He is friendly with Sir Colin Thornton-Kelmseley, former M.P. for the constituency, and owner of a large estate not far from Montrose. John Crawford is distantly related to a branch of the Royal Family who have their Ducal seat at Edzell Castle. Because of Crawford's somewhat anglicized background, and that of his Oxford-educated wife (a maternal descendant of the Johnston fishcuring family), and because of his own preference, he does not participate in many of the activities which characterize the local commercial elite. He has in fact moved beyond it to tie his family business to a larger Glasgow-based firm, with a West coast base. He and his wife prefer a fairly isolated existence, living in a large house (a former Church of Scotland manse) upon Craig hill, overlooking Ferryden. Their children attend the village Primary school (although they will go to boarding school when they are older), and they speak two dialects. At

school, and with their friends, they speak the local version of "braid Scots." At home with their parents, and their parents' friends, they speak "what their mother calls "proper English," (i.e., upper class southern English).

On the whole, the Montrose commercial elite are quite self-conscious of their position. They express satisfaction about their economic achievements, and a few confess to enjoying a sense of power. This open and conspicuous display of awareness also serves to set them apart from the upper class of the "County." Among the latter group, ostentatious superiority is played down. It is considered vulgar. My observations here do not coincide with those of Perrot, who says:

The apologetic phrase favoured by some London lords-- 'We're just ordinary fellows really,'--is not at all common north of the border; or, if spoken, is never seriously meant.⁵¹

Among those I spoke to, most were quick to deny differences between themselves and the rest of the community, insisting that Scotland is a very democratic country. Some go so far as to deny the very existence of class in Britain, implying that the notion is a special contrivance of the Labour Party.

Among the Montrose commercial elite, however, the expression of class identity was different. One prosperous

TABLE 2

CORE MEMBERS OF THE COMMERCIAL ELITE: PARTICIPATION IN KEY ASSOCIATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

Primary Business of Individual	Chamber of Commerce	Rotary or Round Table	Harbour Board	Local Govt.	Fishery Board	National Farmers Union	Trustee Savings Bank	Lifeboat	Justice of the Peace	Other Businesses
Farmer		X				X				Potato Merchant
Potato Merchant		X	X	X						
Johnston's Solicitor	X	X	X	X	X			X		Game Export
Builder's Merchant	X			X						Game; oil services
Builder		X					X			
Frozen Food Co.	X	X				X	X			Oil Services
Stevedoring Co.	X		X				X	X		Oil Services
Johnston's					X		X	X		Oil Service; game export
Johnston's					X			X		Oil Services
Newspaper	X		X	X				X	X	
Potato Merchant	X	X				X		X		Oil Services
Builder	X		X	X					X	
Oil Service Company	X	X								

Note: In some cases, participation is through wives' activity; information is not complete. Probably participation is greater than shown here.

local farmer (whose grandfather had been a tenant on the same land) was heard to express the wish that he could have been a plantation owner in the old American South, because slaves had had to show their respect. He wishes his employees were more deferential.⁵²

Summary

This chapter has traced the rise of Montrose from a tiny market center through its history as a medieval Scottish burgh and an expanding port for long-distance trade, to its recent decline in importance and activity. Throughout the town's history, core groups of commercial entrepreneurs have been instrumental in determining the course of local development. Responding to forces outside their control, the demands and burdens of the expanding capitalist world, the merchants have acted cohesively and collectively. Through the early guilds, and later through their latter-day functional equivalents, the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, the Harbour Board, and more informal organizations, the merchants have dominated access to new opportunities. They have forged alliances, both horizontal and vertical, with their counterparts and superiors outside of Montrose. Today's merchants have, in effect, inherited the role of the ancient burgesses as rulers and patrons

of the townspeople and the people of the surrounding region.

Throughout Montrose's history, its merchants have relied upon the productive capacity of the region, forming the local apex of a hierarchy of asymmetrical exchange. They have controlled land use, port activity, and marine resources. Most recently, they have dominated local participation in the onshore developments connected with offshore oil, activities which are of central concern in this dissertation.

In the following chapter, I will discuss the development and position of Ferryden village, the actual site of Montrose's oil support base. Ferryden is, and has always been, a satellite of Montrose, and its people have depended upon the merchants of Montrose for their livelihood. As an important part of the Montrose region, they fall within the "power domain"⁵³ of the Montrose elite. Their satellite relationship has been expressed through the media of the fishing industry, factory labor, and most recently, offshore oil services. In order to fully understand the nature of the current relationship between the village and the town, one must turn to the past. The underlying structure of this relationship has persisted, with striking continuity, through major changes in government, technology, and economic conditions. Religious,

industrial, and government revolutions have failed to change the basic order of power in Montrose and its region.

FOOTNOTES

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³⁰Fraser, East Coast Oil Town, p. 14.

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³³Ibid., p. 110.

³⁴Smout, History of the Scottish People, p. 343.

³⁵Fraser, The Smugglers, p. 117.

³⁶Ibid., p. 106.

³⁷Ibid., p. 106.

- ³⁸Ibid., p. 21.
- ³⁹Lenman, From Esk to Tweed, p. 81.
- ⁴⁰Ibid., p. 41
- ⁴¹Ibid., pp. 101-102.
- ⁴²Ibid., p. 164.
- ⁴³Ibid., p. 102.
- ⁴⁴Ibid., p. 148.
- ⁴⁵Montrose Yearbook and Directory, 1974, p. 26.
- ⁴⁶Lenman, From Esk to Tweed, p. 164.
- ⁴⁷"Tayside" (Dundee: The Tayside Regional Authority, 1976).
- ⁴⁸Montrose Review, December 23, 1976.
- ⁴⁹Montrose Review, October 23, 1975.
- ⁵⁰For a discussion of British travelling peoples, see Farnham Rehfisch, ed. Gypsies, Tinkers, and other Travellers, (London: Academic Press, 1975).
- ⁵¹Roy Perrott, The Aristocrats (London: Widenfeld and Nicolson, 1968), p. 216.
- ⁵²See Ian Carter, "Class and Culture Among Farm Servants in the North-East, 1840-1914," for a discussion of rural class structure.
- ⁵³Richard Adams, "Power Domains, Levels of Articulation, Brokers, and Career Mobility Systems in Complex Society," preliminary draft paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Society, 1968.

CHAPTER THREE: FERRYDEN VILLAGE
Its Origins and Economic Development

Description and Introduction

Ferryden village lies on the southern banks of the South Esk River mouth, directly across the harbor from the town of Montrose. Perched on the edge of the grey North Sea, its easiest approach is from the main trunk road, which passes by about a mile inland. The first buildings along the Ferryden Road are a row of lookalike Council houses, which were built in 1945. Vivid gardens and trim lawns relieve the architectural monotony somewhat, but one's first impression of the village is of an outflung suburb of Montrose. No clue appears to suggest any special character, or distinctive history.

After the Council houses, one approaches a block of prosperous and substantial private homes, all built within this century, which reveal an upward shift in class. It is only when one reaches the middle of the village, however, that another picture begins to appear. Suddenly the houses are smaller and older, clustering in terraces and squares which climb the steep hillside rising from the low road. Picking one's way through the winding closes,

or alleys, which lead up the hill, one emerges in the bright light of the high road.

Here the houses are also old and narrow, but they look directly over the ocean, and a stiff breeze blows steadily. On a clear day, one can see the St. Cyrus cliffs five miles away to the north. But if the haar (the impenetrable North Sea fog) is blowing in, then the house next door becomes invisible. Following the high road on its way out of the village, one passes the rough pasture which forms the seaward boundary of Ferryden Farm. After a quarter mile of twisting and turning, the road stops at the foot of the Scurdyness Lighthouse, which was built in 1870 to warn unwary vessels away from the treachery of the rocks. From here, both Montrose and Ferryden are invisible, and the gulls and waves shout down any auditory intrusions.

Turning back up into the village, one passes the old Fishermen's Hall, and the United Free Church, which was built in 1929. Down at the central square, one finds the old post office (a one-room affair, converted from the old village wash-house), the village store (which sells a little bit of everything, at high prices), and the village branch of the Scottish Cooperative market. A few hundred feet along, two pubs sit side by side. One is

large and shabby, its peeling grey paint testifying to the passing of better days. The other is new and sparkling, a glass-and-concrete box beckoning to the young, the affluent, and the outsider.

Ferryden today is a study in old and new. The fishermen's but-and-ben cottages, the old pub, the washing lines hung from stilts above the tide, and the groups of old men gazing out to sea all remind the visitor that this was once a fishing village, whose inhabitants clung to the sea for survival. But today's mirror reflects another image, as well. For Ferryden has entered the age of offshore oil, and is now host to an offshore oil supply and support base, which occupies more than one-half of the old village foreshore and whose bright lights and modern face penetrate almost every window.

It would be a serious distortion of events, however, to imagine that the transformation from Ferryden the fishing village, to Ferryden the oil village, happened overnight. In fact, the past seventy-five years have seen the evolution of Ferryden from a homogeneous fishing community into a complex and variegated residential strip, whose claims to community status are ambiguous. Long before North Sea oil emerged as a major British resource, Ferryden had lost its fishing base, and had absorbed a

large number of incomers, whose social and economic interests lay elsewhere.

By the end of the Second World War, most of Ferryden's population, both natives and newcomers, were working in the town. The building trades, a canning factory (known as "the jammie") and a pharmaceutical company absorbed most of them. Despite their convergence in occupational similarity, the newcomers and the "true Ferrydeners" remained socially apart. They lived side by side in a quiet, if mutually suspicious, toleration.

In order to understand the significance of the oil development for modern Ferryden's 800 inhabitants, we must turn first to the history and analysis of village social, political, and economic development and organization. We must place Ferryden in a dynamic perspective, not as an independent, autonomous isolate, nor as a totally submerged proletarian colony, but rather as a setting for a social process, an ongoing community with changing boundaries. For Ferryden, the outside world has never been wholly "out", and the fisherfolk have never been entirely "in". We must therefore address ourselves to the problem of Ferryden's articulation with the wider levels of socio-cultural integration in which village life is embedded. The oil development will stand as a prismatic event, whose

material and ideological facets will help us to focus upon the more general reality of Ferryden in the world today.

The Origins of the Village

Ferryden occupies the strip of land which was originally part of the estate of Robert Scott, the laird of Craig in the 1740's. Craig spanned a hilly area which extended southward from the South Esk River and the Montrose Tidal Basin, and adjoined the estates of Dunninald and Rossie. Eventually, the estate of Craig was broken up, but the name was given to the civil parish which encompassed Ferryden and the farms around it.

The Scott family appears in local history as far back as the seventeenth century, when the merchants, or burgesses of the royal burgh of Montrose began to widen their horizons. They had forged links with the surrounding countryside by their roles as the exporters and marketers of agricultural produce, but soon they began to acquire land for themselves. According to Fraser, "It was a good time for buying estates. Nearly all the landowners around Montrose were impoverished and only too ready to sell."¹ They also began to marry the daughters of the local gentry, blurring the distinction between the two groups, and establishing powerful local alliances. In doing so, they were

conforming to a pattern of the times:

The merchants of Glasgow, for example, like those of many other towns, had been deeply involved in the land-market around the burgh throughout the seventeenth century, and by 1700 were so mixed up by marriage, mortgage, and purchase that it was almost impossible to tell who in the vicinity was by origin a laird and who was by origin a merchant.²

The Scott family was both prolific and aggressive. By the middle of the eighteenth century, members had acquired at least seven local estates, including Craig, Rossie, Dunninald, Logie, Boddin, Ullyseshaven (Usan), and Benholm. They made a great deal of money by exporting the salmon from the waters of these estates.³ They also continued to hold key positions in the town, such as Provost and Customs Collector for the Crown. The significance of this pattern will emerge in the course of our discussion of the continuity and adaptations of the local power structure, and of its relationship to Ferryden throughout the 230-odd years of its existence.

In the Scotland of the eighteenth century, wealth could be acquired through trade, by land-ownership, and by controlling natural resources. Among the latter, the ability to harvest the waters became increasingly important. Lobsters and salmon had long been popular luxury exports in the trade with London. The laird of Usan was reported to have nearly wiped out the lobster beds in his domain,

so thoroughly did his tenants scour the waters. One major pelagic resource had not yet come into its own, however, and this was herring.

Until the middle of the eighteenth century, Scottish herring fishing was confined to small boat, small scale fishers who lived in the neighborhood of the Moray Firth, centering in Inverness. The waters of the east and west coasts, meanwhile, were fished by the Dutch, who sailed their large wooden ships or "busses," right into Scotland's coastal waters, untroubled by local competition. As long as Scotland's herring fisheries remained undeveloped, the Dutch retained their monopolies over the herring shoals and the markets.

Up to this time, most east coast Scottish fishermen were unspecialized, or "cottar" fishermen, who also practiced small-scale subsistence farming⁴, and who "simply did not participate in the herring fishery."⁵ Along with their non-fishing neighbors, they held a bit of ground, and had common, or grazing rights. They reserved part of their catch for their own subsistence, and sold the rest by themselves, locally. Selling the fish was primarily a women's activity: Scottish fishwives "hawked" or "cried" the fish over the surrounding countryside. They carried the fish in creels, or baskets, on their backs, often

travelling as much as thirty miles in a day.

In the Montrose area, there were fishing settlements located on the southern shore of the town itself, at the site of the modern wet-dock, as well as at the rocky beach at Usan. Mather⁶ claims that the extreme antagonism between the fishing and farming populations, characteristic of the Scottish coast, is a relatively recent phenomenon. However, Butchart reports that the fisherfolk of Montrose were called "sand-suckers"⁷, and were ostracized by the rest of the town's inhabitants. The Usan population lived in small cottages above the beach, and were clearly isolated from the farmlands beyond.

It was not unusual in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for a laird to own a "fish-toun", as he might a "ferm-toun." Coull⁸ says that many fishermen were tenants, subject to fixed obligations to their landlords:

This persisted into the latter part of the eighteenth century, as is instanced at Fraserburgh, where the fisherman was bound to serve for a fixed period in a boat . . . and at Buckie it is reported that the laird Dunbar drove his men to sea when they were reluctant to go out in adverse weather . . . As well as those with the formal status of tenant, squatters may have been included in some of the villages; and indeed in 1780, the first settlers in the village of Buchanhaven (now part of Peterhead) were squatters.⁹

Occasionally a harsh tenure system is reported to have actually destroyed a fishing settlement, as was apparently

the case in the first fishing settlement at Arbroath which was due to an immigration in 1705 from the fishing village of Auchmithie, nearby.¹⁰ The lairds of such settlements generally owned the boats, which were rented to the fishermen in shares. The rents could be paid in fish or services.

Ferryden was born some time in the early 1740's, a time when new villages--agricultural, industrial, and fishing-- were being established throughout Scotland.¹¹ Along with a few other new fishing communities along the east and northeast coast, Ferryden owes its origin to the rising demand for Scottish herring. The British Crown had been trying for some years to encourage the growth of a Scottish fishing industry. Royal fishery companies tried, and failed, to boost fishing productivity through subsidies. In 1718, George I offered a bounty, to be paid on each barrel of herring exported¹², in an effort to break into the Dutch monopoly.

The real breakthrough seems to have come with the opening up of the Baltic market. Fraser describes the Baltic peoples as "compulsive herring eaters."¹³ When the herring shoals suddenly and inexplicably disappeared from their waters, they began to demand imported herring. Scottish trading links with the Baltic were already

well-established, and soon, Scottish landowners and merchants began actively to promote the establishment of herring fishing as a specialized commercial industry.

With the rising demand for herring, Robert Scott, laird of Craig, decided to establish a colony of herring fishers on the foreshore of the South Esk, where the ferry-boat station stood. Local fishermen were experienced only in lobster, salmon, and inshore fishing, so Scott imported several families of herring fishermen from the Black Isle, a peninsula reaching out above Inverness into the Moray Firth, some 150 miles from Montrose. We do not know why they chose to leave their homes, but at least three families, with the surnames of West, Coull, and probably (the sources are contradictory) Pert, elected to settle at the foot of the brae near the ferry, and to establish the village of Ferryden. Scott supplied them with "large boats specially suited for the White Herring Fishery in the Western Isles."¹⁴

Through natural growth, immigration from Usan (and from the Montrose fishing settlement, which disappeared around this time), Ferryden's population tripled in its first century of existence. (See accompanying Table) By the 1880's the village had become one of the busiest and largest fishing centers on the east coast of Scotland,

TABLE 3

THE GROWTH OF FERRYDEN

(Data is given in most exact form available)

Year	Population	Boats	Fishermen and Boys
c.1750	3 "families"	--	--
1792 (O.S.A.)	38 "families"	6	
1810	500 people		
1831		25	113
1850	1000 people		
1855		68	186
1881		156	350
1900	1200+ people		
1928		28	94
1976	800 approximately	1	1

Data compiled from P.F. Anson, 1930; D. Fraser, 1974.
 Montrose Local Plan, Report of Survey, July 1977, by
 Angus District Council Planning Department.

between Dundee and Peterhead. Let us go back, now, and examine this development in some detail.

The earlier years of Ferryden's history remain somewhat obscure. In 1805, the estate of Craig passed into the hands of Horatio Ross, who built an elaborate structure known as Rossie Castle.¹⁵ Published accounts indicate that he was very popular with the villagers, and there are other suggestions that he was to some extent a social maverick. Certainly, his name never attracted the vilification which attended those of some other members of the local elite. Villagers today repeat the legend that Ross bequeathed to Ferryden the eternal right to gather mussels from the Back Sands of the Basin, "for as long as water runs and grass grows." Since the mussel beds supplied the fishermen with free bait, this was no mean gift. We will return to the mussel beds, and their significance, later on in this chapter.

The fishermen of Ferryden were involved in two separate systems of fishing: herring and white fishing. The latter occupied the greater part of their year, and played a major role in determining both the domestic economy and village social organization.

Inshore Fishing: The Division of Labor

Inshore white fishing was carried on nearly all year round, interrupted only by the herring season. In open wooden boats about twenty feet long, the Ferryden men "shot their lines" for cod, ling, halibut, turbot, skate, and haddock. Each boat had a crew of three or four men, usually consanguines, and preferably father and sons, or brothers. Each crew had a skipper, but the literature indicates that decisions such as when and where to fish tended to be made fairly democratically.

Each man had his own lines. According to Anson¹⁶, hand-lining, a purely manual system for lowering and drawing in the lines, prevailed throughout Scotland in the white (inshore) fishing industry until the advent of motors. Each line was at least 300 feet long, with a baited hook hung from a two or three-foot line (called a snood) at three-foot intervals. A good day's fishing might last twelve or fourteen hours, so that several lines might be shot in a single day. In the 1840's, Anson tells us, "it was not an uncommon event for fifteen or sixteen boats at Ferryden to come in . . . with a thousand haddocks each."¹⁷

The fishing grounds were located from six to twenty-five miles offshore, and they had names: Shald

TABLE 4A

EXTRACT FROM CREEK RETURNS FOR THE EAST COAST OF SCOTLAND IN THE YEAR 1855

District	No. of Boats in Classes			No. of Boats and Tonnage		No. of Fishermen and Boys	No. of Coopers	No. of Gutters Packers	No. of Vendors, & Makers of Nets, etc.	Total Persons Employed	No. of Curers
	1 30 ft. up'ds	2 18 to 30 ft.	3 under 18 ft.	No.	Ton- nage						
Montrose											
Gourdon	22	20	5	47	377	118	23	155	113	409	9
Johnshaven	14	8	5	27	203	68	2	16	61	147	2
Montrose	..	4	2	6	26	22	42	51	71	186	5
Ferryden	21	32	15	68	415	186	..	..	147	333	..
Usan	4	6	2	12	86	39	1	4	36	80	1
Thornshaven	2	2	2	6	40	13	..	..	18	31	..
Auchmithie	14	15	4	33	256	78	1	5	84	168	1
Arbroath	8	14	7	29	193	69	1	6	72	148	1
Westhaven	4	4	6	14	86	23	..	..	..	3255	..
Easthaven	1	2	2	5	29	12	1	5	13	31	1
Broughty Ferry	10	14	6	30	212	76	1	6	88	171	1
Dundee	..	..	..	..	..	..	14	22	28	64	3

TABLE 4B

NUMBER OF VESSELS AND FISHERMEN AND QUANTITY AND VALUE OF FISH
LANDED IN SCOTLAND IN THE YEAR 1928.

Creek	Fishing Craft Belonging to Creek							Fisher- men	Quantity and Value of Fish Landed by British Vessels				
	30 feet keel and upwards			Under 30 feet keel		Total			Herrings		Other kinds (except Shell Fish)		Value of Shell Fish
Montrose District	Steam	Motor	Sail	Motor	Sail	No.	Tons	No.	Cwts.		Cwts.		
Dundee	*9	..	11	..	..	20	715	111	164	69	49975	58084	..
Broughty Ferry	..	..	3	..	9	12	73	30	240	55	34	21	506
Westhaven	..	..	..	..	2	2	2	6	..	..	40	24	10
Easthaven	..	..	..	..	3	3	6	3	..	..	..	..	72
Abroath	..	25	..	11	8	44	463	162	406	186	31253	35953	521
Auchmithie	..	..	..	..	10	10	17	11	..	..	..	..	410
Usan	..	..	..	..	5	5	3	5	..	..	..	..	56
Ferryden	..	13	..	7	8	28	179	94	21	12	10348	12183	3036
Montrose	..	3	..	9	11	23	80	48	14	9	1688	2310	1429
Gourdon	..	22	..	11	6	39	281	146	..	3	15276	18207	813
Totals	9	63	14	38	62	186	1819	616	845	331	108614	126782	6853

*Trawlers.

from Anson, 1974 pp. 269, 277.

(shallow) water; Castle Ness; the Reef;--a great herring ground--; and the Kaillie. The catch was divided into thirds, one-third going to the men (including the skipper) in shares, one-third allocated to the boat (boat-owner), and one-third going to the nets (maintenance and expenses).

The Ferryden women were vital to the fishing process. Their most important job was baiting the lines onshore. This, along with gathering the bait, was an extremely time-consuming job, which the men could not possibly undertake along with the actual fishing itself. Mussels were the favored source of bait. They grew abundantly in the "beds" of the Montrose Tidal Basin, particularly in the area known as the Back Sands.

Every few days, at low tide, the Ferryden fishwives hoisted their creels upon their backs, tied up their skirts, and waded knee-deep out into the mud. Working in groups of three or four, often singing hymns, they thrust the mussel rakes down into the beds, and piled the mussels into the creels. When the creels were full, the fishwives climbed back up the bank to the village, where each one dumped her harvest into a shallow pool on the foreshore near her home. In this way, mussels could be kept fresh for several days, and used as needed. When the gathering

was done, the fishwives settled themselves down on low stools for the endless job of baiting the lines. This was laborious and monotonous work. For each line, several hundred mussels had to be shelled and fixed on a hook; several lines had to be done each day. A few informants can remember their mothers doing this work. They say that the elder daughters of a household frequently took over child-minding, cooking, and other household chores, so that their mothers could devote themselves to the lines.

Wives also helped the men to unload the boats, and, in the early period, to market the fish. It was this interdependence of roles which gave rise to the saying, "A fisher laddie needs a fisher lassie." Fishwives appear to have acted as cadgers, or marketers, until sometime in the 1830's or 1840's, when their role was usurped by middlemen from the town.

The complementarity of male and female work, the homogeneity of village occupations, and the overall system of production which engaged the fishermen, combined to produce a social structure and organization which reinforced Ferryden's distinction from Montrose. At this point, we will turn to the key relations of production which form the framework for this development.

The Social Relations of Production

The homogeneity of occupation in Ferryden implies a relative uniformity of class within the village. There is evidence to show a small amount of ranking, in terms of wealth and prestige, within the community, and this will be analyzed later in our discussion of social organization. However, the larger meaning of internal ranking must be sought in the context of Ferryden's relationship with Montrose--specifically with those members of the dominant merchant-landowning elite whose class and community allegiances were totally removed from those of the village.

"The fish-curer is the enemy of the fisherman." This is another popular phrase which carried great significance for Ferryden. The fish-curer was not the small-scale, part-time fish-seller cum fisherman, who could be found in Ferryden occasionally throughout the nineteenth century. These minor entrepreneurs may have aroused occasional resentment in their neighbors, but their achievements never met their aspirations, and they remained, fundamentally, fishermen like the rest. The town-based fish-curer, on the other hand, came, by the latter third of the nineteenth century, to represent a perpetual cycle of exploitation and debt, of which the fishermen were explicitly aware.

In the early years of the village, fishwives were the principal agents for the village catch. By the 1820's, or so, cadgers, or middlemen began to flock to the growing fishing center from the landward towns of Brechin, Forfar, and Coupar-Angus, as well as from Dundee and Perth. A boom in fishing from 1837-39 inspired the village schoolmaster (an incomer) to try to form a fish-curing partnership with a Mr. Sutherland from Montrose. They overstocked, however, and the venture failed.¹⁸

We can only proffer suggestions as to why the fishwives lost their business to the outside cadgers. It is likely that the boom in fishing, with the increasingly greater demands on the fishermen's efforts, required a correspondingly greater output from the fishwives in line-baiting, thus conflicting with the time required to sell the fish, either in town, or inland. The greater output must have compensated in the short run for any decreased price per fish which would result from trading through middlemen. It is also interesting to note that the cadgers made a practice of paying the fishermen directly in whiskey and ale, when they met to conduct business at one or other of the many village ale-houses. This may have provided an added inducement to the fishermen to deal through the middlemen, rather than with their wives.

By the 1840's, several fish-curers and cadgers had captured the market for Ferryden's inshore white fish catch. They exported much of it inland or down to England, which kept local fish prices very high. In 1846, a company was formed for the express purpose of selling fish locally, at a price more householders could afford. By the 1850's, a new company had entered the scene-- Joseph Johnston's & Sons. (See Chapter Two.) Johnston's commercial interests lay in salmon, herring, and white fishing, all of which provided them with commodities to market both locally and abroad. As the surviving competitor among a group of fish-curing firms, Johnston's rapidly became the Ferrydeners' sole outlet for their catch.

Johnston's extended their control over the Ferryden economy in a number of ways. They gained a virtual monopoly over the fishermen's sources of bait, boats, and credit, as well as their market. The issue of bait became a bitter one. Village informants today allege that Johnston's "stole" their mussel beds, by bribing the Town Councillors one night around 1890. According to the story, the Councillors were dined, and very well wine'd (or whiskeyed), and turned over control of the mussel beds in gratitude for the Company's largesse. Whatever the facts of the case, the Company did come to own the rights

to the mussel beds, which they patrolled with water baillies (company officers).

It is not surprising that the mussel beds came to be regarded as a commercial property. Their value had been recognized throughout the northeast of Scotland, long before this time.

At the end of the eighteenth century, fishermen from all the villages made periodic trips to load their boats with mussels which, on their return, they 'sowed' on scalps on their own village foreshores to keep them fresh until required. At Torry, near Aberdeen for example, it was the practice to make two or three trips a year to the Montrose Basin for that purpose.¹⁹

Even as early as the fifteenth century, there are records of feuds between landed families whose estates adjoined the Basin, over rights to the mussel beds.

In this, as in other things, Johnston's emerged as the final victor. From the latter part of the nineteenth century onwards, the Ferryden fishermen had to buy their bait. They also had to buy their boats. Few, if any fishermen had the capital to buy their boats outright, and so they bought on credit (provided by Johnston's). Failure to pay could result in repossession of the boat, which was a disaster. Frequently, fishermen bought shares in a boat, several men combining with the Company, which

held the largest share. It is frequently asserted²⁰ that east coast Scottish fishermen owned their own boats. However, in light of the credit and debt cycle which enveloped the village of Ferryden, the meaning of ownership must be given careful examination.

Even in those few cases where a fisherman held the title to a boat (exact figures are unavailable), his hold on his property was tenuous. Used in an unqualified sense, ownership implies a certain degree of autonomy and security. The Ferryden fisherman had neither. A single bad season could result in his loss of the means of production. Thus the significance of ownership, however temporary, was likely to reside in the prestige attached to it, and in the social ramifications of such prestige, rather than in a structurally distinct position of the fisherman vis-a-vis the Company. Let us now examine the operations of the Company as a direct employer in the second fishing system, herring.

Herring Fishing

Herring fishing was the reason for Ferryden's beginnings. The fishermen were initially recruited to work for the laird of Craig. The period between his death and the rise of the larger fish-curing companies in Montrose

remains somewhat obscure, but Butchart²¹ says that the Ferryden fishermen were following the herring during the 1820's and '30's, going as far north as Wick. Since herring fishing is carried out on the open seas, and requires larger boats than the inshore fishing, we must assume that someone, either the next holder of the estate, or Montrose merchants, was continuing to sponsor the industry. The fishermen lacked the resources to build and maintain their own herring boats.

Herring shoals are found in different waters at different times, so the herring fishing is seasonal. Unfortunately, we do not have the figures to tell us the numbers of Ferryden fishermen who were active in the herring fishing. We can guess that some may have stayed behind to continue with the white fishing, particularly when the herring fleet was bound for the Shetlands, or Yarmouth, on the East Anglian coast.

By the 1850's, Johnston's is reported to have taken over the local herring industry. They employed the Ferrydeners directly to work on Company boats, particularly during the summer-autumn season. They also employed the Ferryden women, thus providing a parallel to the division of labor in the inshore fishing. Since Swedish women were reputed to be expert herring packers,

the Company sent several women to Sweden to learn the technique. After that, many village women followed the herring fleet. They travelled in special boats, lashed in against the rough weather. When they arrived at their station in Shetland, or the Hebrides, they were housed together in special huts. They worked all day over the barrels of fish, gutting the herring and salting them in brine. There are one or two women left who can recall those days, and what they chiefly remember are the sores on their hands. Despite the rags tied around their fingers in an effort to protect them, the salt wore through, and rubbed their hands raw.

It was mainly unmarried women who were sent out on these long voyages, but most of them seem to have come home again. Our impression is that they were kept close together, and well-guarded. When the herring fleets put into Montrose, a man from the Company walked through the village crying, "A'body, A'body!" When enough women had gathered round, they were taken back across the harbor to cure the herring on the Montrose docks. Some of the older informants, who can still remember their parents' stories of the heyday of the herring fishing fleet (the 1880's), say that they could walk across the harbor water on the tops of the boats.

The Company Village

A company town is generally acknowledged as one whose subsistence base rests on a single enterprise, and whose labor force is frequently in a state of debt to its employer. We have seen that Johnston's controlled the white fishing through markets and boats, and the herring fishing as a direct employer of fishing labor. They also held the mortgages and the feu-rights to the fishermen's houses. Feu-rights are a form of tenure peculiar to Scotland. The holder of a feu exacts yearly feu-duties from his tenant, who may, in all other senses, be an outright owner of the property. The duty is actually paid on the land upon which the building rests. By the nineteenth century, the principal feu-holders, or feudal superiors, were the Crown, the holders of large estates, and in some cases, private firms. Feu-rights were alienable. By the turn of the century, Johnston's had bought up the feu-rights for the entire village of Ferryden. While the duties were not large by modern standards, they represented a significant cash outflow to the fishermen, and forced them into an additional debt system with the Company. One temporary strategy was to mortgage the house against the feu-duties, but this frequently resulted in the Company repossessing the house altogether, and then renting it

back to the fisherman.

Thus far, we have looked at Ferryden from its beginnings as a laird's fishing station, to its development as a supplier of dependent labor for a single company, over the course of approximately 150 years. At both ends of this time span, we have viewed the fishermen as the subjects of decisions and processes controlled from outside. The shift in the foreign market for fish in the 1740's prompted the entry of local merchants and landholders into the herring trade. This group gave way to a series of marketing entrepreneurs, and finally to a vertically integrated individual company which became the village's main source of income. Throughout the period, the structural vulnerability of the fishermen has grown. Now we shall look at what happened to the village economy as the nature of fishing production changed.

The Contraction of the Fishing Industry

By the turn of the century, Ferryden was a relatively large and active fishing village, described as:

without doubt, one of the largest, most prosperous, and most wealthy fishing villages on the east coast of Scotland, having a population of about 1600, owning somewhere about £25,000 worth of boats, nets and other fishing gear, while many of the fishermen are proprietors of the near and commodious houses in which they reside.²²

This account idealizes both the appearance and reality of Ferryden's economic situation, for, as we have seen, both boats and houses were generally mortgaged to the Company. A quarter of a century later, a Report of the Fishery Board for 1926 expresses concern over the decline of the fishing industry, and says:

The entire fishing community is at the moment living in an elaborate cycle of credit, in which the firms which undertake the reconditioning of the drifters, the manufacturing firms who supply gear, and the wholesalers who supply the retailers are involved. Profits made during the fishing season are almost entirely absorbed in payments of debts and the replenishment of gear. Barely any fisherman makes provision for depreciation: his instant need of cash is compelling.²³

This passage, with specific modifications, more accurately described the Ferryden fishing industry from the 1870's or 1880's onward, than the previous one. The difference lies in the fact that Ferryden at the turn of the century was a thriving fishing center, while by 1926, the number of boats operating from the village had dwindled to roughly one-fifth of the number of boats supported at the peak years of the fishing.

The reasons for this contraction lay in a number of factors. First, the introduction of large steam trawlers in Aberdeen and Peterhead in 1882 began to render the smaller sail boats uncompetitive.²⁴ Second, the world

market for cured fish declined rapidly after the first World War, and never recovered. Johnston's responded by cutting back on its operations, after a brief attempt to compete in the herring trawler operation. In the 1930's, they ended their support of the white fishing and the nearest local market for fish moved to Arbroath, fifteen miles down the coast. The Ferryden fishermen were helpless in the face of these circumstances. They could not return to small-boat fishing for subsistence, as they were inextricably involved in the cash nexus. They could not successfully market fish on their own, as they lacked the capital resources to operate on a large enough scale.

A number of fishing villages along the east coast surrendered to similar changes at this period. Those which survived did so by linking up with outside capital resources, and by obtaining government support in the form of grants and loans.²⁵ In order for Ferryden to have accomplished this transition, the fishermen would have had to circumvent local company pressures, find external (private or government) allies, and enter into a cooperative marketing endeavor. Perhaps the reason it did not do so has to do with the timing of events, and the lack of local alternatives to the Company.

The Company was in a very powerful position. Holding the monopoly over fishing in the area, it was able to discourage the rise of new competition, which a cooperative would represent. The officers and shareholders of the Company, which had remained a family enterprise, were solidly established in a network of alliances which incorporated most of the local elite, thus making the possibility of new vertical alliances between Ferryden and local entrepreneurs even less likely.

By the 1920's, probably a majority of the Ferryden men had left fishing. The older ones retired, living on their Old Age Pension. The younger ones became apprentices and journeymen in the Montrose building trades, or worked in the shipyards in Montrose and Glasgow. Some emigrated to the U.S., Canada, and Australia. And there was a significant number which, due to ill health or other incapacity, were forced to go on parish relief. Now we will turn to an examination of these occupational changes.

The Building Trades

Looking over parish records, and talking with the village men, it became apparent that the building and related trades represented the largest sector of skilled labor in Ferryden during the past forty years. Occupations

such as mason, slater, "brickie", and joiner, as well as rivetter and shipwright were listed frequently. Part of the explanation for this lies in the workmen's exploitation of the "old village" network. During the first decade of the twentieth century, Robert Pert managed to become, first a joiner, and then a builder. After building several large houses in the village, he moved to Montrose and established a business which continued to grow. He and his sons carried on, and provided most of the jobs for the villagers who entered the building trades. His company, Pert & Sons, got contracts for jobs from places as far away as Inverness, to build halls, schools, theaters, and hospitals. Village men today remember riding many miles out to the work-sites. (Pert seems to have lost some of his fellow-feeling as he moved up the class ladder: for example, the carts were unprotected, even in the worst weather, and when the men asked for canvas covers, they were scolded for wanting to be "wrapped in cotton wool.")

The Shipyards

The Coaster Construction Company opened up on Rossie Island in 1919, and survived until 1927. During its brief lifespan, it employed a number of village men as riveters, joiners, and shipwrights. When it closed its

doors, a number of men left for the banks of the Clyde. According to informants, most went to one particular area, and formed an emigré Ferryden colony, where they lived during their working years, returning to the village every summer during the Glasgow fair (two week trades holiday.) Most of them hoped to return upon retirement, and many did so. Glasgow never became their true home.

Other Alternatives

A good many Ferrydeners chose to emigrate to Canada, the U.S., Australia, or South Africa. A few, though not many, of these also managed to return. If they chose to stay in Scotland, they could also join the Merchant Service (a popular choice), the railways, or they could go to work for the Company in one of the surviving fishing jobs, such as salmon fishing or mussel-gathering. These last were unpopular and difficult, however. Informants say that the Company, angered by village resentment, refused for a time to hire any Ferrydeners at all, and only relented slowly. It was sometime shortly before the First World War that the Company president was hanged and burned in effigy at the village pier.

Women's work was easier to find. Unmarried women could find jobs in the flax and jute mills of Montrose,

in the "jammie," (Chivers Jams and Jellies, which opened up in Montrose in 1925), or in domestic service. Their wages were low, and their hours were long, but they could stay at home and off relief.

Pauperism and Relief

Parish Relief became an increasingly important part of village subsistence as the fishing industry declined. It was administered by a Committee composed of representatives for the parish (who need not live there), and from the village. During the years from 1897 to 1930 (for which we have the best data), parish representatives included the laird of Dunninald, a farmer, a director of the Company, and the minister of the Established Kirk of Craig parish. Village representatives were chosen from the higher-ranking members of the community, and included a fish-dealer, a builder, and a joiner. No fisherman sat on the Committee. The members gathered at least four times a year to examine the cases brought before them. They made judgements on whether to grant relief, to augment or reduce an amount already allotted, or to withhold it altogether. Along with the numbers actually granted relief, a substantial number were exempted from paying rates, or taxes, on the grounds of poverty. Many people

were denied relief on the grounds that their relatives should look after them; others chose to try to do without help from the parish. The conditions of their lives are not recorded, but we can assume that a sizeable proportion of the village was living in seriously straitened circumstances from the turn of the century, onward. The actual number of villagers on parish relief from 1897 to 1930 varied annually from a low of twenty-eight to a high of fifty-seven. (See accompanying Table.) Some of these were lunatics, orphans, and the physically unfit. Many were widows.

The Scottish Poor Law gave short shrift to those deemed able-bodied, and until the introduction of Unemployment Relief at the onset of the Depression, mere inability to find work was not considered an adequate excuse for compensation. The Parish Relief Committee passed judgement over both material circumstances and moral worth. Although charity to the poor had been expressed as part of the ideology of the Reformation, the laws were written with a good deal of concern for the landowners and merchants who had to pay the rates, as well as with a degree of explicit moral censure towards those so unfortunate as to fall into destitution. A statute of 1579, which provided the basis for post-Reformation poor law legislation "decreed that all

TABLE 5

PAUPERISM IN FERRYDEN: 1897-1930

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. on Relief</u>
1897	56
1898	54
1899	54
1900	57
1901	56
1902	56
1903	--
1904	--
1905	--
1906	--
1907	56
1908	57
1909	52
1910	58
1911	31*
1912	28
1913	--
1914	--
1915	--
1916	30
1917	30
1918	29
1919	27
1920	32
1921	34
1922	42
1923	45
1924	46
1925	48
1926	53
1927	47
1928	47
1929	--
1930	46

*Old Age Pension introduced

sturdy beggars should be arrested and scourged"26

The administration of the Poor Law was clearly an instrument for social control. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, landowners and ministers "had enough control over the distribution of parochial relief to ensure that the disrespectful would not find themselves numbered among the blessed objects of christian charity."27 According to Newby:

charity has long been, in effect, an integral part of the legitimation of social subordination, not only through its status-enhancing properties but because it has been used discriminatingly in favour of the 'deserving' (i.e., deferential) poor.28

The attitudes of the Committee were influenced by the values of the times. A Local Government Board directive sent to all parish committees in 1907 suggested that the practice of having paupers' children pick up their parents' allowance (called an aliment) from the Parish Council office should be discouraged, "as it tends to familiarize the children with the Poor Law."29

The incompetent or incapacitated poor received what was known as Indoor relief, or institutionalization. They were sent to live either in Dorward's House of Refuge in Montrose (mostly for widows, the senile, and orphans), the Forfar Poorhouse, or the Montrose Asylum (for certified lunatics). We have no record of the feelings of those

going off to such places, but the stigma of "indoor relief" survives in modern form. One lady (about ninety years of age) living in Dorward House today (it is now used as an old people's home), sighed during an interview over the fact that she had outlived both her husband and her children, and now had to live in "the House of Refuge." Her niece, who was visiting her at the time, quickly corrected her, saying, "no, no, Auntie, it's Dorward House, now."

In 1911, the first Old Age Pensions were given out. The amounts were not large, but they did enable some old people to get off the Parish Relief Register. Several people in the village today have copies of an old photograph which shows the first men to receive the Old Age Pension, and their faces look proud. Old age did not carry a stigma, but pauperism did. Unemployment Relief, which came in after the first World War, provided relatively large stipends, but the recipients remained attached to the Parish Register.

Stigmatized Identity

The judgements of the Parish Committee must be viewed not only in light of prevailing attitudes towards the poor, but also in the light of Ferryden's stigmatized identity. The Ferryden poor suffered a double stigma

because they lived in a fishing village which had an unsavory reputation in the town, and in the rural parish. Ferrydeners, like other fisherfolk, were regarded as dirty and coarse, superstitious, disease-ridden, and shifty. They were a popular butt of local humor and caricature, and it would not be surprising if Montrose invented a local equivalent of "Newfy" or Polish jokes.

A Montrose poet and caricaturist expressed the popular view of Ferryden in the 1820's in the following verse:

From Ferryden- (ane place of housen vile,
Where Fishermen and fisherwives abide,
Where mussel-middens, heaped in filthy pile,
Block up the narrow streets from side to side;
And where fresh haddock, with the rising tide,
Ling, turbot, skate, and cod in store,
All kinds of fish that in the waters glide,
In heavy laden boats are brought ashore,
Which in Montrose they vend- then go to sea for more)-

From Ferryden came David Pole- ane man
Who mended shoon while he resided there;
But, coming to Montrose, he changed his plan
And gave himself a somewhat nobler air...

Another caricature, of the rise and fall of another social-climbing Ferrydener, makes the following points:

Among your group of public men
Take Jamie West of Ferryden,
The King o' a' the fisher crew-
A fisher and a pilot too: [one who guides boats through
Sometimes sober, often mellow the harbor entrance]
Still he is a pushing fellow... [drink was considered
a common village vice]

...Then words would pass we dare not name
 Dark epithets of sin and shame
 And vengeful threats and foul reproach,
 In neither English, Erse, nor Scots,
 But in some strange outlandish speech,
 Transposing evermore the 'h'
 For sooth, these people deem it better,
 To throw aside this useless letter,
 Except in that especial case
 Where others never give it place³⁰. [Ferrydeners were
 considered to speak
 a degraded dialect]

Fifty years later, the Ferryden fisherman was portrayed as
 a lusty and an industrious brawler:

The King o' the Fishers appears-
 The Provost of Ferryden-
 And follows the knight of the shears,
 Like a lion shaking his mane.
 He feared but the Fiscal's might, [Procurator-fiscal,
 And many a fine paid he; legal officer]
 For as dearly he loved a rollicking fight
 As a haddock can love the sea...³¹

There are many other examples of slurs against
 Ferryden during the nineteenth century, and informants can
 recall tales of ostracism from their childhoods. These
 attitudes persist today. Montrosians refer to Ferrydeners
 as queer, superstitious, mentally defective (a supposed
 result of inbreeding), unfriendly, dirty, etc. They are
 regarded almost as a separate race, whose motives and
 culture are alien to those of the townsmen. Later, we
 shall examine some of the reasons for these beliefs, and
 compare them with Ferrydeners' own opinion of themselves.
 Here we shall briefly examine the context of these

attitudes.

Hostility and mutual suspicion have governed the interaction between fishing and land-based populations on the east coast of Scotland for at least the past 250 years, since the rise of specialized fishing populations. It is interesting to note Mather's comment:

invariably the communities are given some sort of origin from the other side of the North Sea- sometimes indeed an English origin from the southern part of the North Sea- and almost always through some simple event like a shipwreck which is held to explain the relatively few surnames which are to be found in this or that village.³²

He also refers to Hugh Miller, who wrote on Scots fishermen in 1844, who mentions the "romantic exclusiveness"³³ of the fishing population. Green called the fishing communities "self-contained," and "more familiar with other parts of the British coast than with their own hinterlands."³⁴

We believe that the social and cultural schism between the Ferrydeners and the land-based population around it is based upon both class and ideological conflicts, which interact in a mutually reinforcing system. Fishing communities developed a peculiarly ambiguous position in local Scottish society. They projected an image of independence which separated them from both proletarians, or wage-earners, and bourgeois groups.

While this independence has been shown to be spurious, the ideology of fisherfolk autonomy must have alienated the sympathies of those classes who saw themselves as dependent and vulnerable. Groups at the top must have perceived fisherfolk as being in some way dangerous, in need of special control, like a group of delinquents, who haven't been reliably or properly socialized. Because "a fisher laddie" needed "a fisher lassie," fishing villages tended to be endogamous, a fact to be demonstrated in the following chapter. At this point it is enough to indicate that endogamy reinforced the fishing community's closure from the outside world. We will return to this point later on, as it holds major significance for modern-day Ferryden, and its response to change.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹Fraser, East Coast Oil Town, p. 91.
- ²Smout, A History of the Scottish People, p. 263
- ³Fraser, East Coast Oil Town, p. 91.
- ⁴J.Y. Mather, "Aspects of the Linguistic Geography of Scotland," Scottish Studies, Vol. XIII. Part One, 1969, p. 10.
- ⁵Lenman, From Esk to Tweed, p. 208
- ⁶Mather, "Aspects of Linguistic Geography," p. 10.
- ⁷L. Butchart, "Montrose: An Industrial History," unpublished M.A. Thesis in Geography for the University of St. Andrews, 1967-1968, p. 43.
- ⁸J.R. Coull, "Fisheries in the North-East of Scotland before 1800," Scottish Studies, Vol. XIII. 1969, p. 20.
- ⁹Ibid., p. 24.
- ¹⁰Mather, "Aspects of the Linguistic Geography of Scotland," Part Two, Scottish Studies, Vol. X, 1966, p. 137.
- ¹¹T.C. Smout, "The Landowner and the Planned Village," in N.T. Phillison and Rosalind Mitchison, eds., Scotland in the Age of Improvement, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1970). There is no suggestion in the accounts of Ferryden's birth that Ferryden was in any sense a "planned village"--that is, one laid out according to prior principles and standards architecture, and conforming generally to the values of the eighteenth century Improving movement. Ferryden was, however, a "planted" village, and we may surmise that Scott was influenced in his decision to establish Ferryden by the fashionable proliferation of such attempts during this period.
- ¹²This was for each barrel of white herring "exported beyond the seas." The bounty was maintained until 1830. See Peter F. Anson, Fishing Boats and Fisher Folk

on the East Coast of Scotland, (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1930), p. 2.

¹³Fraser, The Smugglers, p. 70.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 70.

¹⁵Rossie Castle was demolished by its owners after the Second World War, in order to avoid taxes on the building.

¹⁶Peter F. Anson, Fishing Boats and Fisher Folk, p. 9.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 117.

¹⁸Andrew Douglas, History of the Village of Ferryden, (Montrose: 1857).

¹⁹Coull, "Fisheries in the North-East of Scotland."

²⁰Butchart, "Industrial History of Montrose," p. 44.

²¹Coull, "Fisheries in the North-East of Scotland"; Baks and Postel-Coster, "Fishing Communities on the Scottish East Coast," p. 26; Anson, Fishing Boats and Fisher Folk, p. 3.

²²Davidson's Tourist Guide, n.d.

²³Fishery Board for Scotland, Annual Report and Statistics, 1926, quoted in Anson, Fishing Boats and Fisher Folk, p. 4.

²⁴Anson, Fishing Boats and Fisher Folk, p. 4.

²⁵Baks and Postel-Coster, "Fishing Communities on the Scottish East Coast," p. 27; Lenman, From Esk to Tweed, p. 212.

²⁶Smouth, A History of the Scottish People, p. 86.

²⁷Ibid., p. 262.

²⁸Howard Newby, "The Deferential Dialectic," Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol. 17, No. 2, April, 1975, p.

²⁹Parish of Craig Minute Books, 1897-1912.

³⁰James Bowick, John Lee and Others, Montrose Characters: Past and Present (Montrose: David P. Davidson, 1880) pp. 32-35.

³¹Alexander Smart, "Sons of Labour," in Bowick, Montrose Characters.

³²Mather, "Aspects of Linguistic Geography," p. 3.

³³Hugh Miller, quoted in Mather, "Aspects of Linguistic Geography," p. 3.

³⁴Green, 1936, quoted in Mather, "Aspects of Linguistic Geography," p. 3.

CHAPTER FOUR: FERRYDEN: COMMUNITY AND KIN

Here lived a race of hardy souls
 Now passed beyond our ken,
 The fishermen and women folk
 Of dear old Ferryden.
 For them no more the surges roar,
 Or seagulls' piercing cry,
 They lie at rest on Rossie Isle,
 The river flowing by.

--The late Thomas Coull Pert,
 Ferrydener.

In the previous chapter, we discussed Ferryden's economic development from its eighteenth century origins, to the decline of fishing, and the development of alternative occupations around the end of the first World War. Throughout this period, Ferryden's community boundaries were well marked, geographically and socially, materially and symbolically. Its inhabitants lived and worked within a half-mile long strip of land, or out on the sea beyond. Most of them shared a common class, occupation, religion, church affiliation, dialect, kinship network, and stigma. Ferryden's status as a village, separate from the surrounding population, and particularly from the nearby town, was unambiguous. The Montrosians' disdain for the fisherfolk helped to reinforce this social separation, and to

block any significant cross-cutting ties with town dwellers. Thus, Ferryden's first 175 years witnessed the growth of an encapsulated occupational community¹, whose relationship to Montrose and to the rural hinterland were based upon the principles of hierarchy, supported by deference, but in which suspicion and restricted defiance also played a part.

This system held within it the seeds of change, for, like other highly specialized species or groups, it was vulnerable to obsolescence. In this chapter, we will examine the social consequences of Ferryden's occupational focus, and the results of the decline in the small-scale fishing industry, concentrating upon the issues of community identity and kinship. We will explore the transformation of Ferryden's social composition from an occupational community to a divided village, containing two groups: a diminished "fishing" community, and an unorganized set of newcomers, or Incomers.

While Ferryden before World War I was a relatively bounded social system, it was never a homeostatic or absolutely closed one. Economically and politically, Ferryden was always deeply dependent upon events and decisions made in the outside world, especially in Montrose. There was always some interchange of population, both with

other east coast fishing villages, and with more distant parts of Scotland (particularly after the turn of the century), and some Ferrydeners migrated to the colonies quite early. Nonetheless, the dominant patterns of work and marriage kept most Ferrydeners at home.

Village Endogamy

Throughout the period of active participation in the fishing industry, Ferrydeners usually preferred to marry within the village. Parish records and oral genealogies indicate that this continued to hold true until the end of the First World War, when increasing out-migration and the diversification of employment among those who stayed led to the breakdown of the pattern.

Village endogamy thus prevailed for six or seven generations. The explanations for this, we believe, lie in two realms, both of which pertain to Ferryden's occupational specialization and dependence upon the town. First, as we mentioned in the previous chapter, the villagers, nearly all of whom were fishermen and their families, believed that "a fisher laddie needs a fisher lassie." While skilled fisher lassies could be recruited from other fishing villages, and were occasionally brought in as brides, women's work tended to be organized in groups of

uterine kin. The composition of female work groups, which suggests that a fisher lassie needed a fisher lassie, preferably a consanguine, thus indicates a further reason for village endogamy. Males also tended to stay at home, as boat crews were generally recruited agnatically.

The second reason for village endogamy lies in Ferryden's stigmatized identity. The fisherfolk were looked down upon by townsman, farm-laborer, and farmer alike. They were never integrated or assimilated into town families or town activities (except for those who abandoned the village for a life in Montrose, dropping all signs of "fisherfolk" identity and relationships as fast as possible). They were, however, employed, governed, taught, and preached to by outsiders.

While the redundancy of both family and given names in Ferryden throughout the fishing period makes family reconstruction difficult, it is clear that cousin marriage, at least of the second and probably of the first degree, was common practice. Informants today acknowledge this without shame or hesitation, although they realize that Montrosians consider Ferrydeners to be dangerously inbred.

This corresponds with Foran's² findings on Eriskay, where second and first cousin marriage are extremely common, despite the institutional disapproval of the

Catholic Church. It contrasts rather strikingly, however, with Knipe's³ observations in a Banffshire fishing village. Knipe finds that while the people of Gamrie practice cousin marriage, they attempt to disguise the fact through a system of by-names (alternative names). These by-names mask what Knipe calls "homonymic" marriages, or marriages between people of the same surname. While those of the same surname are not necessarily consanguines, people will tend to assume that they are--hence the use of by-names to keep real surnames private.

While village endogamy no longer prevails within Ferryden, and the days of the fishing are long since gone, the memories of both persist among the older folk, and are a favorite subject for discussion. Reminiscence helps to keep alive the feelings of community solidarity and identity as the village bows to the winds of change.

Organizing Principles: Bilateral Descent and Social Division by Sex

Lowland Scottish kinship is formally based upon a bilateral reckoning principle: ego counts himself equally related to both his mother's and his father's kin. In Ferryden, most kin terms are those which Americans find familiar: mother, father, grand..., great grand..., uncles, aunts, nieces and nephews (the exception being the

use of the term "half-cousin" in place of "second" cousin). Mother's and father's relatives are not distinguished from each other. When people wish to specify kin linkages, they simply name the intermediate relatives, as in, "Mary's Jeanie's Margaret," or "Willie's Robbie." This democracy of terminology, however, does not reveal the complexity of relationships which are incorporated in the actual operations of the kinship system.

Kinship in Ferryden must be examined on two levels: the level of the nuclear family and first degree kin; and the level of the wider kinship network, which unites one segment of the village, and excludes the other. Nuclear family members and other primary kin form a support group for the individual. They are expected to take care of each other, to see that basic needs of food, shelter and social training are met. They are expected to be present at life crisis rituals, such as weddings, baptisms, and funerals, and they visit each other fairly casually. Close family can be entrusted with family secrets, such as amounts of income or debt, or marital troubles, which may otherwise be privy only to the minister. Grown children are expected to visit their parents, and see to their welfare, but not necessarily to take them into their homes. According to the 1971 Census, there are only ten three-generation

households in the village, out of a total of 277 households. (A totally contemporary explanation might point to restricted living space as the answer, but many of the elderly were raised in the houses they now inhabit, with their parents, and six or ten siblings.) Married children set up new households, as a rule, and one of the major reasons cited for moving out of the village is the lack of affordable housing. (Many homes stand empty part of the year, their windows shuttered. They are "holiday homes," owned by people from Edinburgh, Dundee, or Glasgow, who enjoy the seaside life during the summer holidays.)

Ferryden siblings often become friends, or at least, allies. Sisters can often be seen walking arm in arm down the village streets, or sitting together on the benches overlooking the water. It is not uncommon for unmarried or widowed sisters to live together, or in adjoining flats. Some pairs of elderly sisters are almost never seen apart. If one is ill, the other refuses to go out, except to do the shopping. Several sets of sisters belong to the Old Age Pensioners' Lunch Club, and they almost never attend singly. Brothers are expected to stick together, to cooperate in getting jobs, and so forth, but there are few sets of unmarried brothers in the village, and no brother-households, so it is difficult to determine

whether brothers are as close as sisters.

Ferrydeners show a tendency to associate strongly with their kin of the same sex generally, and there is evidence to show a further division into what I call ambilineal association, that is, males associating primarily with their agnatic kin, and females with their uterine kin. When asked for their genealogies, males frequently offered their agnatic genealogies first, and did so more fluently. Females, on the other hand, tended to be more familiar with their mother's families. The history of work in the village is a likely factor here.

Boat crews were usually recruited among a man's sons and brothers, sometimes included father's brother's sons, and when boats were available for inheritance (not very often), they were generally left to sons. Women, as we mentioned above, tended to work on mussel digging and line-baiting with their daughters and sisters. Women also tended to return to their mother's house to bear their children. Parish records show that even women who were living in the United States sometimes crossed the Atlantic in order to bear their children at "home."

The tendency towards ambilineal association may be supported by the social division between the sexes, which characterizes much of working-class life in Britain as a

whole. Men and women live very separate lives. With the decline of fishing, men's and women's work no longer shows the clear complementarity it once had. Women working outside the home can usually be found in low-paying factory, shop, or office jobs. Men are mostly employed in the factories or in construction work. At the end of the working day, men and women meet at home for meals, after which the man may go off to his football club, the Masonic Lodge, the British Legion, or the pub. (While English women frequently go to pubs for a quiet pint of beer, Scottish women are strongly discouraged from doing so, and it is mostly the younger generation which is breaking down the pattern.) Women's activities include the Eastern Star (women's version of the Masons), Bible Study sessions with the minister, Church committee work, such as organizing sales, and so on. Women also dominate church attendance nowadays, though males still provide most of the Kirk Session elders. (See Chapter Five)

Many people in Ferryden live alone. Elderly widows and widowers, spinsters and bachelors, inhabit the old but-and-ben (two-room) fishermen's houses, or modern Council flats. According to the recent Census, there are fifty-nine one-person households in the village, or 21.29 per cent. Many of those living alone have children or close

collateral relatives living in the village, sometimes close by, sometimes not. There are strong institutional sanctions working to keep nuclear families together (until recently, Scottish law made it very difficult to obtain a divorce, and it remains heavily censured by the Presbyterian Church). Children frequently remain with their parents until marriage, though there seems to be a strong value placed upon personal independence. Public displays of any kind of affection are frowned upon, and emotional bonds beyond the nuclear family are not easy to observe.

On the wider kin network level, relatedness takes on a new importance. Kinship in Ferryden today acts as a metaphor for community. The social organization of the village rests heavily upon the self-defined notion of the "real" or True Ferrydener, who is identified as a member of a large, but bounded group, the Ferryden "kindred." (See the discussion of "Kindred" following.) In Ferryden, ego-centric kin networks have overlapped through long-standing village endogamy to produce a tight-knit fabric of kin relations among the descendants of the fisherfolk. They believe themselves to be related to one another, "if you go back far enough." When referring to someone whose connection is presumed, but difficult to trace, they say,

"Oh, he's my forty-second cousin."

Anthropologists have traditionally restricted the use of the term "kindred" to refer to an ego-centric network of bilaterally linked kin relationships.⁴ Used in this fashion, a kindred remains a subjective category, co-existent with an individual's lifespan. As a category, rather than a group, a kindred cannot act collectively, or hold property.⁵ Murdock discusses the problem of describing the boundaries of ego-centric bilateral descent groups when individual groups can only overlap, and never, by definition, coincide. He claims that kindreds labor under "a particular disadvantage" when problems of collective action or property arise, both because they intersect with one another, and because they lack "continuity over time." He acknowledges, however, that overarching bilateral kin groups do exist in some societies, which display some similarities in operation to unilineal descent groups:

. . . there is one type of larger bilateral kin group which is fairly common, and which exerts an influence upon kinship terminology and sex behavior comparable to that exerted by sibs and other recognized consanguineal kin groups.

This group is most clearly observable in the endogamous local community which is not segmented by unilinear groupings of kinsmen. By virtue of the rule or strong preference for local endogamy, the inhabitants are necessarily related to one another through intermarriage, although they cannot always trace their exact kinship connections . . . Except for family ties, the strongest sense of identification is usually

with the community as a whole, which is viewed as a consanguineal unity in relation to other communities in a manner quite comparable to the attitude toward one's own sib in a unilinear society . . .⁶

Murdock's quest for an appropriate name for such groupings led him to adopt the term deme borrowed from ancient Attican communities, which he describes as "roughly comparable to an English parish."⁷ There is already a substantial discussion in the literature⁸, excellently summarized by Foran⁹, on the issue of how to analyze and name bilateral descent groups. Foran concludes, from his own work in the Western Isles of Scotland, that the diachronic perspective, so often ignored or discounted, is of crucial importance in resolving the problem of whether or not bilateral descent groups have an independent or non-ego-centric existence.

Freeman supports this approach when he says that the kindred may become consolidated by the marriage of close cognates:

. . . as it occurs in many bilateral societies, as, for instance, with the Iban, among whom the marriage of cousins (of first or any degree) is both lawful and preferred . . . If the marriage of cousins is continued generation by generation, this results in a continuing consolidation of stocks and produces a closer cognatic network than in societies in which the marriage of close cognates does not occur . . . such cognatic networks are close and cohesive and so of great importance to the multiplex relations of social life . . .¹⁰

Thus for Freeman, the functions of a bilateral descent group derive partly from its development over time.

For the descendants of the Ferryden fishermen, kinship is extended to include a large population, among them cousins of the nth degree, which stems from the original core, or founding families of the village. Thus the kin category has a decided "ancestor focus."¹¹

This strong feeling of relatedness applies to approximately one-third of the adult population of the village. It is perceived as stemming from a particular set of ancestors, and is seen as a bounded category, excluding all those not related by "blood." One can therefore describe it as a bilateral descent group, which includes the overlapping personal kindreds of many people. Specific links are often forgotten, while the shield of consanguinity protects its members against the incursions of outsiders. We would like to avoid coining a term and find deme to be somewhat obscure and misleading. Therefore we would like to extend the use of the term "kindred" to cover the socio-centric, rather than ego-centric, group which developed in Ferryden and which persists in reduced but significant form today.

The Ferryden kindred is composed of that group of villagers who either assume or can trace consanguineal

links, reckoned bilaterally, to one of the old founding families of the village--the Wests and Coulls, who came from the Moray Firth, the Perts, who were probably local fisherfolk, and the Patons, descendants of the fishermen of Usan village, who began to be incorporated into Ferryden by migration and intermarriage early in the nineteenth century. Both members and non-members recognize the existence of this group, to which one can belong solely by right of birth.

The Ferryden kindred speak of themselves as a dying group, their heyday corresponding with that of the herring fishing, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Nonetheless, they recognize as kindred members those of their number who have long since moved away, as well as the exiles' children. Thus there is an apparent contradiction here: although kindred members may theoretically live anywhere in the world (and do), they are expected to keep in touch with the kin back home. Even those who were born in foreign places qualify for inclusion if they write letters, or visit the village. However, since fewer and fewer of the younger generation do this, the group is seen as diminishing through attrition and dispersal. Therefore, an attachment to place becomes part of the constitution of the kindred. If Ferryden were to

disappear, the "Ferryden kindred" would disappear also, with no central point for sentiments to focus. Thus we see that the Ferryden kindred qualifies for group status: it is held together by both ideology and behavior. It can be reconstructed through the application of a derived principle-consanguinity--but it can be observed through interaction, emotional bonds, and myth-telling.

As long as exiles return for periodic visits, or keep in touch by other means, they are reckoned as part of the kindred. Before Mrs. Gordon (née Paton) returned with her husband from a forty-year sojourn in Oxford, England, she intended to live in the old Paton family house in Ferryden. In her absence, however, the County Council had decided to demolish a block of houses to make way for planned "Sheltered Housing" for the elderly. She was notified of this by mail, but was unable to present her objections in person, and the demolition swept her house away with the others. Although Mr. and Mrs. Gordon were thus forced to take a flat in Montrose, they quickly joined the Ferryden Old Age Pensioners' Association (despite the fact that Mr. Gordon is from Montrose) and began going to weekly lunch meetings. Mrs. Gordon was able to fit in immediately. Her aunt, at least one first cousin, and numerous "half cousins" welcomed her back into the fold. Her

grandchildren, who were born and live in the United States, and whom most Ferrydeners had never met, were the objects of great interest, and when they recently paid their first visit to the village, they were warmly received.

The functions of family and kindred may appear as a safety-net or an "action group"¹², depending upon the social context in which they emerge. There seems to be a gap between small-scale and large-scale kinship-related behavior. Nuclear family and primary kin members interact daily and are expected to stick by one another. The Ferryden kindred provides its members with a social place, a group status, and a level of shared understandings in a harsh and hierarchical world. It does not appear to function on a more intimate level. Members of the kindred whose children have left the village, whose parents are dead, and whose siblings are away, may find themselves personally isolated. They gain immediate acceptance in group situations, but only the minister may go to visit them. There are many lonely old people who live by themselves. They appear to enjoy the company of their fellows in meetings, church, or other public situations, but cannot or do not call upon them for minor aid.

Informants vary widely in their ability to recall the precise nature of their relationships to one another.

One octogenarian was able to remember the names of nearly all her maternal ancestors, as well as some of the collateral branches, going back to her great-grandmother's generation in the late eighteenth century. Since her great-grandmother had twelve children, and her grandmother ten, this was an enormous undertaking, and represented many hours of effort, as well as numerous cups of tea. She was an unusual informant, however. Many people were able to go back only as far as their grandparents, their memories dimming at great-uncles and great-aunts.

Given the apparent casualness with which many Ferrydeners treat formal kin linkages, their insistence on the idea of general relatedness becomes all the more interesting. In order to reconcile this apparent contradiction, we must view it both in temporal and functional perspective. We must consider the function of the Ferryden kindred both within the village itself, and in its relationship with the town and rural populations around it.

The Ferryden kindred was once coterminous with Ferryden village. All members shared the status of "fisherfolk," and suffered the same stigma. Today, the Ferryden kindred serves to separate the descendants of the fisherfolk from the other inhabitants of the village, the Incomers. Kindred membership today confers a dual status--

elite in the eyes of members, and "backward" in the eyes of the Incomers and the Montrosians. The significance of this duality will be explored in greater depth, for it has provided a Montrose-based power structure with a basis for a policy of "divide and rule," which has emerged quite clearly in the light of recent offshore-oil developments.

True Ferrydeners and Incomers

Don't let us be strangers, as long as we are together,
Friends we'll be, if you'll agree, 'tis far a better
plan,
Life is very short, so let us all endeavor
To be as good and kind to one another as we can.

So let me give you this advice, wherever you may roam,
Be courteous to your fellow man, and make him feel at
home,
Civility costs nothing, and you'll find that out in
the end,
And by my simple message you will always find a friend.

--Chorus and 3rd verse from
"The Ferryden Anthem"

Both Ferryden residents and Montrosians distinguish two major social categories of Ferrydeners: the True Ferrydeners, and the Incomers. True Ferrydeners are defined by related characteristics, one primary and one contingent. These are membership in the Ferryden kindred, discussed above, and the concomitant assumption of fisherfolk identity. The fisherfolk criterion, while evident, proved difficult to define, at first. Ferryden today is

widely claimed to be a fishing village, despite the fact that fishing has long since ceased to be the primary economic or occupational base of the village. To Ferrydeners, as well as to their neighbors, a fishing village is a village of fisherfolk, and fisherfolk are those who are descended from, or who claim descent from, fishermen, and who display a great attachment to the sea. This attachment is expressed in their continuing interest in all things maritime: boats, fish, seagulls, tides, weather, and folklore. In other words, fisherfolk has become an ascribed status, a metaphorical statement of identity, an expression of community boundaries, and of the community's relationship to the outside world.

When True Ferrydeners gather together, as they do at the weekly meetings of the Old Age Pensioners' Lunch Club, they devote a large amount of time to recalling the past. They tell stories about the fishing days, of what happened when Billy Pert refused to help out Davey West's grandfather one day out at sea, of how Simon Coull's father lost two boats, one to lightning, and one to a gale. They speak of the early years of the century, when Johnston's first tried to introduce steam trawlers, and the villagers threw stones at the boat. (They were afraid the trawlers would wipe out the fishing, and for several years resisted

working aboard them, thereby forcing the Company to recruit the trawler crews elsewhere.) They deplore the ebbing away of what they call "neighborliness," and they ascribe this to the fact that everyone now must work in Montrose.

Many True Ferrydeners are fond of self-description. They make frequent statements about the nature of fishing folk, merging past and present as they shift back and forth from their ancestors to themselves. They say that fishermen are a superstitious lot, and recount numerous examples to support their contention. (We will discuss these in the following chapter.) They also say that fishermen are very devout, and appear to find no contradiction in these two statements. They claim that fisherfolk are much more mindful of the Kirk and of the Sabbath than their landward neighbors, though they admit that church attendance is not what it used to be in Ferryden. Some of them say that fisherfolk are queer and shy, prone to "hiding, and peering out the window at strangers." At the same time, they describe themselves as very hospitable, and gracious to tourists and guests. They vacillate between seeing themselves as independent and forthright, and as totally at the mercy of the "big men" of the town, and the lairds. They also describe themselves as clean and thrifty people, who "would rather save their money than pay their bills." Some

of these self-descriptive statements appear to support the stigmatized stereotype which the Montrosians express about the Ferrydeners. Some reverse the stereotype, or proclaim as virtues what Montrosians see as vices.

Another way in which Ferrydeners mark their identity is through the use of by-names (also known as tee-names). By-names are special names which are given to an individual which supplement, or even replace, given names as terms of reference. To use a by-name to someone's face is a serious breach of etiquette, and ideally, one is not supposed even to know one's own by-name. (In fact, several informants said that they did know their own by-names, and appeared to be proud of them.)

By-names fall into two main categories: genealogical (a term borrowed from Dorian¹³ in her article on by-names in a Gaelic-speaking area in the northern Highlands of Scotland), and personal. Genealogical by-names identify someone in relation to someone else, usually a parent or a spouse. A woman might be known as Mary's Jeanie, or Donald's Moira. These names express specific kin ties, as well as symbolizing True Ferrydener status (although Incomer affines are occasionally denoted this way). Personal by-names frequently have very obscure meanings, and I have attempted a rough classification,

breaking them down into the categories of Status, Occupational, Personal Attribute, and Maritime by-names. Males are given personal by-names sometime during adolescence as a rule, usually by their peers. Anson¹⁴ makes tantalizing references to initiation practices for young fisher lads of earlier generations on the east coast of Scotland, but unfortunately I have no information on this from Ferryden. According to Anson, by-names were frequently given after a boy's initiation, which took place before his first sail. By-names today exist mostly in memory, although a few of the younger True Ferrydeners have them. Thus, twenty-four-year-old Donald Douglas is known as "Coddlin' Donald," which presumably refers to his love of fishing.

True Ferrydeners also express their feelings of "ingroupness" by their behavior to outsiders. Outsiders lack the credentials of trust. They are kept at arm's length in a number of ways. They are seldom invited into True Ferrydeners' homes, and they are seldom addressed informally. If they attempt to push their ways into the group by an unusual show of friendliness, or by doing favors, they tend to become the targets of gossip, or at least of malicious speculation. (I was able to witness this in the Old Age Pensioners' Lunch Club, whose official

TABLE 6

SOME FERRYDEN BY-NAMES: A ROUGH CLASSIFICATION

<u>Personal Characteristic</u>	<u>Maritime</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Occupation or Affiliation</u>
Feet	Turbot	Young King	Mason Willie
Puffy	Coxswain Wattie	The Duke	Scaffie Jamie
Jimmy Stinkey	Codlin'	Baronets Willie	Pedlar
Deaf Davie	Dowdrums David	Bizmark	Postie Willie
Scatty	Paddle Clock	Burgess	Mackie Painter
Boozer	Stinkin' Crab	Provost	Tamp Piper
Dummy David	Captain Bob	General Jim	Cartie
Leggie			Rafter
Loon			Canner
Cripple David			
Hairy Johnny			
Curly Doggie			
Punch			
Art Thou Weary			
Pistol David			
Lumpie Tom			
Jocky Peevil			
Monkey Alex			
Davie Crab Apple			

Note: This classification is purely my own. The categories are not absolutely exclusive: for example, Captain Bob could be placed in either the Maritime or the status column. Many of the by-names are very obscure in reference, such as Jubblie Joe, or Roverie. Most of these names are taken from the past--the practice of by-naming appears to be dying out in Ferryden.

leader happened to be an Incomer, although a wife of over fifty years' standing to a True Ferrydener. People whispered about her "bossiness," and hinted that she kept left-over food for herself. Her counterpart in the larger Ferryden Branch of the Scottish Old Age Pensioner's Association did not attract such attacks, although he was not noticeably less "bossy.")

Consanguineal ties take clear precedence over affinal ties in several ways. One of the most striking is the retention by married women of their maiden names, when conversing with either close kin or childhood friends. This can be very baffling for the fieldworker. Many times, a woman introduced to me as Mrs. James West would subsequently be referred to as Annabella Pert, rather than as Annabella West. This practice serves to discriminate against the in-marrying spouse of a True Ferrydener who has married into the village. Her maiden name tends to be either unknown or ignored. It also serves to mystify not only the anthropologist, but the Montrosian, or other outsider. (Our data indicates that this practice does not apply to Montrose.)

The in-marrying man or woman never becomes a True Ferrydener, but as long as the marriage survives may achieve a kind of halfway acceptance into the group,

neither member nor rank outsider. The exigencies of social life force the Incomer-spouse to associate with the True Ferrydeners, and if he or she is liked, there will be a substantial lessening of ingroup reserve. However, many informants declared that they would "never be one of them," no matter how long they lived in the village. The following example illustrates the problem facing the Incomer spouses of True Ferrydeners who are concerned about their acceptance into the fisherfolk network. They must face a kind of extended family of in-laws, a potentially critical and very watchful group of their spouses' kin who see the new daughter-in-law or son-in-law as an alien intruder.

Fiona is a young woman from Montrose who has married Jamie, the son of True Ferrydener parents. Fiona and Jamie live in a house on Victoria Square in the older part of the village, not far from the house where Jamie was born. Jamie's grandmother lives at one end of the street, and his brother lives at the other end. Jamie, as one of the True Ferrydener representatives of his generation in the village, is well liked by the older folk, and often wishes that he could have been a fisherman, like his forebears. While he makes his living by working at the Glaxo pharmaceutical company in Montrose, he keeps a small boat on the village foreshore, and spends nearly all of

his leisure time on the sea. He has also spent many hours crewing for Andrew Watt, the last remaining commercial fisherman in Ferryden, or for James Paton, the coxswain of the lifeboat, whom Jamie calls his "skipper." Jamie feels very close to the older men of the village and spends many hours listening to their stories and absorbing their sea-lore. He is highly knowledgeable about many types of fishing and keeps about twenty lobster creels (pots, or traps) piled up against the wall near his house. When the lobster season opens, he sets them out off the rocks beyond the lighthouse, and picks up a bit of extra cash by selling his catch to the fish-export company in Montrose. Jamie is very proud to be a Ferrydener, although he tells wry stories about the peculiarities of his neighbors, and has many friends in Montrose.

Fiona works as a teacher in the village primary school, and is therefore one of the few village residents to work within the village itself. She is a friendly, outgoing person, eager to be liked, who would make an ideal candidate for adoption into the True Ferrydener circle, if affinal relationship were a sufficient entry fee. Fiona believes that her acceptance by the True Ferrydeners is both partial and conditional. If Jamie were to die, or to leave her, she would be instantly relegated back to

complete outsider status.

During my fieldwork, Fiona became sharply reminded of her "place." Fiona and Jamie were among my best informants in Ferryden, being interested in the project, self-conscious and articulate. As the end of the field stay was drawing near, I needed help in collecting the questionnaires which I had distributed a few weeks before. Fiona volunteered to help collect the questionnaires from her neighbors on King Street, most of whom were elderly True Ferrydeners. During the next few days, whenever we'd meet, she'd call out gaily, "I'm working on them!" However, as the time for my departure approached, the Victoria Square questionnaires failed to appear, and Fiona was becoming visibly ill at ease. Finally she admitted that she had been daunted by her neighbors' response. They were suspicious of the questionnaire (particularly because of the questions on politics, which is regarded as a very private subject), and they extended their suspicions to Fiona herself. Some were clearly wondering whether she would open the envelopes and spy out their answers. Fiona felt that her tentative acceptance into the group was in jeopardy and was greatly relieved when I assured her that I could collect them myself.

Another manifestation of the True Ferrydener group

is to be found in the operation of the fish network. The fish network refers to the group of villagers who are able to buy cut-price fish from Andrew Watt, the last commercial fisherman in Ferryden. Andrew is about forty years old and has recently moved to a house in the new housing development which has mushroomed over the hill to Craig. He is the descendant of a long line of fishermen, harbor pilots, lifeboat and ferryboat skippers who were among Ferryden's most successful maritime families. Andrew owns his own boat, which he keeps on the Montrose side of the river, where modern dock and harbor facilities are available. His crew varies, frequently including some of the older, retired fishermen. Until recently, Andrew sold his fish to the frozen foods factory on Rossie Island, but a dispute with the factory owner culminated in Andrew's shifting his outlet to Arbroath.

Once or twice a week, a number of fish are brought directly into the village. Several members of the Watt family--primarily Andrew's wife and mother--clean and gut the fish in a small shed on the foreshore, below the old family house on King Street. When the fish are ready for distribution, they are taken to the Cooperative, where those villagers who have "put in a word" go to pick them up. (A few years ago, Andrew's father, old Andrew Watt,

used to carry the fish from door to door, but ill health and advancing age put a stop to that, and no one has replaced him.) After people have collected their fish from the Cooperative, a secondary distribution procedure begins. Friends, neighbors, and kinsmen who cannot manage to get the fish from the Cooperative receive a few choice fish from the initial buyers. Sometimes these are presented as a gift, sometimes they are paid for (I never heard of any profit-taking in this arrangement.) If the recipient is away from home, the fish may be placed, wrapped in newspaper, just inside the outer door of the house, which is seldom kept locked.

The fish network operates in an atmosphere of secrecy. The fish are never advertised, and few outside the village know that the Ferrydeners get cheap or free fish. (One informant suggested that the village fish fall outside the official size limit, and are therefore illegal, but I cannot say if this is true.) With very few exceptions, only True Ferrydeners or their spouses participate in the fish network. While an Incomer can ask for the fish, he or she is made to feel uncomfortable or pushy in doing so. One Incomer informant told me that she asked for the fish a few times, and then realized that her True Ferrydener neighbors were sending out signals of

disapproval. She occasionally gets the fish as a gift from an elderly couple, who have told her not to mention it to anyone else--particularly not to tell one Incomer neighbor, a widow who comes from a northern fishing village. She has alienated her True Ferrydener neighbors with her stories of the old days of fishing in her village. They appear to dislike her repeated attempts to compare her village with Ferryden (not unfavorably), seeing them as part of an effort to insinuate herself as a kind of parallel True Ferrydener, because she is, at least, a "fisher lass."

Incomers form at least half of Ferryden's population today, but the distinction between True Ferrydeners and Incomers survives, even among the school children. Children who were born in the village of Incomer parents have been taunted with their Incomer status by the children of True Ferrydeners. The distinction is most clearly and visibly maintained, however, among the elderly. There are approximately two hundred Old Age Pensioners in Ferryden, and the majority of these are True Ferrydeners. About forty Old Age Pensioners belong to the Lunch Club, which meets weekly in the village primary school.

Every Wednesday, shortly before noon, Joe Coull, one of the younger Pensioners, collects the County Council minibus from the town of Brechin, about a half-hour's

drive. He then drives around the village, making three or four trips to pick up those members who cannot walk to the Club comfortably. When they arrive at the school, the Pensioners file into the general-use room, and seat themselves on the chairs and couches which line three sides of the room. They sit fairly quietly until the stroke of noon, when lunch is served. The women take their places at the lunch tables in groups of six or seven, while the men go out to the kitchen to collect the trays of food and dishes. Each man returns to his table with the tray, and then defers to "Mother." "Mother" is the woman at the head of the table, who is responsible for dishing out the portions and collecting the dirty plates. The women take turns playing "Mother," although not all of them participate.

Once the food is on their plates, a small hubub arises. Everyone seems to be discussing the food--amount, quality, comparison with previous weeks, and so forth. There is great enthusiasm for certain dishes, such as fish and chips, but the greatest attention is paid to dessert, which is frequently a pudding topped with hot custard. There is great concern lest some be left over, and the lone male at the table is usually forced to consume two helpings. Biscuits and tea follow dessert (the meals are always extremely high in carbohydrates), and everyone watches

closely to see that the biscuits are divided evenly.

When the last biscuit has disappeared, and the last cup of tea has been swallowed, most people return to their places around the room, while a few women take their turns at washing up, and the men return the trays to the kitchen. When all the tidying up is finished, the routine follows one of several possible courses. People may continue to sit and talk until tea-time at two o'clock. A few women play whist, while the men play dominoes. On other days, a planned entertainment may be in order, provided by some of the Pensioners themselves, or by outside entertainers and speakers who volunteer their services. Occasionally, short films (usually advertising documentaries) lull the audience to sleep. Films on maritime subjects, however, such as the story of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, hold their interest more keenly. Promptly at three o'clock, the minibus begins the first of its return journeys, and the pedestrians start to meander down the hill to their homes.

While the events of the Lunch Club appear fairly mundane and routinized, devoid of special significance or interest, a great deal more goes on behind the scenes. The social organization of the village may be seen replicated in microcosm in the schoolroom, as True Ferrydeners

and Incomer members interact on a polite, but distant, footing, and men and women sit on opposite sides of the room. This behavior is more than purely symbolic. Plans and arguments which affect other village institutions, such as the Kirk or the Community Association, frequently originate or develop within the innocent domain of the Old Age Pensioners' Lunch Club.

The incident of the Chewing Gum Caper provides an enlightening demonstration of ingroup defensiveness. One rainy Wednesday afternoon, Mrs. White, the Lunch Club leader and its primary organizer, stood up to make an announcement. The school cook and kitchen staff had noticed that plates with chewing gum stuck underneath them were coming back from the Pensioners' Lunch. The chewing gum was almost impossible to remove, and they wanted the practice stopped. Mrs. White asked them all to be sure not to stick chewing gum to their plates. The following week, Mrs. White again stood up, this time fairly agitated. The gum had reappeared. When a third week proved that the culprit was unrepentant, Mrs. White asked everyone to watch his or her neighbor. The Lunch Club could be disbanded if the school officials decided to kick them out. The room buzzed with curious excitement. Several people whispered knowingly behind their hands, but made sure that no names

were audible to Mrs. White. Eventually, the gum stopped appearing on the plates, but the guilty party was never identified. It was my distinct impression that many of the True Ferrydeners knew well who was responsible, but were not about to tell Mrs. White, an Incomer, as well as a leader. (In the following chapter there is discussion of the negative consequences of social leadership.) The Pensioners in this incident were not demonstrating a reversion to childhood--none of them could be considered senile, though some appeared a bit vague. We believe rather that they were demonstrating a True Ferrydener solidarity, and protecting their own.

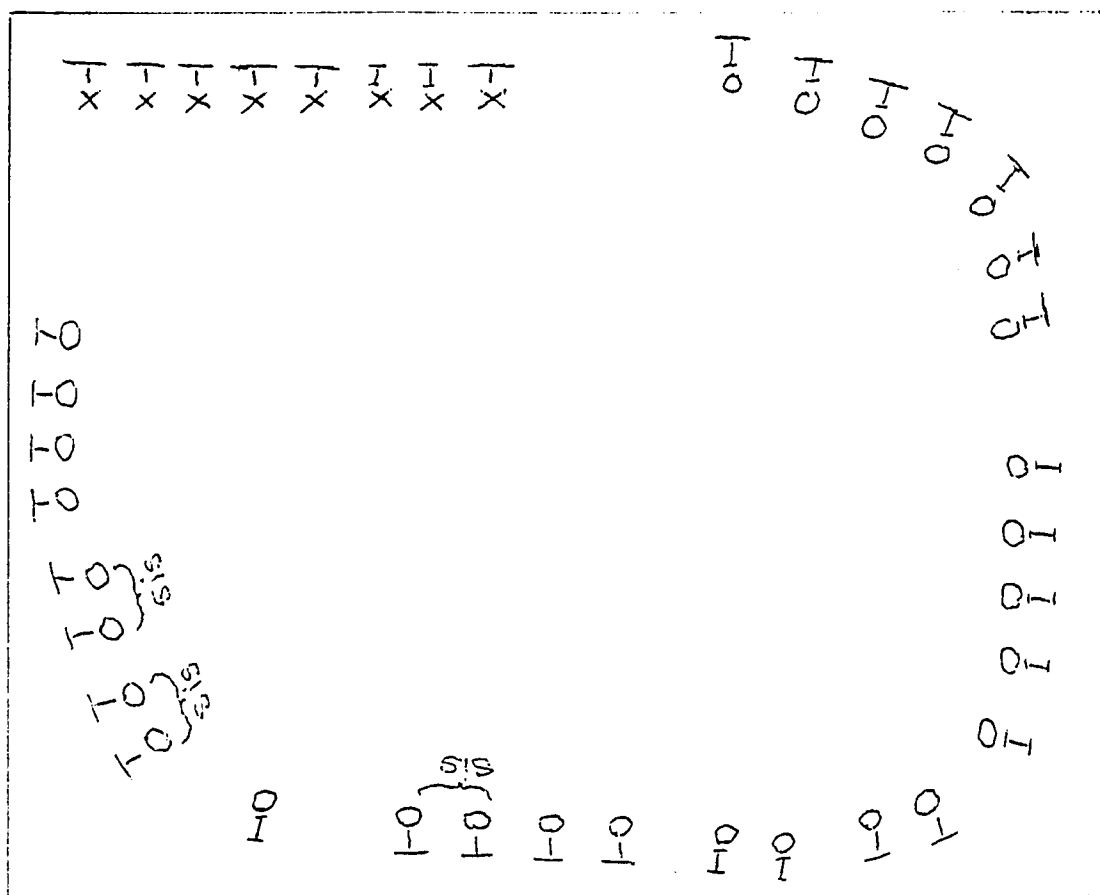
The seating chart following this page shows the distribution of True Ferrydeners and Incomers at a typical Lunch Club meeting. While people move about a bit, the rough placement of individuals and groups remains impressively uniform. Incomers are not relegated to a solid bloc at one end of the room, but they do tend to sit next to each other in groups of two or three. Those who sit alone are visibly isolated. They are quiet, while their neighbors talk animatedly to others in the opposite directions. Men almost always sit apart from the women, despite the fact that some of them have wives in the Club. Only one man occasionally violates this rule, and visits his wife

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FIGURE 1

Old Age Pensioners' Lunch Club-- Seating Pattern



T= True Ferrydener; I= Incomer; x= male; o= female; sis= sisters

and her friends for short periods of time. Women never go over to join the men.

There are several pairs of sisters in the Lunch Club, and they always sit together, without exception. One pair is reputed to be so close that "they even go to the toilet together." Mrs. North is the sister of Mrs. Lewis (see their genealogy at the end of the chapter). A third sister, Mrs. Grieve, died recently. Mrs. North is a widow, and was very depressed for a time. Mrs. Lewis is still married (her husband does not attend the Lunch Club), and she and her husband were planning to return to his home in Inverkeithing. Mrs. North was both anxious and furious. If Mrs. Lewis left the village, she would be left alone.. Looking at her genealogy, one can spot at least two first cousins still living in the village, along with many more distant relatives. Yet her sisters were the only ones Mrs. North felt she could count on.

Summary

Ferryden village today includes two groups of people, True Ferrydeners and Incomers. True Ferrydeners are related to each other by consanguineal kinship ties, while Incomers have only small family networks within the village. Incomer affines occupy a position roughly halfway

between the two groups, though they do not provide a significant mediating structure between their own kin and the True Ferrydeners. True Ferrydeners see themselves as a bounded group, cemented by mutual obligations, rights, and self-esteem. This can be seen as a defensive posture, developed to withstand the stigmatized identity which has dominated their relationship to the town for many years. Their absorption in fisherfolk lore and history provides them with a romantic, though anachronistic, viewpoint, which leaves them highly vulnerable to manipulation from outside.

As we shall see further on, government officials and oil promoters in Montrose were able to play upon this village division, using both patron-client ties and True Ferrydener/Incomer hostility, reaffirming Ferryden's idealized identity in order to circumvent organized opposition to the oil base development. Ferryden's status as a discrete community has thus been publicly reaffirmed and physically undercut.

FOOTNOTES

¹"occupational community: is used here as in G.W. Horobin, "Community and Occupation in the Hull Fishing Industry," British Journal of Sociology, Vol. VIII, No. 4, as "a group of people united not only by the bonds of spatial contiguity, but by a common dependence upon one industry."

²Neil Foran, personal communication.

³Edward Knipe, "Homonymic Marriages."

⁴W.H.R. Rivers, Social Organization (New York: 1924); George Peter Murdock, Social Structure (New York: The Free Press, 1949); "Cognatic Forms of Social Organization," Chapter One in Social Structure in Southeast Asia, Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology, No. 29 (New York: Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, 1960).

⁵Robin Fox, Kinship and Marriage, (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1967), p. 167.

⁶George Peter Murdock, Social Structure, p. 62.

⁷Ibid., p. 63; As both the Attican deme and the English parish are political groups, it seems questionable to use the deme to refer to a kinship group. See Clark Hopkins, An Introduction to Classical Archeology: Crete and Greece (Ann Arbor: Ann Arbor Publishers, 1961) p. 50.

⁸Murdock, Social Structure and "Cognitive Forms of Social Organization,"; Ward H. Goodenough, "A Problem in Malayo-Polynesian Social Organization," American Anthropologist, Vol. 55, 1957; William Davenport, "Nonunilinear Descent and Descent Groups," American Anthropologist, Vol. 61, August, 1959, pp. 557-572; J.D. Freeman, "On the Concept of the Kindred," Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute Vol. 91, 1961, pp. 192-220.

⁹Neil Foran, "Bilateral Kinship Models: The Diachronic Perspective," Paper delivered at the Annual Meetings of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, D.C., November, 1976.

¹⁰Freeman, "On the Concept of the Kindred," p. 259.

¹¹Goodenough, "Problems in Malayo-Polynesian Social Organization."

¹²Otto Blehr, "Action Groups in a Society With Bilateral Kinship: A Case Study From the Faroe Islands," Ethnology II, 1963.

¹³Nancy Dorian, "A Substitute Name System in the Scottish Highlands," American Anthropologist Vol. 72, No. 2, 1970, pp. 303-319.

¹⁴Anson, Fishing Boats and Fisher Folk, p. 54.

CHAPTER FIVE: FERRYDEN: THE POLITICS OF THE KIRK

The question may be put: is Presbyterianism likely to maintain its hold of the Scottish people? So far as can be judged, the different Churches that represent it were never more active in efforts at extension, and in the cultivation of Christian thought and work, than they are at present. They contain four-fifths of the professed Christianity of the country; and, while there are some questions that have to be settled among them, there is a growing feeling of brotherhood, and tokens of a period coming when the divisions of past generations are to be repaired.¹

Introduction: The Kirk and the Political Process

In this chapter, I shall begin to examine the structure and dynamics of political processes in Ferryden. I shall describe the competition for control over key statuses, or social positions of leadership, which are dependent upon access to power, and expressed through the roles of patrons, brokers, and their clients, within the institutional framework of the Kirk. (I use the Scottish word, Kirk, to refer to the Scottish Presbyterian religion and its representation in both the Established and voluntary bodies. The Scottish usage reflects both a nationalist and a community-based boundary from the Roman and Anglican churches.) The Kirk, as an ongoing institution

which has seen many changes, has permeated all sections of Ferryden society, and its internecine battles have recapitulated major conflicts within other social spheres. Thus, the Kirk, in its development through time, will serve to elucidate some of the basic relationships within the village community, and will help to explain some of the community's responses to changes from without.

Readers of Scottish history and literature will be keenly aware of the importance which organized religion and sectarian squabbles have held for Scotland as a whole. Through the medium of the Kirk, class antagonisms, ethnic conflicts, and power rivalries have been played out. Ferryden village, ensconced in the heart of the Presbyterian domain, has proved no exception to the national pattern. National conflicts have been reproduced there in microcosm, and village quarrels have been translated into Kirk battles. The Kirk in Ferryden has provided an endless source for the springs of conflict and faction, while simultaneously emerging as a symbol of village identity and pride.

Presbyterian unity has run a rough course through the ups and downs of Ferryden history. Presbyterian teachings and codes have clashed with fisherfolk beliefs and traditions, and while the Kirk has apparently emerged

as the victor, some of the old "pagan" notions persisted for many years, running side by side with official doctrine like an underground stream which refuses to join the river. Villagers today still take pride in both their piety and their paganism, recalling the days of belief in witches, spirits, omens, and divination, with more than a hint of the present tense.

The Early Years: The Pagan Fishermen

"God is alive, Magic is afoot . . ."

--Leonard Cohen (beautiful losers)²

Originally, the parish church looked down from Craig hill, surrounded by the fermtoun, or farming hamlet of Craig, and by its fields, which slope down sharply to the sea. It marked the spiritual and social center of Craig parish, which was formed in 1618 from the merger of two separate titularities, Craig and Dunninald. The parish included both the farmlands and the fishing village of Usan, and, by the middle of the eighteenth century, the village of Ferryden. The church pews were filled largely by the laird's family and retainers, while the fisherfolk stayed at home. As far as they were concerned, the church on the hill was the farmers' church: the building and its

congregation looked down upon the shore, as well as on the people who lived there. In 1799, the old church was replaced by a new, loftily-steeped building, with funds donated by the nouveau-riche laird of Rossie and Craig, Hercules Ross. Although Ross was reputedly popular with the fisherfolk, his church was not.

Contemporary accounts reveal some of the reasons for the fisherfolks' antipathy to the church on Craig hill. They were regarded by both town and country dwellers as little more than savages. Described as illiterate and intemperate, the Ferrydeners and the Usanites must have felt very unwelcome outside the confines of their villages. Their chroniclers' words parallel those of early missionaries and travellers in Africa, the Americas, and other rough, wild places. Even the village schoolmaster wrote, "I did not think I could endure their society," and claimed that their standard of intelligence was "amazingly low."³ Peter Anson, a direct descendant of Hercules Ross, wrote in 1930 that the fisherfolk are naturally endowed with a different outlook on life, implying that fisherfolk are primitives:

The Scottish fisherfolk possess that inborn sense of the supernatural to a strong degree, but owing largely to the survival of pagan ideas among them, the want of instruction, the comparatively little hold which the Presbyterian Kirk seems to have had over their

imaginations and emotions during the two centuries that followed the Reformation, however much they may have been afraid of disobeying its ordinances, we come across an amount of extraordinary superstitions, beliefs, and practices which ruled the daily lives of the fishing communities . . . until almost within living memory. Traces of them survive today, and even young fishermen are nervous of ignoring the superstitions of their forebears. Fisher life until quite recently was bound up with a hundred and one superstitions; many of these are still believed in by the older people.⁴

Fishing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was an arduous, and frequently a hazardous, occupation and many of the beliefs which impressed Anson, Frazer, Gregor, and other folklore collectors reflected the perils and uncertainties of the seafaring life.⁵ "Pagan superstitions" were not the only means by which the fisherfolk shocked and repelled the townsfolk. Their drinking habits, purported sexual behavior, public manners and dialect contributed to the disapproval with which outsiders regarded them. Contemporary accounts of Ferryden⁶ agree that Ferryden in the first half of the nineteenth century was a squalid and rowdy community, untutored and unkempt, its denizens openly flaunting sober working and middle class standards. Meanwhile, a storm was brewing within the walls of the Presbyterian Establishment which was to break its house apart, and sweep the fisherfolk onto the paths of righteousness.

Disruption and Conversion:
1843 and Its Aftermath

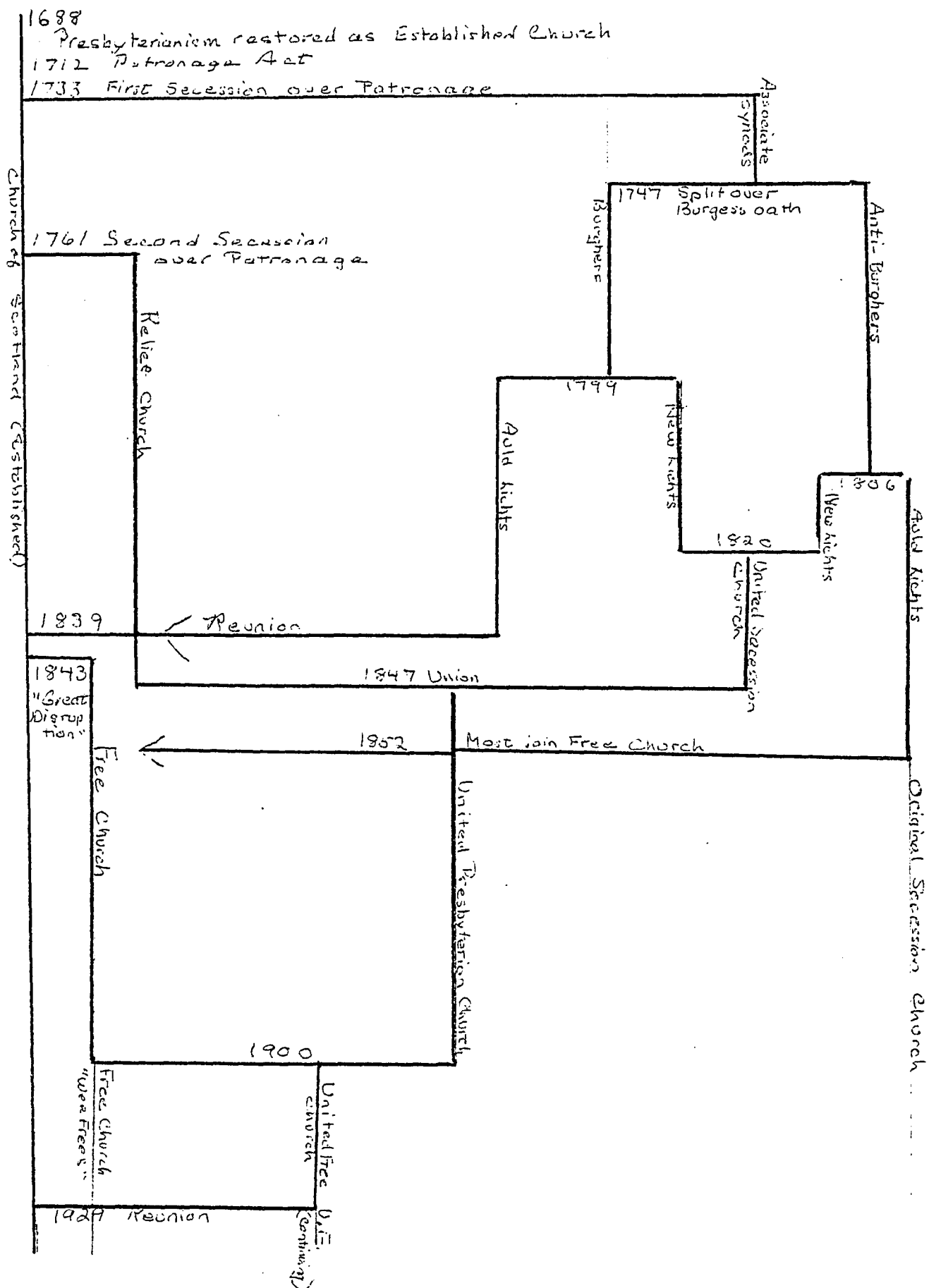
"Through my Saviour's blood alone
 I look for mercy at the Throne."

--Free Kirk Hymn

The Established Presbyterian Church of Scotland is the descendant of John Knox and the Calvinist Reformation. Knox's famous anti-idolatry sermon in Perth in 1559 launched the Scottish Reformation on its Protestant course, but the struggle over the establishment of a Presbyterian or an Episcopalian Protestantism was not resolved until the close of the next century. There were repeated attempts to amend or replace the fledgling Presbyterian system, "with its convictions of ecclesiastical parity,"⁷ with a hierarchy of bishops. The Presbyterian system, based upon the collective representation of the people by both laity and clergy organized into presbyteries, synods, and the nation-wide General Assembly, took many years to achieve its final form.

Other conflicts rent the fabric of the Establishment. Sects formed and split from the parent body (see diagram on following page), over such issues as evangelism, Sabbath observances, and points of doctrine. One of the most persistent and complex issues was that of lay patronage. Lay patronage was the support given by the wealthy

FIGURE 2
The Main Divisions and Re-Unions of the Scottish Church



towards the upkeep of the Kirk. This in itself was abhorrent to some, but the corollary privilege it generated was a much thornier problem. Landowners who provided the glebe, or the grounds for the minister's manse and the Kirk building, also felt themselves entitled to choose the minister, leaving congregations with no choice in the matter. Lay patronage also provided the rural nobility with a means by which the bolster their position vis-a-vis the state. This became especially crucial after 1707, when the Treaty of Union with England formally abolished the Scottish Parliament, while guaranteeing Scotland's right to its own separate Established Kirk. In the absence of a Scottish Parliament, the General Assembly (the national governing body of the Kirk) began increasingly to acquire the characteristics of a parapolitical institution.⁸ By filling the General Assembly with their nominees, the lairds bolstered their control over Scottish society.⁹

By the 1840's, the Presbyterian Establishment was divided into two hostile camps, known as the Moderates and the Evangelicals. Among their many disagreements, the issue of lay patronage loomed large. The Moderates, then the ruling party, had originated as a reform movement in the late eighteenth century. Now, however, they had become committed to enforcing Kirk discipline and adherence to

official doctrine.¹⁰ The Moderates held to the principle espoused by Andrew Melville, one of their founding fathers, that church and state should each be "supreme within its own sphere."¹¹ In other words, they believed that the Kirk should be supported by the State, but that the State should allow it autonomy and authority on a par with its own. By setting up the Kirk as a Scottish-based institutional authority, and by opposing State intervention in Kirk affairs, the Moderates' views were congruent with the interests of the Scottish aristocracy and the landed gentry, who saw themselves as the only legitimate local expression of State authority.

The Evangelicals took the opposing view. While adhering in principle to the importance of Establishment, they found themselves forced to work outside it, in order to begin what they saw as a purification of the morally decadent and worldly Kirk:

The Evangelicals stood for missionary work at home and abroad, and a zealous puritanism not unlike that of the Nonconformists in other parts of Britain, and indeed believed passionately that the Scottish Established Church should be maintained by the state and strengthened by the provision of additional churches to cope with the rising population. Most important, they began to assert that the congregation of each church had the right to veto the appointment of a minister they disliked, even when the patron persisted with his nominee. Many held that patronage itself was inconsistent with Presbyterianism; for patronage, abolished by the 1690 Act re-establishing the Church of Scotland, was later

foisted upon an unwilling Church by the Westminster Parliament in 1712. In the eighteenth century, the Church suffered secessions on account of patronage and dissatisfaction with the connection with the state, and by the 1830's these 'voluntary' churches seemed a real threat to the Establishment.¹²

The Evangelical faction finally seceded from the Establishment in 1843, taking with them approximately one-third of the Presbyterian congregations of Scotland. The event became known as the Great Disruption, and the secessionists called their church the Free Kirk. Support for the Free Kirk grew rapidly. As a result of the split, many of the Established Kirk's responsibilities for social welfare, including parish relief and public education had to be relinquished to the State.¹³

The number of Presbyterians outside the Establishment was now as high as those who remained inside it, and the Union of the older secessionists in the United Presbyterian Church in 1847, shortly after the Disruption, gave added strength to the 'voluntary' opponents of the Kirk. The bitterness which grew up between the Established and the 'dissenting' Presbyterian churches pervaded Scottish life for two generations, affecting politics, education, and social and family ties. Not only were churches duplicated in every parish, but also schools . . . an entire alternative Presbyterian system was erected by the Free Church, culminating in a rival General Assembly . . .¹⁴

Thus the Great Disruption became far more than a factional dispute between rival theologians. It was a sweeping social movement which reached down into working class lives, and which came to provide an outlet for the

frustrations and angers of the disenfranchised. Its significance for Ferryden was enormous. The small fishing village had hitherto lacked any extra-familial institutional barriers against the social, political, and economic domination of the lairds and the merchants. Suddenly it found a way to assert its corporate identity.

The Reverend Dr. Brewster, an Evangelical minister, came to Ferryden sometime during the late 1820's. His mission was to convert the 'heathen' fisherfolk, to draw them into the disciplined fold of the Kirk. At first, he met great resistance. Many heard his words, but few paid attention. He constructed a small chapel in the middle of the village, at Rossie Square, in order to give the villagers their 'own' Kirk, but they stayed away in droves. They went to great lengths to avoid him, hiding under carts, sheds, and upturned boats when word spread that he was on his way to collect a congregation. Women pleaded that they had to stay at home with the bairns, or insisted, "I hae nae claes."¹⁵ Brewster was undaunted. If they refused to attend the chapel, he held impromptu services in their cottages. Gradually, his persistence and conviction began to win them over, and he gathered a small, but growing core of regular worshippers. The little Kirk was set up on the same lines as the Craig Kirk, with village men as elders,

and their wives as choir-singers.

When the Evangelicals seceded from the Establishment in 1843, and created the voluntary Free Kirk, they were joined by Dr. Brewster's congregation, now several hundred strong. The little chapel was now far too small for their needs, and they built their new Kirk on Rossie Island, near the old burying-ground. The land for the Kirk was donated to them by the laird of Craig, Horatio Ross, son of Hercules Ross, of Rossie and Craig:

The Free Church at Ferryden was opened on Sabbath last. The site is excellent, and has been generously and unconditionally given by Mr. Ross of Rossie. The Church is capable of containing between 700 and 800 persons, and it was more than crowded on this occasion.¹⁶

Ross's role in helping the seceders was nearly unique in Scotland. All over the country, the lairds were reported to be openly hostile to the Free Kirk, for the secessionists had struck at one of their main sources of local power--patronage. Many lairds refused permission for Free Kirk congregations to build churches upon their lands, some even "serving interdicts for trespass on congregations worshipping upon their lands."¹⁷

Seen in this context, Ross's behavior was eccentric, even iconoclastic. The explanation appears to lie in Ross's own background and ambitions. His great-grandson, Peter

Anson, records that his ancestor was himself the grandson of a Customs and Excise Officer at Johnshaven, a substantial fishing village some nine miles north of Ferryden. His son, Horatio's father Hercules, made his fortune as a purser in the Royal Navy, and purchased the lands of Rossie and Craig from the estate of Patrick Scott, in 1783. In 1788, Hercules married the daughter of a Hamburg merchant, thus cementing his financial position, and laying the groundwork for his attempted climb up the rural social ladder. His son, Horatio, was cut from different cloth. After running through the bulk of the family fortune, he set out to make a career in politics:

Early in 1831, he stood for Parliament as Whig member of the Aberdeen Burghs. Like his father, he was a keen Freemason, and could be fairly sure of the votes of his fellow craftsmen. The following year he stood for the Montrose Burghs. The Ferryden fishermen were strongly in favour of the Reform Bill introduced by Lord John Russell, which became law on June 7, 1832. Rossie had declared for "the Bill, the Bill and nothing but the Bill."¹⁸

In advocating the Reform Bill, Ross declared himself to be on the side of the middle classes, rather than with the landed gentry, whose hegemony was seriously undercut by the extension of the franchise. (Montrose at this time was a center for Whig reform, and elected Joseph Hume, the famous Parliamentary reformer, in 1818, and again in 1842.)

Ross also enjoyed an unusual degree of popularity

with the fisherfolk. Anson speculates that this may have been due to Ross' encouragement of public houses and whiskey-shops on his estate.¹⁹ A song composed before the 1831 election (which he won) ran:

In Ferryden the fishermen
They cry for Rossie a',
The boats will reel as fast's the deil,
When Rossie waur's them a'.²⁰

Thus Ross's support for the fishermen's Kirk, while at odds with the local gentry's feelings, was consistent with his alliance with the burgesses. Ross was, perhaps, the last representative of this local mercantile ruling elite to enjoy the fisherfolk's affection.

With the laird's blessing, the fisherfolk flocked to their new Kirk, but many skeptical observers predicted that their enthusiasm would be short-lived:

It was said, at this time, that the fishermen would withdraw from the Free Kirk as soon as the full pressure of the church's system of contributing was brought to bear upon them. I can assure . . . that this pressure was never felt. The fishermen set most cordially about collecting for the support of ordinances among themselves. When the shots [the catch] were divided daily, a share was allotted to the church.²¹

Now the Reverend Brewster's path was cleared for the fulfillment of his mission, to instill the evangelical spirit and strict doctrines of the Free Kirk. All must be baptized, for the unbaptized were merely God's creatures,

not God's children. The Sabbath must be strictly observed, with all work, including fishing, washing, cooking, fire-lighting, mending, and nearly everything else prohibited on the Sabbath day. Only spiritual activities, such as Bible study and prayer, were encouraged.

In 1848, Dr. Brewster made way for the Reverend Hugh Mitchell, who arrived in Ferryden fresh from an Aberdeen divinity college. A great admirer of Brewster and his evangelical successes, Mitchell determined to carry on in the same tradition. He remained in the village for forty-five years, gaining "not only the respect, but the personal affection of the large fishing population of Ferryden, the bulk of whom belonged to his congregation."²² Despite his long-standing efforts, however, Brewster remained engraved in the villagers' memories as the spiritual founder of the modern village.

The Revivals

Mitchell's endeavors met with great success. During his tenure, the village was transformed into a community known for fierce religious devotion. In part, this was due to the evangelical fervor of the times. Revivals, or popular, public displays of new-found and reaffirmed commitment to Protestant Christianity, were sweeping the

United States and Britain.²³ In Ulster, the revivals became quite famous for their intensity, and in 1859, several laymen from Montrose visited Ulster to see them for themselves. Upon their return, they organized prayer meetings in Montrose, in hopes of emulating the Irish success. In Ferryden, Mitchell persuaded some of the fishwives to gather for prayer meetings, and soon, cases of possession were being reported from the village. Lewis²⁴ defines possession as "the seizure of man by divinity" and ecstatic episodes as "transcendental experiences." The following passage, excerpted from a verbatim account of personal possession histories from the Ferryden revivals, illustrates the characteristic form taken by these episodes at the time:

A married woman, about thirty years of age, with a family, was the first convert in Ferryden, and her case is very remarkable . . . 'About the middle of September last, I was in a neighbour's house, and we was cracking about the Irish revival. I had often heard it spoken about, and thought I would liked to been in Ireland to get a little of it. Somehow or other I turned very queer--could not understand myself--came home and told my husband I must get things ready to gang to the kirk the morn, as I have been ower lang out of it. Went to the kirk next day (Sunday), but nothing particular impressed me. My queer feelings had gone away, but when setting by the fireside on the next Tuesday, with a young woman beside me weaving stockings, without thinking about anything particular, all in a moment I sprang to my feet, and cried out, I am lost! I am lost! I saw all the darkness of the ill place before me and got frightened and cried out like a child, and could not help it . . . The Lord never began a thing

he did not finish. Still I was terribly ill, and could not get any relief or any light. For three weeks I continued in this fearful state; I could neither eat, nor sleep, nor work, and often thought, oh, if I was dead, or just out of the world . . . I thought I saw the Wicked One, like a black savage, glaring into my very face, and saying, go back to the world again, and be happy like other folk, and mind your work, and I tried to pray, but I could not . . . I thought I saw my sins like three great mountains towering up one above another . . . I took up a Bible--opened it by chance, wondering where God should cause it to open. I turned up twelfth of the Hebrews, but I could not read any, my agony of soul was so great; so I just cried aloud, O God, deal graciously with me; and as I do not know thy Word, show me a sign that I am a forgiven sinner . . . in a moment I saw a shadow form pass before me, and heard a voice say behind me, Fear not, thou shalt be saved . . . I am always happy, and delight only in God's work and God's people.'²⁵

Typically, the possessed person appears to feel himself to be a battleground for the forces of good and evil, God and the devil. He or she is passive, but tormented, unable to make conscious decisions or control his feelings. The battle rages on until God triumphs, and the soul knows it will be released from Sin into Salvation.

During these episodes, some of the subjects sang, spoke in tongues, acted euphoric, and saw visions. While the early episodes appear to have struck people individually, at home, or on the 'shore, village prayer meetings, organized by laymen and visiting evangelists, provided the settings for virtual flash-floods of possession:

Early in the summer, a Miss Petrie, who has for many years taken a deep interest in the spiritual

instruction of all classes in the village of Ferryden, organized a special meeting amongst a few of the godly women of this fishing village. The effect of the meeting was, by earnest supplication at the throne of grace, to seek and obtain the blessing of a revival in Ferryden, and blessed be God, they did not ask in vain . . . One of the villagers . . . felt burdened in his soul. The Lord laid it on him to try and get a meeting of his fellow men to speak of the things that concern salvation, and knowing of the prayer-meetings of the females referred to, he spoke of the matter to them . . . The place of meeting was very crowded . . . The result was communicated to the minister of the Free Church, the Rev. Hugh Mitchell, who then invited several laymen from Montrose that visited Ireland to come and tell his people what they had seen of God's work in Ulster . . .²⁶

One evening, about 400 Ferrydeners gathered in the Free Kirk for a prayer meeting. Tension in the village was running high, and the crowd was restive:

The preacher was discoursing in most tender strains of the love of Jesus for fishermen, when a loud shriek for mercy broke the deathlike stillness of the meeting. This was the letting-out of pent-up feelings, and like an electric shock, it affected all who had sympathy, and they were many. The speaker's voice was drowned amidst the general wail . . . The preacher resumed, but again the voice of agony arose . . . one after another shriek aloud to Jesus for mercy and falling prostrate, apparently dead, are carried out one by one to the vestry, till it is filled . . . the whole assembly is awe-stricken . . .²⁷

Such outbursts were mere preludes to 'true' conversions, which were not so easily achieved. The number of those considered to have been granted salvation was fewer than that of those who cried for it. The minister's services were in such demand that he collapsed from

overwork, and had to recruit assistants from neighboring congregations. Even the Establishment minister from Craig was impressed by the fisherfolk's zeal, and took his turn at presiding over meetings, and visiting the housebound.

The revivals burned on for more than a decade, fueled by their own success, and by the encouragement of outsiders. Ferryden village enjoyed great prestige throughout the region when, in the early 1870's, the famous American evangelist, Dwight Moody, and his partner, Ira Sankey, the hymn-writer, stopped there to preach in the course of their British tour.

Dwight Moody's message was a simple and relatively innocuous blend of American optimism and evangelical Arminianism. Holding aloft his Bible, he assured his hearers that eternal life was theirs for the asking, that they had only to come forward and "t-a-k-e, TAKE!" This done, his follow-up instructions were short and to the point, "Join some church at once." Which church did not matter.²⁸

A remark was made by a leading citizen of Chicago to the famous evangelist, D.L. Moody, who was visiting him in his drawing room. "I do not see," said the man, "that I cannot be just as good a Christian outside the church as within it." Moody said nothing but stepped to the brightly burning fire, and, picking up a blazing coal in the tongs, allowed it to burn by itself . . . In silence the two men watched it smoulder and go out. Next Sunday, the man went to church.²⁹

Moody and Sankey's non-denominational message found ready acceptance among the already enthusiastic and well-primed Ferrydeners, and the preceding quotation from the

Ferryden United Free Church Newsletter gives some indication of its enduring impact. (Villagers today speak of the visit with great pride, in tones reminiscent of those in which they refer to Royalty. Sankey's hymns continue to be very popular, and one of his hymn-books is used regularly in the United Free Church throughout Scotland.) Even after the Revivals had dwindled, prayer meetings continued to be very popular, and the fisherfolk remained very devout. In the 1880's, one writer observed the fishermen in prayer before setting out to sea:

The whole adult male population were about to sail towards midnight for the fishing in the North Sea which so often strews their rugged coasts with wrecks, and sacrifice themselves. In all the experience of many years and meetings he [sic] has never seen a gathering more inspiriting, devout, and enthusiastic.³⁰

Temperance

The Temperance movement flourished along with evangelism and the revivals. As the fisherfolk's paganism was eclipsed by their conversions, their love of drink was superseded by their commitment to Teetotalism. Ferryden, along with other fishing villages, had, until this time, a reputation for excessive insobriety.³¹ The stereotypical fisherman was a reeling lout, his normally thick fisher-dialect rendered unintelligible by drink.³² Various theories were advanced to explain this tendency. Drinking

was blamed upon the cold and dangerous nature of the fisherman's work, on inborn weakness, and on the central role of the public house in village life. Fishcurers and cadgers often found that it was to their advantage to pay the fisherman directly in spirits, and many a catch was sold in the pub. Husbands found the public house a convenient (and possibly a safe) location for talking to their wives:

It was the custom at this time [the 1820's] for a husband, when he had anything particular to say to his wife, to go to the public house, whence he would send for his better half, and after due ceremony, point out to her, in the full hearing of all present, whatever his lordly mind was charged with . . .³³

In 1845, Ferryden is reported to have had between six and seventeen whiskey-shops (sources differ), and the surrounding estate of Rossie had no fewer than thirty-five premises where liquor could be bought.³⁴ Even Douglas, the schoolmaster whose memoirs excoriate the fisherfolk for their addiction to drink, ran a little sideline in whiskey. The Good Templars, as the foes of alcohol were called, insisted upon total abstinence, and their movement was particularly strong in the Scottish lowlands.³⁵ Waging a vigorous campaign against the sale and consumption of liquor in any form, the Templars eventually managed to reduce the number of public houses in the village to one.

By the 1870's or '80's, the Esk Hotel had become the last place in Ferryden where one could buy a drink. Attempts to close it down failed in the 1890's, and again in the 1920's, and it still survives. Also unsuccessful was a motion to rename the central village square, from Rossie Square, to Teetotal Square.

The Good Templars met regularly in their own hall, which the fishermen built with money donated by Johnston's and from contributions raised on trips up and down the coast. (The Hall soon became alternately called the Fishermen's Hall and was later taken over by the Freemasons.) Other groups began to be organized around Temperance activities. The Boys' Brigade, a church youth group whose members took temperance vows, became very popular. Later, the Band of Hope, a United Free Church youth group, flourished early in the twentieth century. A national Friendly Society, the Rechabites, organized a chapter in the village. Members had to pay dues and take temperance vows, and were provided with sickness and death benefits.

The change in the fisherfolk's public image drew a bit of attention. Even Douglas, whose whiskey-business had failed, acknowledged the transformation:

Besides withdrawing the fisherman from the whiskey-shop, it has been the aim of the friends of abstinence to provide a substitute for drinking pleasures, and, by a

variety of means, a taste for healthy, social and intellectual entertainments has been awakened, and at the same time a desire for sanitary improvement, combined with a species of patriotism, or love and respect for their native village . . .³⁶

I attribute the improved state of society in Ferryden almost entirely to the religious and moral excitement caused by the Disruption and the Temperance Movement. Now, but for the public meetings and the awakening of mind that has thereby been occasioned, strangers might have addressed the villagers on the same subjects till doomsday without avail.³⁷

1929: The Reunion that Split the Village

Our Moderator does not require silver buckles on his shoes, nor lace upon his gown.

--Anonymous United Free Kirk minister, in 1929, referring to Dr. James Barr, Moderator of the General Assembly of the United Free Kirk, and Socialist M.P.³⁸

Between the revivals of the 1870's, and the 1929 reunion of the United Free Kirk and the Established Kirk, we have little information on Kirk-related activities in Ferryden. In 1900, most of the Scottish Free Kirk congregations outside the Highlands merged with the United Presbyterians, a group whose forebears had seceded from the Established Kirk in the eighteenth century. Together, they formed the United Free Kirk. The United Free Kirk remained true to the principles set forth in the Great Disruption, and stayed outside the Establishment. There

appears to have been little, if any, opposition to the merger in Ferryden.

While Kirk and society were torn apart in 1843, Ferryden experienced a new-found unity. By contrast, the reunion of 1929, which healed many wounds between most of the Established and Free Kirk congregations, opened an era of deep division within the village. In Ferryden, the vote to ratify the reunion split the village down the middle, as it did in other parts of the lowlands (most notably among east coast fishing villages.) In Ferryden, the Kirk members voted 194 for the reunion, and 125 against, with some abstentions. The majority not only won the vote, but got to keep the church building. The vote split friendships, sibling ties, and generations. According to one informant, who was a young girl at the time, the minority included most of the best choir singers, and included a number of "business people--builders and undertakers." (Later, the United Free (Continuing) Kirk went "more than halfway to cooperate with the other one, but the Established Kirk knew they were bigger, and so they didn't bother." Members of the Established Kirk, however, shake their heads over the "stubbornness" of the others, and lay all the blame for the rift at their door.

The following explanation of the split is based

upon a number of informants' versions. When the proposal to reunite the United Free and the Established Kirks was put forth, the Ferryden minister, Mr. MacIver, was initially opposed to it. His wife and her brothers disagreed, and reminded him that the salary of an Establishment minister was both larger and more secure. In one informant's words, "they got him turned." After the first vote by the congregation went against the proposal, the minister and the elders reportedly set out to convert the congregation. The second vote showed the results recounted above. A common accusation, voiced not only in Ferryden, but in other villages as well, charged that the vote had been rigged by adding the names of dead parishioners to the winning side. Among those repeating the charge during the interviews in Ferryden were both of the current village ministers, neither of whom would commit himself as to its truth or falsity. Many members of the United Free Kirk repeat the allegation with more conviction. They explain the success of the reunion in Ferryden in various ways. The minister was "turned," the congregation was not religious enough, and simply did as they were told, certain key anti-reunion elders were sick, and unable to fight the proposal. One very old lady insists that had her father not died shortly before the vote, everything would have

turned out differently. "He would never have let them do it."

The members of the minority side felt betrayed not only in soul, but in body. At issue was the Kirk building itself. The parents and grandparents of both sides had played a part in its creation, and both sides claimed it for their own. The majority felt entitled to it by virtue of their superior numbers. The minority, who refused to concede, and called themselves the United Free (Continuing) Kirk, saw themselves as the only legitimate descendants of the original, voluntary Free Kirk. Each had justice on its side, and neither would back down. However, consensus was not required, and the majority, with the support of the minister, held on to the Kirk.

The Continuing Kirk was left homeless. For several years, its members were forced to cross the Montrose bridge, and join the Free Kirk congregations of Knox's and Logie Pert to worship in the Angus Hall, which consisted of a large room above a bakery at the southern end of the town. The Continuing Kirk members from Ferryden suffered great humiliation at being forced to worship in Montrose. The Free Kirk had stood as a banner of village pride, a symbol of autonomy. The town congregation's feelings are unknown, but Ferrydeners who recall those days believe

that the Montrosians looked down upon the fisherfolk, and were anxious to be rid of them. In 1933, the two congregations found an excuse to quarrel. According to one of the ministers, the Ferrydeners had lent the Montrosians some 500, and were very proud of being able to do so. They were not pleased, however, when the Montrosians were unable to pay them back. The Ferrydeners reportedly walked out of the Angus Hall in high dudgeon, to hold their own services in the old Temperance/Fishermen's Hall. Soon after, the village men constructed their own small church, entirely through their own labor and money. They built it "up the brae," near the seaward end of Ferryden, and made it just large enough to hold their congregation, which numbered about 200 at that time.

Even after the village Kirk was built, the bitterness between the United Free and the Established congregations continued. The United Free now had a Kirk, but no Kirk hall. This was needed for extramural activities, such as fund-raising sales, meetings and concerts. The Established Kirk kept both Kirk and Hall. The estrangement was aggravated by avoidance, which was both deliberate and structurally inevitable. Much of village social life revolved around Kirk-related activities: prayer meetings, choir practice, picnics, youth groups, women's guilds and

work committees, and Kirk Session meetings. Now, all of these activities were segregated by the dual Kirks. People began to ostracize former friends from the other side, and the children imitated their parents in the schools and in the streets. One old lady is reported to have made a habit out of shaking her rugs out over the heads of any United Free members who passed her windows on the way to their Kirk.

1929-1976: The United Free Kirk Today

At the time of the split, the rival village congregations were nearly equal in size. Despite our predictions that the Continuing Kirk would fail within five years, it maintained its strength throughout the inter-War period. By the 1950's, however, its membership had begun to decline. The senior men, the elders and activists of the Kirk, were beginning to grow old, and as they died, they were not replaced. Many of the younger men had emigrated during the Depression, when both fishing and local industry were moribund, and still others had died in the War. Today, the largely elderly membership stands at fifty-five. The few young people who have recently joined have been recruited from the families of already existing members. The Sunday School, which provides instruction for the very

young children, has only a small handful of pupils. Most members of the Kirk live near the seaward end of the village (although there are a few scattered through the village Council housing estates), and nearly all are related, either consanguineally or affinally, to the True Ferryden group. The United Free congregation also contains the last active fishing family in the village.

By the 1960's, the size of the Ferryden congregation had shrunk too far for it to be an autonomous unit. For several years, unable to support a minister, the Ferrydeners made do with a lay preacher, a missionary sent to them by the Home Area Committee of the United Free General Assembly. He conducted services, but was not authorized to perform communions, baptisms, or marriages. For these, the Ferrydeners had to go to Montrose. In 1974, swallowing their old grudge against Knox's, the villagers agreed to share a minister with them, and with the congregation at Logie Pert, another local group which had dwindled too far to be viable on its own. Among the three of them, they could pay a minister's salary, and provide him with a place to live.

Mr. Graham Bruce, a United Free Kirk minister from Dundee, came to the area in 1974. He was offered the choice of a 'manse' in Montrose or in Ferryden, and made

himself very popular with the villagers by choosing the latter. He became known as the "Ferryden minister," despite the fact that he conducted three separate sets of services for each of the three congregations, and was technically equally responsible to each.

The Ferryden congregation take great pride in their financial contribution. They give generously at each Sunday's collection. In 1975, the income from the collections alone totalled £1808, or approximately £35 per week. More than half of the members are Old Age Pensioners, and none of them is wealthy. The average weekly contribution comes to 63p., or roughly \$1.25, which represents a significant sum to most of them. Collections are usually placed in sealed envelopes, which are then put into the collections plate. Thus, no one (presumably) knows how much other people give individually. However, the prior week's total is announced each Sunday, so the congregation are encouraged to maintain their level of support. Sales of jumble (rummage) and handmade goods are another popular form of fund raising, and each sale raises an average of £200 or more (a number of outsiders come to buy.) Mr. Bruce feels that the Ferrydeners' pride in their ability to raise money for the Kirk is so strong that they were actually a bit disappointed when they were able to sell a

house belonging to the Kirk. Its sale brought them £12,000, which was invested, and the income used for maintaining the manse. Apparently, this windfall threatened to undercut their feelings of self-sufficiency. They also delight in pointing out the contrast between their financial success, and Knox's less impressive record.

Inchbraoch: The Established Kirk

The Established Kirk is now known officially as Inchbraoch, after the original name for Rossie Island, the site of the old Free Kirk. It stands at the end of a wide lane leading up from the low road, near the center of the village. It was built around the turn of the century, shortly after Rossie Island was transferred from the parish of Craig to the parish of Montrose, having been purchased by the Montrose Town Council. Since 1971, it has been the official parish Kirk, as the old Kirk up in Craig shut its doors through lack of support. The few remnants of the agricultural population were then forced to choose between joining the Ferryden Kirk, or going over to Montrose. Their choice in nearly every case reflected their class affiliation. The farmers, the landowners, and most of the professional people went to Montrose. One tenant farmer, one professional man and his family, and most of the farm

laborers went down to Ferryden.

Since 1974, Inchbraoch has been presided over by a young minister from Edinburgh, Mr. Leitch. He is generally well-liked, though many of the older members call him "modern," and are frequently startled by his approach to religious procedures. His predecessor was a stern and strait-laced fire-breather, who frowned upon card-playing, dancing, and all forms of gambling. Even some of the old folk thought him "narrow," and he alienated a large segment of the younger people quite thoroughly. Leitch is trying to mend some of the wounds, and is actively wooing the children and teenagers. He holds a special Children's Service every Sunday for about ten minutes, before the start of the regular service. He and an assistant employ visual aids and devices reminiscent of a Presbyterian Sesame Street, in order to capture the interest of the ten or twelve small children sitting in the front row. His recruiting efforts are helped by volunteers from the Scripture Union, a Kirk education group based in Edinburgh, and volunteers also spend part of each summer helping to run a "camp" on the village playing fields. The camp alternates instruction with play, and draws children from outside the village, as well.

The current membership of Inchbraoch Kirk stands

at 326, roughly six times that of the United Free Kirk. In addition to the actual membership, a number of people attend regularly. They are called 'adherents,' and should be considered potential members. Members must be at least sixteen years of age, and must take part in a special communion service to join. They are eligible for election to the Congregational Board and the Kirk Session, the two administrative bodies responsible to the minister and to the membership.

On a typical Sunday, perhaps 100 people attend services. Many people attend sporadically, and some almost never appear in church. Mr. Leitch is concerned by the casual devotion of some of the members, and hopes to tighten up their attendance by threatening them with expulsion, which can be authorized by the Session.

The congregation of Inchbraoch is far more heterogeneous than that of the Continuing Kirk. Between true members and adherents, every sector of the village is represented: young, old, middle-aged, Incomers, True Ferrydeners, Council house residents, and members of the lower middle class. The sample is not evenly distributed, however. The membership is heavily dominated by those who are over fifty years in age, of True Ferrydener (or spouse) status, and female.

Workers and Leaders: Female and Male
Domains Within the Two Kirks

Although women only outnumber men by approximately fifty percent on the membership roll, they appear to attend church in a ratio of roughly four to one. The everyday, common affairs of Sunday services, choir singing, and fund-raising, have become the women's province. On the other hand, men appear to have a near monopoly on leadership positions. This holds true for both Kirks, although the United Free Kirk permits the ordination of women. In both Kirks, middle-aged and elderly women provide most of the active workers. They knit and crochet baby clothes and mittens to sell at Sales of Work, they go to weekly Women's Guild meetings, they clean the Kirks, sing in the choirs, play the organ, and run the infant crèches, which provide care for small children whose mothers wish to attend services.

Although most of the formal leadership positions are held by men, women wield power in less visible ways. The Women's Guild provides an arena in which women exchange information and ideas for the next fund-raising event. It began as a work party, in the early days of the Kirk. Gradually, its activities became more general, but fund-raising remained its central purpose. Inchbraoch Women's

Guild has about thirty members who meet each Monday night with the minister. He believes that most of the women attend for the tea, the company, and from habit, but for some of the women, at least, there are other attractions. There are formal offices, which confer prestige upon the occupants. The Guild has a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and a Committee. Nearly all of these are Pensioners, and most of them belong to the Old Age Pensioners' Lunch Club. According to the minister, the Lunch Club is where the real decision-making takes place. This enables the officers and committee to confer away from the presence of the minister and the rest of the Guild, who, unlike the executive group, are not all True Ferrydeners.

Many informants say that Kirk life was very different a century ago. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, men were very involved in the social life of the Kirk. Every Sunday morning, the fishermen strolled out of their cottages to the foreshore, where they walked up and down discoursing on the weather, and the prospects for the week's fishing. About ten-thirty o'clock, they returned home to get dressed for the Kirk, and set off in little groups of friends and kinsmen, while the women stayed home to mind the children. The whole family went together for the six o'clock service. Some of the men

taught in the Sunday school, using different parts of the Kirk for their classes. After the service, they went home, and led their families in Bible reading, psalms, and prayer. This pattern persisted until the time of the first World War.

When asked today why they seldom go to the services, despite their declared belief in religion, and their Kirk membership, most men look a bit uncomfortable, and some suggest feebly that they don't like to "dress up." Some maintain that nowadays the women are more religious, but others deny this. I will merely suggest that the reasons for the initial decline of male involvement and those for its continuation, may not be the same. Sunday services have now become a clearly female domain. Social separation of the sexes is common all over Scotland, and the Kirk recapitulates the pattern found in other social spheres.

Leadership is another matter. The Kirk is run by the minister, the Kirk Session, and the Congregational Board. The Kirk Session is composed of elders, who are elected from the membership. There are eight elders on the United Free Kirk Session, and twelve on the Inchbraoch Session. Each Session is presided over by the Session Clerk. The Elders of the Kirk Session are charged with assisting the minister in the performance of his duties,

acting as his worldly and spiritual henchmen. Each elder is assigned a district, whose members he visits, reminding truant members to attend, giving advice when asked (and when not asked).

The elders in both Kirks are in middle age, or older, have working-class origins, and hold or have held such occupations as builder's laborer, male nurse, painter, gardener, plasterer, and shipyard rivetter. With only two exceptions, they are either True Ferrydeners, or married to True Ferrydeners. They were elected because of their reputations as respectable, responsible, and pious men, and none of them has held any civil office. Most of them have no wish to make changes, to lead factions, or to become conspicuous in any way. They have not inherited the seventeenth and eighteenth century notions of the proper role for a Kirk session, as described by Henry Thomas Buckle:

. . . the clergyman of the parish selected a certain number of laymen on whom he could depend, and who, under the name of elders, were his councillors, or rather the minister of his authority . . . this little court, which enforced the decisions uttered in the pulpit, was so supported by the superstitious reverence of the people, that it was far more powerful than any civil tribunal . . . The clergy interfered with every man's private concerns . . . their minions, the elders, were everywhere; for each parish was divided into several quarters, and to each quarter one of these officials was allotted, in order that he might take special notice of what was done in his own district . . .³⁹

The modern Kirk session is nowhere near so powerful. Some

of the oldest villagers can recall the days of more powerful Kirk sessions, or remember stories from their parents about punishments meted out by the Kirk session on unwary villagers caught in moral disrepair. Today there is a strong prejudice against inquiring too deeply or too openly into others' business, Kirk elder or not. The Session Clerks provide a striking exception to this modern trend.

The Session Clerk: Leadership and Isolation

The status of Session Clerk in Ferryden confers both privileges and penalties. The privileges include influence, authority, deference, and an occasional captive audience, as well as special access to the minister. The penalties include public resentment, becoming the subject of malicious rumors and mockery, and exclusion from the ordinary rounds of gossip and intrigue. On the whole, Ferrydeners dislike or distrust not only their "rulers," but their "leaders" as well. Not only the Session Clerks, but government representatives and faction leaders become the targets for jibes and sneers.

The Session Clerk, as the minister's primary assistant, has an institutionalized position of authority. He is supposed to know a great deal about Kirk history, both local and national, Scripture, and Kirk procedure.

He is supposed to be capable of substituting for the minister himself if necessary. His resemblance to the minister stops short at a crucial point, however. The Session Clerk is a member of the community, while the minister is always an outsider. As one of the ministers put it, with a touch of bitterness, "Ministers come and go, but the Session Clerk is always there." This puts the Clerk into a particularly difficult and powerful position. Difficult, because his statuses as Kirk official and community member can and do conflict; powerful, because he provides the link between the minister and the community he serves.

Community members are ideally supposed to be reserved and discreet. This is a popularly held notion throughout the Scottish eastern lowlands. Ferrydeners and their neighbors believe that this goes double for Ferryden. Villagers speak vehemently about their dislike for those who "think they're better than they are," or who are "trying to be better than the rest of us." Special knowledge and information about any subject (with the possible exception of fishing) is regarded with suspicion, lest it be used as a weapon, a way of rising up by pushing others down. Thus, mockery and derision come into play as leveling mechanisms the instant anyone displays or claims more

than common knowledge. The villagers also make a point of stressing their uniform class identity (not class consciousness, since it is not defined in terms of opposition to other classes).

The Session Clerk, by virtue of his position, must demonstrate special knowledge, and inevitably becomes privy to many family secrets, such as financial worries and health problems. He has the minister's ear, and acts as the minister's voice. Thus, election to Session Clerk status carries with it the price of elevation--isolation. It is not surprising, therefore, that those who seek this office appear to have special personality traits which set them apart from their fellows in the first place. Both the recently retired Session Clerks of the two Kirks are cantankerous, opinionated old men, who expostulate freely on their ideas of the proper Christian way of life. They deplore the decline of religiosity in Ferryden, and each claims himself to be an unusually honest and pious man. Each was cordially disliked by the minister he served, and neither is popular with his fellow villagers.

Charles of Inchbraoch

Charles was Session Clerk of the Established Kirk in Ferryden for fifteen years, serving under three

ministers, including the "narrow" Mr. Patterson, and his successor, the "modern" Mr. Leitch. Charles lives in one of the large, two-storey stone houses on Ogilvie Terrace, built about fifty years ago by Robert Pert, who founded R. Pert & Sons, Builders, in Montrose. Charles is about sixty-five years old, and recently retired from his position with another building firm in Montrose which was started by Ferryden men. He began his career in the building trades by serving an apprenticeship as a plasterer with R. Pert & Sons, and worked his way up to managerial status through the years. By village standards, he is quite prosperous. He is married to a shy, quiet woman from the Highlands, who has remained a member of her home Kirk, the "Wee Frees"--the Free Kirk of Scotland. She and Charles have no children.

When Charles retired as Session Clerk, the minister was very relieved. He considered Charles to be a disruptive force, as well as a thorn in his side. He felt, probably correctly, that Charles resented him, believing in his secret heart that he himself should have been a minister, and was undoubtedly better qualified. Charles projects an attitude of moral righteousness and evangelistic zeal. As Session Clerk, he had a good deal of power. Among other things, he controlled the handling of

three trust funds, which had been bequeathed to the Kirk at various times, for distribution among the "poor and destitute." These days, only two families receive regular help from the funds, but the Pensioners are each given a bag of tea at Christmastime. Distribution of the funds became a source of conflict between Charles and the minister. One in particular had accumulated a lot of money, which Leitch believed was being controlled "somewhat highhandedly," with some of the funds being diverted into Kirk upkeep, and not for their stated purpose.

Charles helps to keep alive the old bitterness between the two Kirks. He has opposed recent moves towards reconciliation, such as joint services and concerts. When Leitch suggested that his congregation go "up the brae" for their six o'clock service when he was going on holiday, Charles led the congregation in refusing to go. When the two Kirks held a joint service one Sunday with Mr. Bruce presiding, Charles exclaimed, "Fancy the minister of the Kirk setting under the minister of the 'separated bretheren!'" Charles has prepared a "talk," in which he analyzes the development of Presbyterianism, and which he delivers at every opportunity, to the Women's Guild, or any other agreeable audience. His rigid belief in the correctness of his own interpretations, and his loud denunciations

of those who oppose him have alienated many people, some of whom declared to Leitch that they would not return to the Kirk until Charles' term as Session Clerk was over.

In addition to his office as Session Clerk, Charles has been actively involved in other village organizations. For several years, he was active in the now defunct Ferryden and Craig Ratepayers Association. Although he has never held elective office, and claims that he does not want to, as a representative cannot remain true to the dictates of his own conscience, he has chaired several village meetings with members of the Montrose Harbour Board and representatives from the Sea Oil Services Base. He is a longstanding member of the Scottish National Party, and unlike most of the villagers, he is not averse to stating his political convictions. He is openly hostile to Alec, the ex-County Councillor and long-term village representative on the Harbour Board. Leitch believes that Charles and Alec are rivals for power, and certainly they appeared on opposite sides of the Oil Base issue.

James of the United Free Kirk

James, long-time Session Clerk of the United Free Kirk, was one of the original members of the Continuing Kirk, and carries the flame of bitterness burning brightly

in his heart. He has been described as a "miserable old man," and "always on about something." It is said that he has "a book of rules" for his life, which must be followed to the letter. Like his counterpart in Inchbraoch, James considers himself to be an authority on Kirk history and doctrine, and is not afraid to openly contradict the minister.

James is a True Ferrydener, and is married to another one, Ina Watt Mearns Pert Paton. They live in a small house on Rossie Terrace, and have one daughter, who lives with her husband in the village. James started out as a shipyard rivetter, serving his apprenticeship in Montrose, and then working for the Coaster Construction Company on Rossie Island, until it closed during the Drpession. After that, he worked for a time as a builder's laborer for R. Pert & Sons, who sent him on a number of jobs throughout the Highlands. Now retired, he and his wife live comfortably, but modestly.

James, like Charles, appears to be another frustrated theologian. The Kirk is his passion, his main interest in life. For twenty-five years, he ran the Sunday School, taking over from a cousin who died in 1950. He was active in the Temperance movement, and was Chief Templar of the Good Templars for three years. He belongs to the

Ferryden chapter of the Masons, Lodge St. Skae, but does not appear to have participated in other village organizations, or political groups. Until 1970, he voted for the Labour party, but since then he has voted twice for the Scottish Nationalists, although he is not an S.N.P. (Scottish Nationalist Party) member.

The Minister: Never One of Them

As outsiders and transients, the ministers' relationship to their parishioners is ambiguous. They live in the village, their children attend the village school, and their primary social environment is Ferryden. Nonetheless, their background, allegiance, and identity have been shaped elsewhere, and they know that they will not always live in Ferryden. Even if they were to remain, the village would always consider them Incomers.

The minister is expected to lead the congregation in moral and spiritual matters, but not too directly, and only on well-trodden paths. Attempts to change the pattern of services or other procedures tend to meet with objections from the Session Clerk, grumblings from the Session, and stubborn puzzlement from the congregation. Mr. Bruce once attempted to change the order of the communion service, which is held about four times a year. According to him,

his suggestions were quite simple and straightforward, yet three rehearsals were required to get it straight, and the next time it all fell apart anyway, and he gave up.

Both of the ministers said that they knew that they were not, and never would be fully accepted by the community. They would never be "one of them." Their parishioners' troubles frequently became known to the whole True Ferrydener community before they heard a word about them. Conversations stop abruptly when they approach, to resume after their departure. Their visits become little occasions of state, with tea served and company manners kept. Little intrigues hatch behind their backs. I became involved in a very minor example one evening after the United Free six o'clock service. Mrs. David White (married to Charles' cousin) was in charge of collecting oddments for the upcoming Jumble Sale. Standing outside the little Kirk, she drew me aside, and began to tell me about a "lovely" dress she thought might fit me. As we were about to make arrangements for me to take a look at it, Mr. Bruce came up to say hello. Switching rapidly to a lively discussion about the weather, we exchanged a few friendly formalities, and he moved on. Mrs. White then returned to the subject of the dress, and made it clear she was relieved that I had not spoken of it to Mr. Bruce. It

appeared that Jumble was supposed to be made equally available to everybody, and that private, advance sales were felt to be somehow not quite right, even though the money would be given to the Kirk. This, despite the fact that a goodly portion of every Sale collection was set aside for individuals in advance. Clearly, Mrs. White regarded the minister as the bearer of authority and arbiter of absolute moral righteousness, who would disapprove of a practice so widespread as to be considered normal.

Both Leitch and Bruce are aware of the ways in which they are treated differently from other people. When they try to probe too far into their parishioners' affairs, they notice a distinct cooling off in the villagers' normally friendly demeanor. Leitch has also noticed that the Ferrydeners modify their speech when talking to him. They switch from their normally broad Ferryden dialect (in which f's become vocalized, and are also attached to the beginning of such words as 'who,' 'what,' and 'where,' along with assorted vowel shifts).

Summary and Analysis:
The Kirk as a Political Arena

Ferryden has stood from the outset in a marginal and inferior position to the rural hinterland and to the Town of Montrose. For nearly a century, the fisherfolk

were characterized as heathen, foreign, and even racially distinct.⁴⁰ They were isolated both socially and culturally from the mainstream of local intellectual and religious development until well into the nineteenth century. With the rise of an Evangelistic movement within the Presbyterian Establishment, Ferryden became the target for missionary work. Hitherto left to their own devices, the Ferrydeners now were taught, preached to, and reformed. They became a religious constituency, ready to follow their minister into the breakaway Free Kirk in 1843.

By joining the Free Kirk, the fisherfolk also established a new base for their communal identity. They remained marginal to local power politics and factions, but became part of a national movement which pitted the poor and the middle class against the Crown and the landed aristocracy. The Free Kirk was not a stable institution, however, but rather a forum for protest and change. When the waves of revivals began to inundate the English-speaking Protestant world, Free Kirk congregations were particularly vulnerable, and the most striking responses came from poor working class or stigmatized occupational communities like Ferryden.

The Ferryden revivals must be viewed from two standpoints: that of their individual and psychological

expressive value, and that of their sociopolitical significance. Each dimension helped to shape the other, so the two viewpoints must articulate closely. In analyzing the meaning of religious movements, Lewis⁴¹ insists upon the primacy of the "crucial bread and butter questions." Therefore we must ask what the revivals meant to the Ferrydeners themselves, and how spirit possession and conversion helped them to manipulate their earthly world. Through ecstatic religious experiences, the Ferrydeners were attempting symbolically to restructure their moral and political universe. By entering into a patron-client relationship with Jesus, the villagers could temporarily transcend the power of the laird, the merchant, and the fish-curer, and simultaneously raise their own self-esteem. Those who were "elect" in the sight of God possessed a psychological and social armor against the scorn of worldly neighbors.

The revivals played a part in raising the Ferrydeners' standing with outsiders, as, for a time, they became famous for their enthusiasm:

Those that before were openly profane and ungodly, are now humble Christians. Those who formerly indulged and delighted in open vice, now shun every appearance of evil. Those who never visited the house of God, are now regular worshippers there; the drunkard has given up his cups; the swearer abandoned his oaths and cursing; the drunken song has given place to the voice of praise. Family worship formerly little known, is now enjoyed by all, without allowing worldly concerns to hinder. Now, in dwellings of the righteous is heard the melody of joy and praise. Meetings for

prayer are greatly relished, ardently desired, and truly delighted in whether it be in the public assembly, the social meetings, or amongst private friends.⁴²

Thus the revivals became a realm in which the fisherfolk could draw praise and attention from the outside world. Piety and zeal became prestige goods, costing nothing but emotional exhaustion. Public displays of religious conviction were highly valued, yet available to even the poorest and least powerful members of society. Their ministers and missionaries encouraged them, partly from sincere conviction, and partly because each conversion stood as a monument to their success. The revivals were not a zero-sum game, or a limited good. The greater the number of converts, the greater the amount of spiritual wealth generated, at no cost to anyone.

The political consequences of the Revivals led in two directions. On the one hand, greater self-esteem played a part in enabling the villagers to take more initiative in forming their own voluntary associations around social, economic, political party, and Kirk-related interests. Such groups became, at different times, and to different degrees, arenas for the acting-out of villager leadership and power struggles. The revivals and their aftermath helped to solidify and clarify village boundaries and identity. The Free Kirk became a symbol of resistance

and unity, and related institutions, such as the Temperance groups and the Kirk Session, became vehicles for the expression of collective sentiment. The following passage from Hechter, although written about the relationship between peripheral and culturally distinct areas of a nation state and its core, can be usefully applied to the developing relationship between Ferryden and Montrose:

cultural institutions which develop independent of state sponsorship, and in competition with state-supported institutions [such as the Free Kirk] may become modes for the crystallization of political opposition. Once a cultural institution, such as a church or a voluntary association, perceives that its interests are not congruent with those of the state, it is particularly well adapted to extend its influence in the society, for it can, within variable limits, engage in socialization contrary to the state's ends.⁴³

So it was with Ferryden. The Revivals gave rise to new forms of association not sponsored or controlled by town interests. For the first time, Ferrydeners began to see themselves as members of their own distinct community in a positive, rather than a negative fashion.

It must also be borne in mind that the Revivals began during a time of increasing prosperity for the fisherfolk. As the herring fishing industry expanded, and the Montrose fish merchants began to take advantage of new and more lucrative markets, the standard of living in the village also began, albeit slowly, to rise. Thus the village

eagerness to embrace the revivals must be placed in a context both of relative deprivation and of rising expectations. It is also possible that the changing economic circumstances meant different responses from men and women. As a highly labor-intensive industry at this time, fishing required long hours and grueling work for both sexes. However, women may have come to view their hours of line-baiting and mussel-digging as being insufficiently rewarding, particularly as they lost control over the sale of fish with the increasing dominance of the fish-curing company. Lewis⁴⁴ cites numerous examples, particularly from Africa, in which women use trance and possession cults as "strategies of mystical attack," or means by which to regain lost power, or to achieve new statuses. While the Ferryden revivals were by no means confined to women, the relationships between men and women, villagers and outsiders, fishermen and fish-curiers all rest on a common theme of subordination and tension. Thus, the men's stake in the revivals may have been parallel, if not identical, to the women's.

The Ferrydeners began to resent their status as a stigmatized community, and to express their grievances. Deference to social superiors began to be more consciously mixed with anger, and the village began to develop a kind

of defensive pride. (It should be noted that the villagers' sense of grievance and exclusion from power may have contributed to the post World War I emergence of "radical" politics in Ferryden, as it did among other east coast Scottish fishing villages. In E.P. Thompson's words, "spiritual egalitarianism had a tendency to break its banks and flow into temporal channels."⁴⁵)

The experiences of the Disruption and the revivals united Ferryden as a religious community, fortified by institutional symbols against the outside world. After the Reunion of 1929, however, two factions emerged in the village, centered around the two Kirks. Using Nicholas's criteria for factions⁴⁶, we may see the Kirk as a political arena which became organized by segmentary factions possessing the following characteristics: exhaustiveness, exclusivity, and structural equality. All Ferrydeners belonged to either one or the other of the two Kirks, and in 1929 and the succeeding years, all were forced to make a choice between them. One could not belong to both Kirks, but there were a number of cases of desertion, particularly from the Continuing Kirk to the Establishment. Each Kirk was organized in fundamentally the same way, providing the same services and satisfactions for its members--there was no division of labor between them. The strength of these

factions endured for many years. They began to erode with the introduction in 1974 of the two new ministers, both of whom are too young to remember the events of 1929, and neither of whom has any hostility against the other. Until the retirement of the two Session Clerks, Charles and James, however, the factions were fed by their repetition of the old accusations and condemnations. Since the Clerks' retirements in 1975 and 1976, outsiders and Incomers have begun to take on more important roles in the village Kirks, and the old feud is beginning to die by attrition.

In recent years, the division between the two Kirks has begun to articulate closely with the division between the True Ferrydener and the Incomer group. While an occasional Incomer who has previously belonged to a United Free congregation does join the Ferryden United Free Kirk, True Ferrydeners overwhelmingly dominate the membership. Even their services reflect adherence to the old fisher-folk identity. Their favorite hymns refer to the sea or to fishermen, and an annual Sea Service is held each autumn. The Kirk is decorated with nets, floats, shells, and other maritime paraphernalia, and a lay preacher well known to the Ferrydeners comes up from the Arbroath fishing community to conduct the service.

The Established Kirk, on the other hand, is far more heterogeneous in composition. While it contains many of the old True Ferrydeners, it also has proved relatively hospitable to Incomers. Almost all Incomers who join a Ferryden Kirk, join Inchbraoch. Inchbraoch is also more clearly associated with upward mobility and assimilation to Montrose. While neither Kirk displays a tendency to more "liberal" doctrine than the other (both stress literal belief in the Bible, miracles, and distrust of intellectualism), Inchbraoch's public image is more "modern." Part of this is due to the new minister's efforts, but they would not be possible in the United Free Kirk. The larger, looser structure and more diverse population of the Established Kirk allows for greater flexibility and adaptation to new pressures. Thus, Leitch's recruiting drive is proving quite successful, and the membership of Inchbraoch is at least holding its own, if not growing.

Many of the older members of both Kirks are resisting their new ministers' efforts to reconcile their differences. Many believe that the Continuing Kirk will disappear as the older generation dies off, and regard these efforts as hastening an end they have no wish to see; or, on the other hand, they regard them as superfluous. The disappearance of these factionalized arenas will not mean

an end to conflict in Ferryden, however, for new issues have arisen, and have generated new factions, which we will turn to in the next chapters.

The Session Clerks, with their problems and privileges of leadership, lead us to another issue which has proved central for Ferryden, and its response to pressures and changes from outside. The social penalties for leaders in all contexts must be weighed against the benefits, and thus many articulate and intelligent villagers refuse to speak out in the face of challenges to their community. Those who take the risk find it difficult to organize a constituency or to force public discussion of issues, particularly in the face of organized or institutional power. This tendency represents a sharp departure from the past, when Ferrydeners were known for active and vocal--as opposed to passive and silent--opposition to threats from outside. We will return to this point several times in the following chapters, as it is vital to our understanding of Ferryden's adaptive history.

FOOTNOTES

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¹³Ibid, p. 56-57.

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- ¹⁶The Montrose Review, October 7, 1843.
- ¹⁷Kellas, Modern Scotland, p. 54.
- ¹⁸Anson, Life On Low Shore, p. 135.
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- ⁴⁵E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1968) p. 399.

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CHAPTER SIX: MONTROSE STRIKES OIL

Introduction

This chapter will examine the history of onshore development for offshore oil in the Montrose region. It will focus closely upon two mutually dependent processes: the response of the local business elite to oil-related opportunities; and Ferryden's response to the oil service base which was planted on its doorstep. The longstanding dependence of Ferryden upon Montrose, and the village's vulnerability to town-based demands will be seen in the new context of North Sea oil development. This chapter will therefore look closely at the strategies of power and entrepreneurship employed by present-day Montrose merchants, and at the impact of these strategies upon the fabric of community identity and cohesion within Ferryden village.

Throughout this dissertation, I have attempted to demonstrate Ferryden's marginal position, its satellite relationship to the "metropolis" of Montrose. In this chapter, I bring the picture up to date. Offshore oil supplies and services have become a new resource for the local economic and political elite groups. However, the

ways in which these groups have adapted to their new opportunities have posed a distinct threat to the continuing survival of Ferryden as a socio-cultural, partially-bounded community. The special requirements of onshore support services have place unanticipated demands upon the social, economic, and political framework of Ferryden. Thus, offshore oil has become a successor to a long line of restricted resources (including salmon, land, herring, etc.). The impact of oil has been both quantitatively and qualitatively different, however. Now it is not merely Ferryden's labor force and livelihood, but the very land upon which it rests, and the water which once lapped its shores which have been placed under siege.

A Background Summary of Oil Developments in Montrose

In 1973, a Dutch-built cutter-dredger ship moved up the channel of the South Esk River, between Montrose and Ferryden. Cutting down into the harbor's main channel, it tore out rocks, mud, gravel, and sand. The dredged materials were spewed out of metal pipes into the Inch Burn, the tidal stretch of water which formed the northern border of Ferryden. Working day and night for several months without a pause, the dredger deepened the old harbor channel back to its nineteenth century level of eighteen

feet--just deep enough to accomodate the offshore oil supply vessels which were soon to follow in its wake. Meanwhile, the Inch Burn was displaced, leaving behind a forty-acre expanse of raw, red earth. This was the site of the coming Sea Oil Services Base, the child of the Montrose Harbour Board, and the multinational conglomerate of P&O.

After the dredging and filling operations were completed, the Base began to take shape. Sheds, warehouses, and office blocks quickly blocked the villagers' remaining view of Montrose. A chain-link fence ringed the perimeter, and the volume of traffic, noise, and human activity rose sharply. By 1974, the Base was fully operational. P&O leased dock, office, and warehouse space to offshore services companies from the United States, Canada, England, Norway, and France. These companies brought in welders, crane operators, warehousemen, communications specialists, managers, and secretaries to conduct and coordinate their North Sea support and supply services. The working population on the base rose to over 400, and different companies came and went as their North Sea contracts expired. Overseeing all of this was the Sea Oil Services Company, which had the dual responsibility of managing its own North Sea operations, and providing the facilities for others.

The effects of all this activity were quickly felt

FIGURE 3 The Oil Base

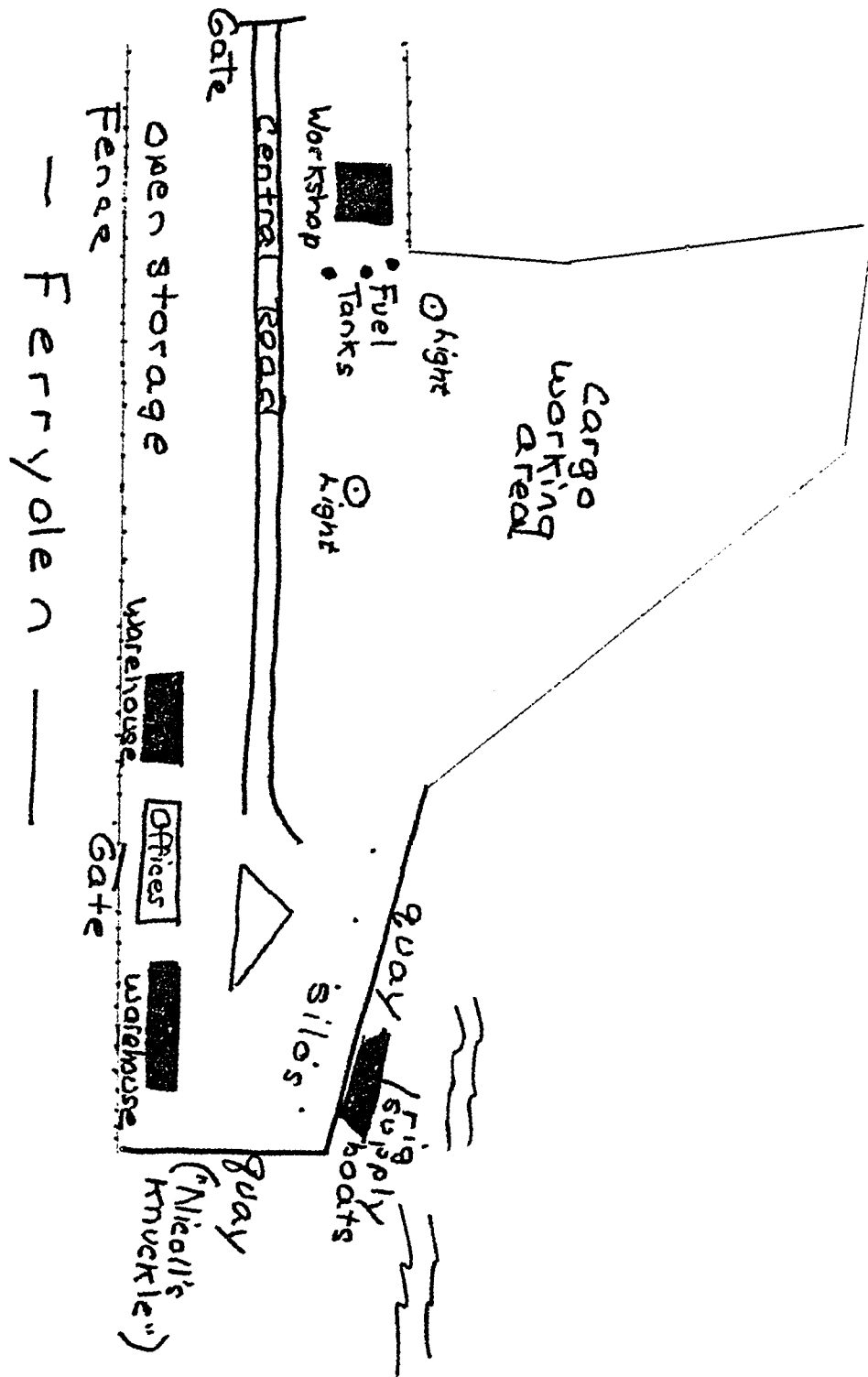
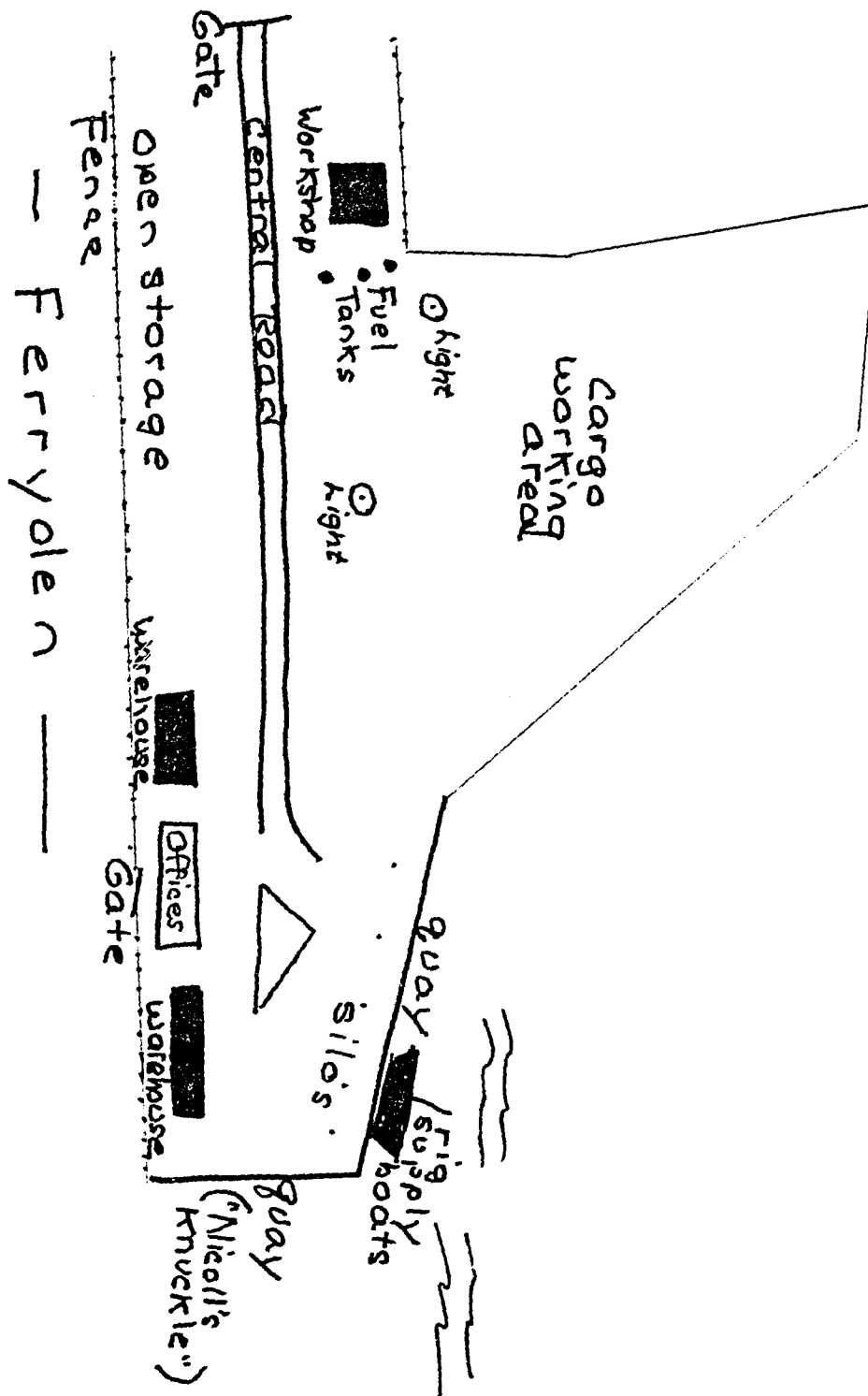
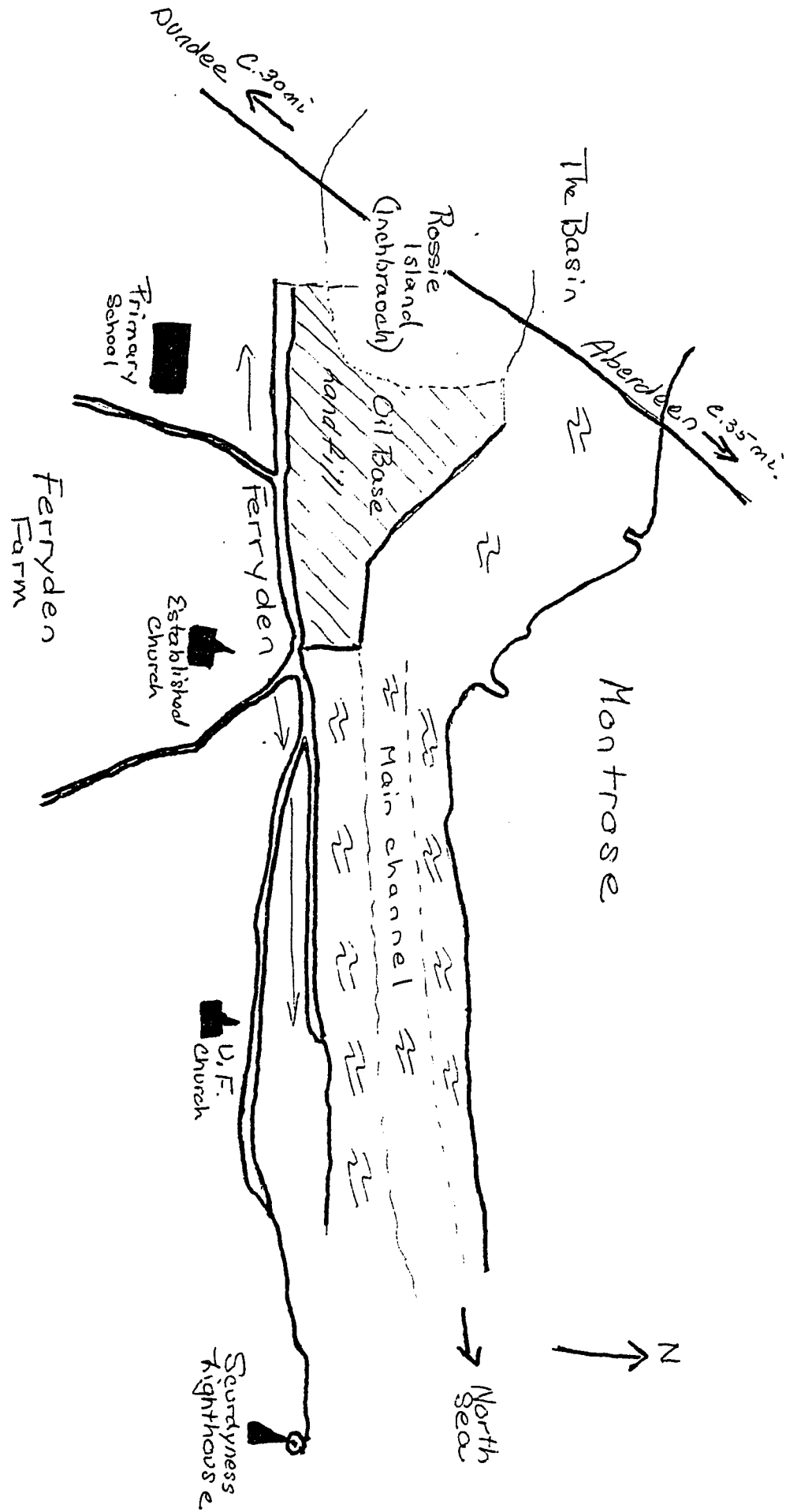


FIGURE 3 The Oil Base



MAP 6 The Oil Base and Ferryden



in Montrose. New people, new money, and new businesses occupied columns of print in the local weekly newspaper. Bars, hotels, and restaurants began to flourish as never before, no longer dependent mainly upon the summer tourist trade. Food and equipment retailers and wholesalers were swamped with new orders, and soon, ideas for new commercial ventures became a popular topic of conversation. Montrose began to bask in the glow of oil wealth, and in the reflected glamour of the offshore oil industry.

As the offshore supply boats plied in and out of the harbor, carrying goods and equipment from the Base, other oil-related businesses were springing up at the north end of Montrose. With the exception of Otis Pressure Control (an offshore service company which is part of the great Texas-based Halliburton empire), almost all of these enterprises were owned by groups of Montrose businessmen. Their investors enjoyed participating in a new and lucrative, although somewhat risky, field of endeavor, and they formed the nucleus of Montrose's share in the onshore support bonanza. I shall return to a more detailed discussion of their activities later on in this chapter, as their relationship to the Harbour Board, Sea Oil Services, and to the higher echelons of commercial and political power make them an important factor in the analysis of Ferryden's fate.

Levels of Dependence:
the Harbour Board and P&O

Before the coming of oil, Montrose as a commercial center was resting unhappily in the doldrums. By the early 1960's, the volume of harbor trade had sunk to a new low. The Harbour Board had been unable to pay its annual dues to the Town Council, and the docks were falling into disrepair. The local stevedoring company appears to have been less than aggressive in seeking out new business, and only the seasonal exports of grain and imports of fertilizer were keeping the harbor alive. The two large factories in Montrose, Glaxo Pharmaceuticals and the Chivers "jammie" employed substantial numbers of people, so that there was no immediate unemployment crisis. On the other hand, there were no prospects for expansion, and the younger generation was being forced to "get out to get on."

In 1964, Captain Gordon was hired as the new Harbour Master. A native of northern Ireland, with no prior ties to Montrose, Gordon found the harbor's stagnation depressing. An energetic and restless man, he was forced to channel his managerial talents into daydreams, fantasies of Montrose's potential development, if only the money could be found. In his spare time, he drew up a set of plans which could transform Montrose into a major east coast

trade center. If he had his way, he would dredge and deepen the harbor channel to make it accessible to larger, more modern vessels. He would repair and extend the docks, and fill in the Inch Burn on the Ferryden side. There he would build additional docks, increasing the port's capacity. Montrose had the physical capacity to become one of Scotland's major container ports. There was no market for his ideas at this time, however, so his plans remained shut away in a drawer. He did set out to improve the trade picture, however. He used contacts built up over years of shipping and harbor management experience, stirred the fires under the stevedoring company, and managed to secure a number of new contracts for imports, including paper, wood pulp, and timber from Scandinavia. Paper, in particular, became, and still remains, an important commodity in Montrose's import pattern.

Captain Gordon's direct employers were the Trustees of the Montrose Harbour Board. The Harbour Board was established in 1834, under the provisions of a Parliamentary Charter. This Charter transferred authority over the development and maintenance of Montrose Harbour from the Montrose Town Council to a specially-appointed Board of Trustees. Its members included many of the prominent merchants and Councilmen of the town, as well as

representatives from several interested parties, such as the town of Brechin (twelve miles up river), but the Board was by no means coterminous with the Council. The Board was given virtually absolute control over the harbor and its surrounding dock area, with the ability to set harbor fees, restrict the passage of vessels, and oversee the Customs office. Thus, the stage was set for the development of rivalry between the Board and the Town Council, most of whose members were merchants themselves, and therefore very dependent upon the health of the port.

The Board's structure has remained largely unaltered since its beginnings. Its members are appointed by the Board itself, and terms of office are indefinite. The Board's finances are subject to an outside annual audit, and its powers are restricted to the domain of the harbor itself, but within its domain, it remains virtually autonomous, answerable only to Parliament and the Crown. The Board holds monthly meetings in the Town Buildings. The public is "invited" to view the first part of each meeting, when the Minutes are read, and general financial reports are given. This part of a meeting takes no more than fifteen minutes, as a rule, and its proceedings are reported in the local paper. The second part of the meeting is closed. In this part, discussions of ongoing

negotiations and contract details take place with no outside scrutiny. Special committee meetings, also closed, can be called at will. Both the closed and the open sessions are recorded by the Harbour Clerk, and the records are kept in the Clerk's offices.

The Clerk has other duties besides record-keeping. He or she (at the time of my fieldwork the Clerk was a woman solicitor--an unprecedented appointment) is responsible for the Board's correspondence, and also acts as the Board's legal advisor. Thus the Clerk has, at least in recent years, been a qualified solicitor. The most recent Clerks have also been employed by a particular local solicitor's firm. The Clerk's position as legal counsel and official correspondent, as well as his officially independent job in the solicitor's firm, give him an unusual degree of access to privileged information. His position is therefore a pivotal one, and enables him to act as a kind of information broker and influence patron for many different segments of town interests. The importance of the Clerk's role came into prominence during the negotiations between the Harbour Board and P&O, and in the town's response to oil.

North Sea oil exploitation was well under way by the late 1960's. In 1969, outside speculators began to

appear in Montrose, investigating the possibilities of using the port for oil-related operations. Several of them made tentative overtures to the Harbour Board, but none had any proposals which the Board took seriously. At that time, most of the Scottish involvement was centered in Aberdeen. Many of these speculators appeared to be fly-by-night, or get-rich-quick schemers, with little or no real capital to invest. In 1970, however, more substantial offers began to take shape. In November of that year, one of the Board members reported on his negotiations with "certain parties interested in using the port."¹ The "certain parties" turned out to be an engineering company proposing "to use Montrose as a supply base port for oil rigs working off Montrose."² This company wished to set up a subsidiary company, to be called the Montrose Oil Supply Ltd., and would lease an old disused railway yard from British Rail, to amplify its transport system. They proposed to "set up a supply base service as quickly as possible at Montrose to attract any major oil company engaging in Continental Shelf activity in Montrose."³ They promised to employ the local stevedoring company, and to pay normal harbor dues on ships and cargo, lights, water, pilotage, shed rent, and so on. Another firm expressed its wish to cooperate with the first in this venture, and

TABLE 7

THE IMPACT OF OIL UPON ABERDEEN HARBOURABERDEEN HARBOUR: Oil Vessels Using the Port

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>
No. of Oil Vessels	--	1720 (14.7%)	2865 (24.3%)
Total all Vessels	11,549	11,624	11,795
Tonnage, Oil Vessels	--	1,076,783 (25%)	1,922,511 (40%)
Total Tonnage	1,687,965	4,157,375	4,761,364

Table from Hunt, Deirdre, "Response of Industry Within Aberdeen to Oil Related Change, Some Implications for Urban Planners." 1975 School of Business Management Studies, Robert Gordon's Institute of Technology, Aberdeen. Extracted from Aberdeen Harbour Statements of Trade, 1970, 1973, 1974.

the Harbour Board took the idea under serious consideration.

The project failed, however. The sticking point appears to have been the companies' demands to commit a major amount of existing port space for the exclusive use of oil supply vessels. This would interfere with the port's ability to carry out existing contracts. Due to Captain Gordon's vigorous efforts, trade volume at the port was now beginning to rise, and port capacity would be overtaxed if large sections of dock space were withdrawn from ordinary use.

In 1971, another prospect appeared on the oil horizon. A company which we will call Land Scouts Ltd., based near Glasgow, approached the Board with another scheme to develop Montrose for oil services. Claiming to be representing a number of potentially interested major oil corporations, Land Scouts appears to have temporarily dazzled the Board. They argued convincingly for the future success of their scheme. Aberdeen, now known as the "Houston of Scotland," was becoming both costly and congested. Many companies were looking at the small ports with an eye to expanding their operations elsewhere. (In Britain, small ports are exempt from the National Dock Regulations Act, which enforces the hiring of unionized labor. The small ports could therefore offer cheaper

labor, faster turnaround, and lower operating costs in general.) A small port, Montrose was also favored because of its good harbor safety record, its year-round access, and hospitable business climate.

Land Scouts appeared serious in its intentions. It negotiated with the owner of Ferryden Farm for an option on his land (187 acres of first-quality agricultural land valued at approximately £1500 per acre), and spoke of laying auxiliary rail lines from the main line, down through the farm to the harbor. The company filed planning proposals with the Angus County Planning Committee (a sub-committee of the Angus County Council, responsible for approving new construction). It promised the Harbour Board that it could back up its proposals with £1 million in working capital.

While the Harbour Board appears to have been initially enthusiastic about Land Scouts' proposals, both the Planning Committee and its advisory arm, the County Planning Department, had some reservations. The proposals called for several potentially controversial moves, including the rezoning of the greater Ferryden area from Residential and Agricultural to Light Industrial. When the proposal was made public, a number of formal objections were quickly lodged with the Planning Committee.

Environmental groups (including the Society for the Preservation of a Rural Scotland, the East Coast Protection Society, the Tayside Branch of the Conservation Society, the Nature Conservancy, the Countryside Commission for Scotland, and the Tay River Purification Board) expressed concern over the loss of farmland, threats to the wildlife in the Montrose Basin, and the amenities damage to the residents of Ferryden. A petition with some sixty signatures was sent from Ferryden itself, objecting to the transformation of Ferryden Farm. In addition to the formal objections, rumors had begun to fly concerning Land Scouts' credentials. It was said they were misrepresenting their abilities to follow through on their commitments, that their actual capital was only £100, and that they were making simultaneous offers to other towns. No one seems to know for sure who or what the firm was, but by November of 1972, the Planning Committee had finally denied them permission to develop Ferryden Farm, and they faded rather quietly out of the picture.

During this period, some other speculators had appeared on the scene. One, which called itself Strathmore Developments, played upon the growing tension between the Town Council and the Harbour Board. It proposed a large-scale program of oil-related industrial

developments which would give the town some 600 jobs, but just how it intended to fulfill this idea, it never managed to make clear. Its proposals were quickly forgotten in the general frenzy over development possibilities. The town began to hum with talk of refineries, tank farms, rig construction yards, and other implausible developments. One local businessman recalling those days, likened the climate of anticipation to that surrounding the Sullom Voe land speculation fever in the Shetlands, where major developments did emerge, with the discovery of new fields off the Shetland coasts.

Finally in 1972, P&O entered the arena with a proposal which was quickly recognized as feasible and enticing. P&O already had an onshore support base at Great Yarmouth, in Northern England, where the initial offshore gas support services were located. It had part interests in several North Sea oil fields, and the trend of discoveries was moving north. For the reasons given above, Aberdeen did not suit their needs, but they wanted a Scottish base. (Among the reasons P&O gives for this desire is that the original company, the Penninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, was founded in 1830 by a Scot, and that its present chairman, Lord Inchcape, was born in the Scottish town of Arbroath. P&O claims that it

FIGURE 4 P&O Energy Division

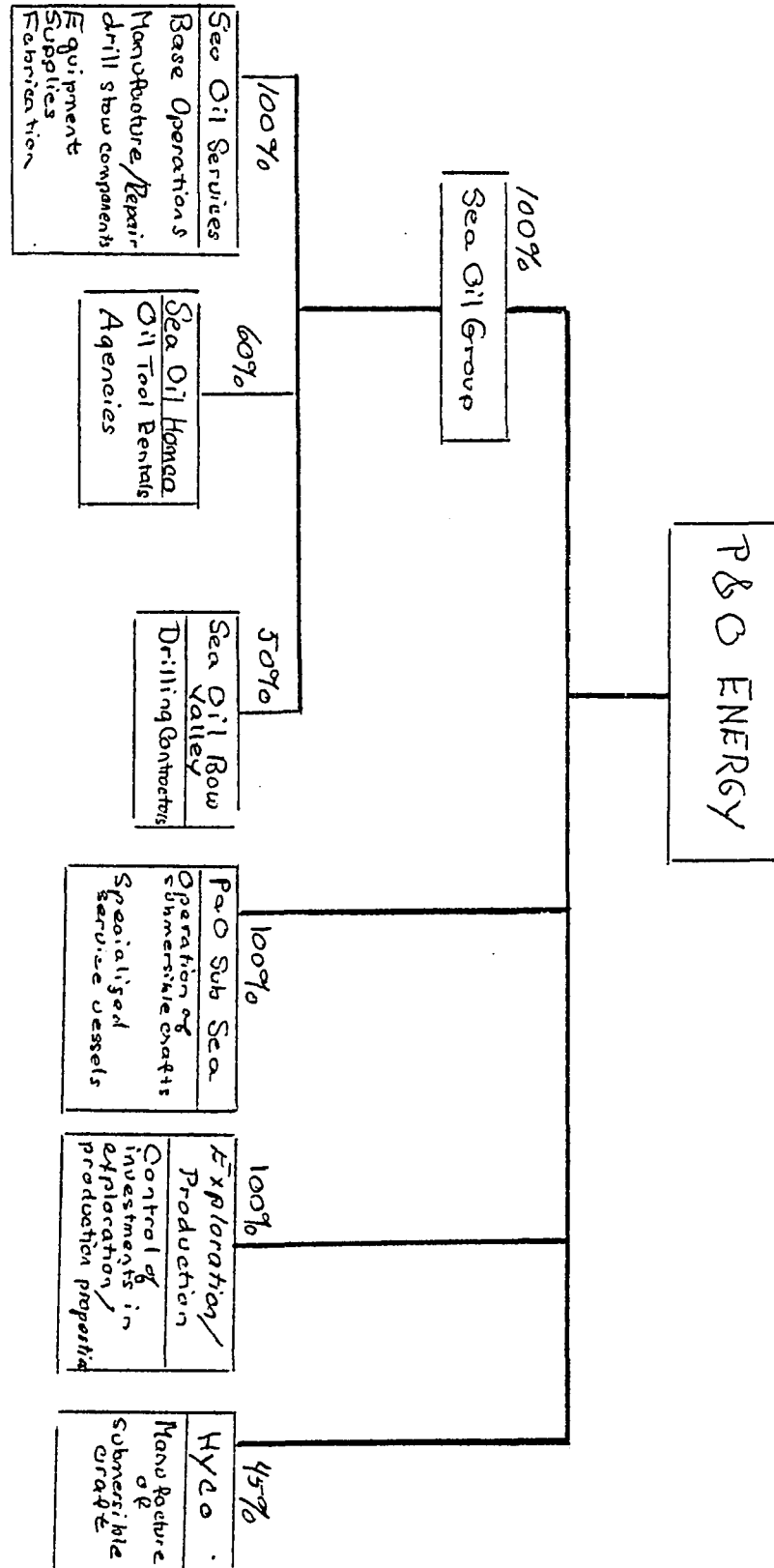
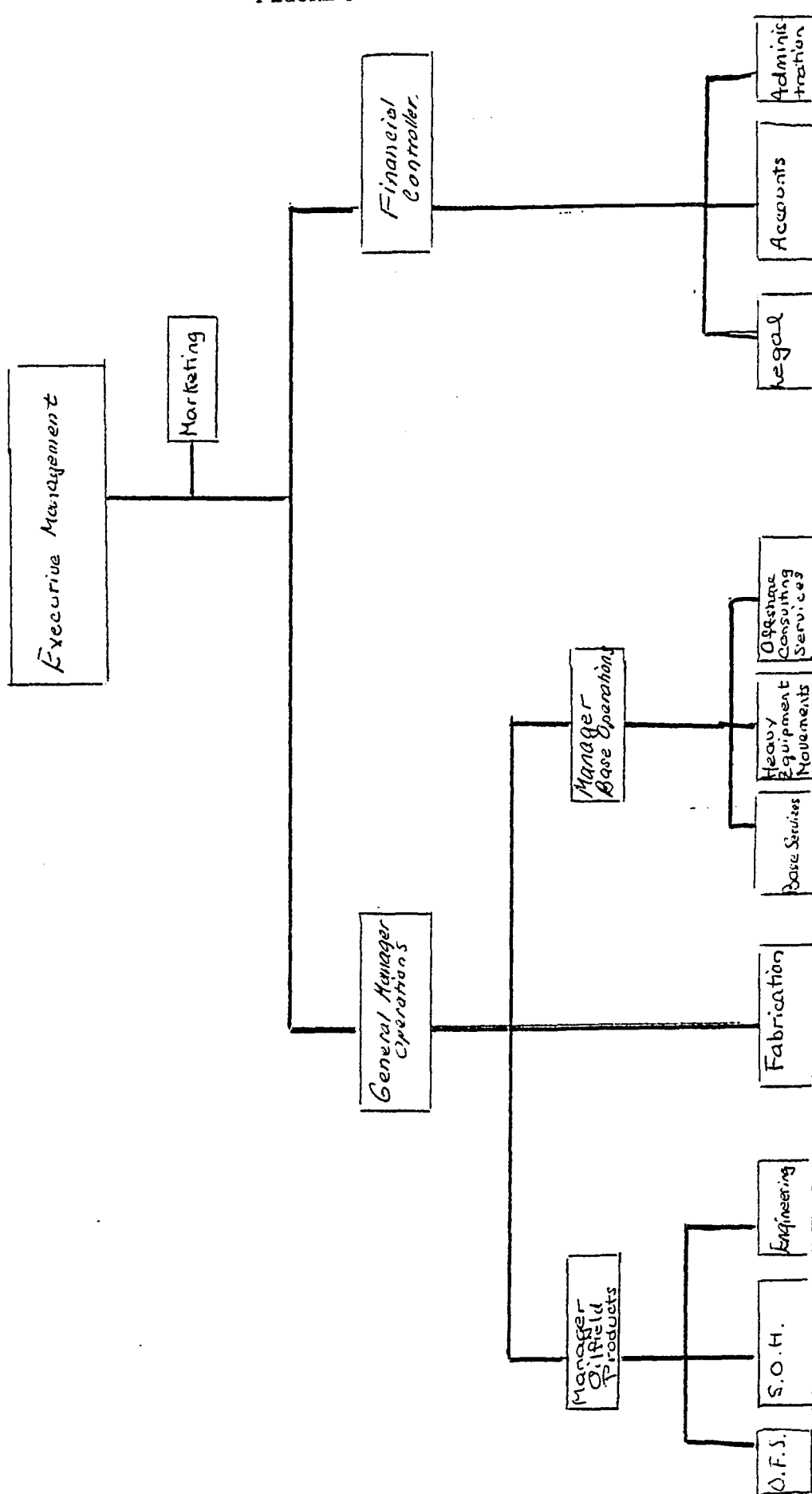


FIGURE 5 Sea Oil Services--Organization



has an interest in promoting Scottish development, because of its personal ties to that country. One suspects that they may also have more compelling motives, however.) In order to select the most convenient location, the company commissioned a survey of a number of east coast Scottish ports, including Leith (the port of Edinburgh), Dundee, Montrose, Peterhead, and Wick. Peterhead already had a degree of oil development around its harbor, Dundee and Leith were unionized, and Wick had weather and safety problems. Montrose emerged as P&O's first choice. although they were prepared to go to Peterhead if necessary.

When P&O told the Montrose Harbour Board of its interest, the Board set up a special liaison committee to conduct the negotiations. The Committee included Captain Gordon, the Harbour Clerk, the Harbour Treasurer, Alec (Ferryden's County Council and Harbour Board member), and Jack, the editor of the local newspaper, a Councilman and also a member of the Harbour Board. The Board recognized that it was dealing now with a powerful and sophisticated organization, and that it needed close attention to detail and efficient communication in order to work out the best deal for Montrose. The Committee had to strike a balance between the company's demands and the port's needs.

The first question to be addressed was the actual

siting of the support base. Ferryden Farm had already been rejected in a former proposal, and it was likely that the same objections would arise again. There was no space left on the Montrose side of the harbor for such a development. Although the Board was well aware from the outset that its jurisdiction over the Ferryden side of the river was incomplete and untested, it was clear that Captain Gordon's plan to fill in the Inch Burn was the only feasible course. With some modifications, his plans, drawn up some six years earlier, were adopted.

The next problem was to arrange the questions of finance and responsibility for the new oil base. Eventually, the Board and P&O worked out a mutually satisfactory agreement. The Harbour Board agreed to undertake the cost of dredging the river and constructing the landfill, and would take on a special Government loan to do so. P&O would pay for the construction of warehouses, offices, etc., and in addition would lease the new land from the Harbour Board. The lease, which would run for twelve years, with an option to renew for another twelve, would provide the Harbour Board with enough money to pay back its loan, and was guaranteed for the initial period. Ultimately, the land would revert to the full control of the Montrose Harbour Board, and Captain Gordon's vision of a container

port could conceivably come true. This arrangement was satisfactory to both sides. P&O was guaranteed a monopoly on all oil-related trade using the port of Montrose. No oil support vessels would be allowed to dock at the "commercial" side of the Harbour, and no rival facilities could be established in the area. Montrose's debt was effectively written off by the leasing agreement, and the spinoff effects in the general area were eagerly anticipated. The agreement also appears to have stood up well in the light of other, similar arrangements in other parts of Scotland:

The Shetland Harbour Trust revealed that P&O Ltd. had obtained permission to create a supply base costing approximately £1.8 million in Lerwick Harbour, but had to pay harbour dues on every vessel entering and leaving the port including oil supply vessels . . . Similar arrangements had been reached with Norsco who had agreed to lease the area for sixty years, but if they left before the expiry of that period the Lerwick Harbour Trust could take over the facility. It therefore appeared that the guarantee to be given to Montrose was not excessive and that in Shetland P&O were paying for the development themselves and yet were still paying harbour dues, which, of course, could increase at any time. It also appeared from the general tone of the Conference that Montrose was in an extremely advantageous position and would be in operation before Peterhead . . .⁴

P&O's representatives made several visits to Montrose. Planning proposals were filed with the County Authorities, and initial contracts were signed. The way for development was not yet clear, however. The Angus

County Planning Committee did not immediately grant its approval to the scheme, and it was discovered that a special permission had to be obtained from London, in the shape of a Harbour Revision Order, to permit the Board to construct new quays on the Ferryden side of the river.

The Clerk did his best to argue that the Board's domain was sufficient, and that the Board could proceed without outside permission. A lengthy correspondence between him and the County Planning Officer ensued:

according to the lease between the Board of Trade and the Montrose Harbour Trustees dated 1911 whereby the Trustees were granted the Lease of the entire area between high and low water marks, and therefore as you will observe the area which falls under the jurisdiction of the Montrose Harbour Trustees covers the whole foreshore between high and low water marks from a point at the east end of the Annat Bank, to the Inch Bridge, and thereafter straight down to Ferryden and Scuryness Lighthouse. The only actual area which at present falls outwith the jurisdiction of the Harbour Trustees is the Inch Burn and the Trustees propose to obtain the lease of this particular area from the Crown Estate Commissioners.

The actual area of the Inch Burn is therefore not legally outwith the area controlled by the Montrose Harbour Trustees but I would be prepared to accept that it is outwith the normal operational area and that planning permission is required. It therefore would be the intention of the Trustees to apply to Angus County Council for permission in principle of the outlined scheme for the reclamation of land at the Inch Burn and for the approval for that particular area to be made as a separate application from the other developments in the normal operational area. It is as you state in your letter a matter of extreme urgency that the application for outline planning permission is approved as soon as possible to enable the work to proceed . . .⁵

Two days later, the Clerk wrote another letter, somewhat at odds with the first, in which he contended that planning permission was not, in fact, needed for development on the North (Montrose) side of the river, for dredging the channel, "and for the reclamation on their existing operational area . . . the only point on which the Trustees have no statutory authority is the actual construction of a quay from Ferryden to Rossie Island."⁶ This exchange of letters proved highly symbolic of the Board's attitude towards attempts to control or restrict its decisions, and of the Clerk's apparent annoyance at having to wade through bureaucratic regulations. The tone of these and other letters is slightly martyred and gently rebuking, implying that the Harbour Board had no wish to offend other bodies, and would play the game in order to spare their feelings, rather than an outright admission of deference to higher authority. The Board's attitude also reflects the degree of pressure it was under. P&O made it amply clear from the outset that the success of the joint venture was contingent upon the speed with which it could be put into operation. Undue delays could force them to shift their plans to Peterhead. Although both parties were reasonably sure that the necessary approvals could be obtained, every delay raised the level of anxiety and

tension in Montrose. In order to placate those officials concerned about the viability of the proposal, P&O stipulated that:

Subject to satisfactory negotiations with the Harbour Trust they were prepared to use the whole pier facilities on the south bank of the river including the area of reclaimed land. Letters of intent were in many respects depreciated in the current North Sea oil situation but since it was impossible to get prospective users to give a contractual undertaking until the facilities could be guaranteed and the facility could not be gone ahead with until there was at least a firm prospect of customers it was essential to carry the operation forward on both sides partly on the basis of trust and partly on the basis of giving as firm undertakings as possible at each stage. P&O were therefore prepared to write a letter to the Harbour Trust which would intimate their serious intentions, subject to the negotiations of satisfactory commercial terms with the Trust to operate the whole harbour installation as planned.⁷

In turn, P&O required assurances from the Harbour Board that it would exert all possible efforts towards securing the approvals and the loan. During a meeting with P&O representatives, the Harbour Board committee revealed some of its underlying concerns over planning approvals:

The planning authority would consult urgently with the Scottish Development Department . . . The Planning Authority would also take urgent action to give full information to the East Coast Protection Committee--and any other inquirer--and every reassurance possible in an effort to avoid public inquiry procedures which could wholly upset the scheme.⁸ (Emphasis mine)

The Harbour Clerk made a trip to London to try to answer some of the questions which apparently were delaying the

Harbour Revision Order. He met with officials at the Department of the Environment, expecting only minor discussion. However, he found himself confronted with a number of officials who questioned Montrose's ability to exploit the full business potential of such a development. Some felt the Base should operate from Dundee, or at least be supervised from Dundee. This was a blow to the pride of Montrose, and especially threatening to the businessmen and Harbour Board members of the town, who now saw themselves as skilled manipulators in the world of high finance. Eventually, the Department doubters allowed themselves to be persuaded, and discussions thereafter were fairly amicable. The Harbour Revision Order was not yet granted, however.

After the County Planning Committee finally gave its approval in principle to the reclamation scheme, the Harbour Board decided that the Harbour Revision Order was merely a matter of time, and made plans to go ahead with the project. They could not afford to delay any longer. They commissioned a firm of surveyors to make a thorough survey of harbor conditions, which was completed in the autumn of 1972. One crucial passage in the surveyors' report reads as follows:

On the south side of the harbor it is proposed to

reclaim an area in the channel to the south and part of the harbour to the east of Rossie Island. The full extent of the area to be reclaimed in the first stage of development is in some doubt but would certainly include the whole of the channel area and part of the area to the east of the island and would provide a minimum area of twenty-eight acres . . . Construction of quays in this area depends upon the successful promotion of a Harbour Revision Order, and could not commence before April or May 1973 at the earliest . . . The timetable for the planning and design activities is extremely short but the critical dates can be achieved provided that all the parties involved co-operate enthusiastically and enter into the 'spirit' of the project.⁹

The dredging began early in 1973. After the landfill was in place, the sides were sheetpiled, and the basis was laid for the construction of quays. This move was later to give fuel to accusations of undue haste and the bypassing of legal procedures which arose some months later. I will deal with these accusations and their significance in terms of village response to the oil base in the latter part of this chapter. Now I will turn to some of the other aspects of offshore oil development in Montrose, in order to fill in the background needed to understand the constraints and pressures operating in the Montrose oil drama.

Montrose: The Entrepreneurial Response

The picture of Montrose's response to the prospect of oil would not be complete without some discussion of the

eager welcome given by the town's business community. Since a number of the local businessmen had both formal and informal ties to the Harbour Board and various levels of local and national government, their behavior must be considered as highly relevant to our understanding of events. Ferryden village was faced not only by a discrete group of managers and a multinational corporation, but by the heirs to the commercial elite who had dominated the village's economy since its birth.

Offshore oil presented the merchants of Montrose with new opportunities to expand their wealth and influence--opportunities which had not been available for many years. Offshore oil rigs may be regarded as little desert islands which are wholly dependent upon the mainland for survival. Supply vessels carry the components of the islands' life support systems, providing a nonstop umbilical shuttle. They transport food, water, clothing, medicine, reading material, and other human necessities, as well as oilfield equipment, fuel, and personnel. While most of the specialist equipment is provided by companies long-established in the offshore technology world, many of the basic supplies can be provided by anyone with sufficient resources to offer a good deal to the purchasers. This obvious opportunity was not lost upon the Montrose

business community. A number of local firms were already big and efficient enough to try to enter the offshore market. It is interesting to examine the way in which they did so, particularly in terms of the networks of patronage and alliance which were formed to facilitate new ventures.

After the Sea Oil Service Base plan received its endorsement by the Harbour Board, some ten new oil-related businesses sprang up in Montrose, owned and managed by local men. The men serving on their boards of directors overlapped with startling regularity. (See chart) Most of these companies thus were connected with each other by personal links, in addition to economic ones, which included mutual investment and cooperation. They shared not only the common goals of making money and establishing themselves in the offshore market system, but also the desire to restrict local participation to their own members. They formed a clique, an exclusionary circle of like-minded entrepreneurs, sharing information, influence, and capital resources to promote their endeavors. Outsiders and upstarts have been discouraged from entering the competition. A very few have managed to do so, but they have had to fight against the clique.

One individual appears to have been instrumental

in coordinating the commercial efforts of many of the town's businessmen. This was the Harbour Clerk, who was also the Montrose Town Solicitor. Time after time, when asking local entrepreneurs how their oil-related ventures had gotten started, I was told, "Well, I was having a drink at the Albert Hotel, and Ted came over and we started talking. He suggested I might be able to get together with so-and-so, and get a new business going . . ." While Ted appears to have been a crucial link between several groups of businessmen, and to have promoted aggressive participation in the offshore supply industry, his name does not appear on any of the boards-of-directors lists. He seems to have enjoyed the popularity and prestige associated with the role of go-between, or broker. (Such behavior eventually gave rise to a number of rumors concerning his ethics, and the possibility of corruption. He became the target for many people's suspicions regarding conflicts of interest, and by the time of my fieldwork, he had left Montrose to take a position in the city of Perth.) As an example of the kind of deal in which he was alleged by some to have been involved, the following extract from a newspaper article is suggestive. He is not mentioned in the article itself, but there were hints locally that he may have been responsible for transferring key information:

In 1968, Montrose Town Council was aware the town was short of housing land . . . In 1969 it was announced 100 acres of land . . . on the northern boundary, had been rezoned from agricultural to residential use . . . In 1972 a Montrose building firm, W.W. Pert, applied for planning permission in principle for an eighteen and a half acre site. They had held an option on it for several years . . . This permission was granted to W.W. Pert in July, 1972 . . . Then, in December 1973, another firm, Seacater Ltd., applied for detailed planning permission for eight houses on the same site. Permission was granted. Now two companies had planning permission. This was the situation until 1974. On July 18, W.W. Pert purchased the site from the owners for £2,090. The following day, W.W. Pert sold the site to Seacater--for £70,000 . . .¹⁰

A study of the chart accompanying this section reveals that two of the men associated with W.W. Pert are directors of Montrose Commercial Motors and Montrose Cement Castings, both of which were established around this time. These two companies are partially owned by John Lindsay & Son, which has a twenty percent interest in Seaboard Supplies, which in turn has a twenty percent share in Seacater Ltd.

The Seacater group, which includes Seacater Ltd., Seacater Development, Seawelding, Seaboard Supplies, and a company which does not appear on the chart, called Vindicall (based in Dundee), exemplifies the tight-knit nature of oil-related business enterprise in Montrose. The participating directors and originators began with local businesses based on commodities as frozen fish, salmon, soft fruit, and stationery supplies. Ted, the

Harbour Clerk, suggested that they might get together to supply their products to the rigs, for mutual benefit and expansion. With the supply boats about to become regular visitors to the port of Montrose, they had a ready access to the market. The idea was immediately popular, and the venture has proved highly successful. One of the original participants has expanded his original enterprise, and revealed plans for starting a merchant bank. (In 1978, Seacater established an office in Aberdeen.)

The fishcuring company which was shown to have played an instrumental role in Ferryden's past development has been a highly active player in the offshore game. Beginning in 1973, the company established a wholly-owned subsidiary, Johnston's Game Ltd., which was funded partly by anticipated oil-based revenues. The company also took an eighty percent interest in Seaboard Supplies, which has a twenty percent interest in Seacater, which holds a fifty-one percent interest in Seawelding. Its directors also sit on the boards of Seacater, Seawelding, Esk Foods, and Seaboard Supplies.

Another group of companies centers around the parent firm of John Lindsay & Sons, Builders Merchants. These include Ultraglide Ltd. (manufacturers of a special underwater lubricant invented by a chemist formerly

employed by Glaxo), Montrose Cement Castings, and Angus Mud Services (not on the chart). Lindsay's has an interest in the Seacater group, but the Seacater clique does not have members sitting on the Lindsay group's boards of directors. For this, and for more subtle social reasons, Lindsay is considered a rival, rather than a teammate, by the men in the Seacater group. He stands apart socially and economically, and survives because of his independent financial base and his ties to higher levels of social influence and capital.

At the other end of the entrepreneurial scale, the firm of Macrow, Ltd., stands out because of its surprising success in the face of local hostility. Macrow was the creation of a former policeman from Rossie Island, who inherited a small grocer's shop. He expanded the shop and oriented its trade to the harbor, transforming it into a ship's chandlery. He also opened up a pub not far from the docks. When the prospect of oil began to look like a reality, he decided to enter the field of offshore catering on his own. He made daily trips to the oil base to talk to the ships' captains. He went to Norway to arrange for Scandinavian delicacies to be sent to Montrose, so that he could attract the business of the Scandinavian ships. His business gives active competition to both

Seacater and Vindicall (an associated catering firm based in Dundee) and he has been excluded from the privileged circle of information and influence sharers in Montrose.

The entrepreneurial circle or clique is recognized and appreciated consciously by its own members. They like to refer to themselves in a partly humorous, partly boastful way as the Montrose Mafia. They see themselves as aggressive, forward-looking men of action, acting out the survival of the fittest in a highly competitive world. A few of them went so far as to write up a document, purporting to be a dossier in the files of S.E.M.E.N.--the Society for the Extermination of Mafia Executives in Montrose. The dossier contains capsule descriptions of the personalities and activities of the members of the Montrose Mafia. Most of the members of the boards of directors of the Seacater group, as well as a few others, are included. (Neither Lindsay nor the head of Macrow is included. Neither one plays the game by "Mafia" rules.)

By 1974, when the Sea Oil Services Base was operating, and the oil fever was still raging through Montrose, Ferryden also had seen some changes, but these were of a rather different sort. According to the local press, and to most Montrosians' version of recent history, the Ferrydeners were pleased and gratified by the oil base

development. The destruction of the waterfront, the damage to property values, and the transformation of the village's surrounding environment were all said to be of little concern to the villagers themselves. It is time now to turn to an examination of the meaning of these statements, which proved to have many ambiguities and omissions.

The Response From the Village

There proved to be a striking disparity between the ways village response was presented to me by the merchants of Montrose, and by the Ferrydeners themselves. Town businessmen, local officials, and members of the Harbour Board assured me that the Ferrydeners had been uniformly in favor of the new development, and that their views had been actively consulted from the beginning. They were sure that the villagers understood the importance of the oil base for the welfare of the greater Montrose area, and added that the one-time village foreshore, the tidal Inch Burn, had really been a foul mud flat whenever the tide was out.

Ferrydeners gave me a range of different answers. Alec, the County Councillor and leader of the old fisherfolk group in the village, recapitulated the town view with fervor. He had been a member of the Harbour Board's

liaison committee and an active promoter and spokesman for the project. When pressed, he admitted that not all the villagers agreed with his viewpoint, but claimed that the few dissenters were "Incomers, holiday-home owners . . . people with no real interest in the future of Ferryden." In his capacity as village authority and representative, he spoke with conviction, and was greatly insulted when I continued to ask the same question of other people. (By the end of my fieldwork, he would have nothing to do with me, and is reported to have stated publicly at a Community Council meeting that I was a "spy.")

The real picture proved to be extremely complicated, and explicable only in terms of village history, social structure, and continuing economic dependence upon Montrose. A good many of the villagers appeared initially to agree with Alec. They spoke enthusiastically of the number of jobs on the oil base now available to Ferrydeners. Others said that while they regretted the loss of the view, they would not stand in the way of "progress." There was, however, a slightly smaller but vocal group which maintained, with striking aptitude, that the village had been "sold down the river." Further research revealed that a surprisingly large number of Ferryden residents, both Incomers and True Ferrydeners (see Chapter Four) had felt,

and sometimes voiced, strong objections to the imposition of the oil support base on their community. Some had written bitter letters to the Planning Committee, protesting the planning proposals:

I feel that I must protest at the sacrilege which has been and is still being perpetrated against our once lovely village of Ferryden. Its natural beauty is gone forever and the damage will remain long after the planners have gone . . . My husband and I had looked forward to the time when we could retire back to Ferryden and this we did eleven years ago. We were lucky enough to purchase a house directly facing the river . . . Today, our view has gone forever, the value of the house has slumped, for we are the nearest house to what was once the river and now we are faced with the prospect of looking into the back of an unbroken line of sheds which even obscure our view of Montrose. My husband is an invalid confined permanently to the house, and the only thing which gave him pleasure was watching the bird life in our burn and the boats on the river . . .¹¹

During the course of my fieldwork, many villagers began to reveal that their enthusiasm for the support base was less than complete. A striking disparity emerged between what people felt they "ought" to say, and how they felt they had personally been affected by the development. While some expressed appreciation of the positive effects of the base on employment and local development prospects, many of the same people also admitted that they were continually disturbed by the bright lights and the noise, the all-night work, and the increased traffic near the entrance to the village. Many felt that the entire character of the

village had been transformed, and that they missed the view of the Inch Burn. Many people, despite their mixed or largely negative feelings, displayed a sense of resignation. The powers that be had made their decisions, and they were only little people in a little village. It was no good fighting the higher-ups in Montrose.

A small number of villagers were angry, and had expressed their feelings openly from the outset. They had tried to organize some collective action either to stop the development, or at least to have a voice in the specific ways in which it would affect their lives. Their efforts failed, and they were, and continue to be, labelled as crackpots, both in Montrose and in parts of Ferryden. One man kept a file of his correspondence with planning officials and government representatives, as well as clippings from area newspapers. He had written at least twenty-five letters, and had attended every possible meeting. While he was not able to affect the final development of the base, he was partially successful in two respects. He led a ratepayers' (property tax) protest, asking for a reduction in the rates based on the devaluation of private housing in the part of the village directly opposite the offices and sheds. The Regional Assessor agreed to a five percent reduction in the rates (much less

than had been asked for), but made it clear that he did so more in compensation for disturbance than because of real decline in property values. Stone, the leader of the appeal, was outraged by what he felt to be a total lack of concern for Ferryden, and of knowledge about the village itself:

To arrive at the Ferryden figure he [the Regional Assessor] had compared them with similar properties in the dockland and industrial areas of Montrose. As a result he submitted that a five percent reduction be made for the modern property and the valuation of older property remain unchanged. Commented Mr. Stone, 'You are saying that Ferryden has become a dockland area. The dockland area in Montrose has been there since medieval times. You are not comparing like with like. You are ignoring the question of change caused by the oil base to a village which was a peaceful residential unit until it was set up . . . '12

He also succeeded in setting up a special liaison committee between Ferryden and the base to discuss landscaping, noise, etc.

Many of the villagers complained about the way in which public meetings had been held. There were four or five of these meetings, called jointly by the Harbour Board and Sea Oil Services, to present the forthcoming development to Ferryden. During these meetings, slides of other onshore bases, models of the proposed base, and descriptions of the construction were offered to the public. Many of the blueprints and models appear to have been highly

technical in nature--impressive, but not necessarily comprehensible to the layman. While the Harbour officials who attended these meetings and the local newspaper which reported them all claimed that no questions went unanswered, and that no one in the audience had any serious objections, some of the Ferrydeners who were there tell it differently. They claim that a number of questions were passed by or answered falsely, and that several people raised objections to a variety of planning details. These people now feel that they were "hoodwinked," that their voices were muffled, and that the attempts to include the villagers in planning decisions via the public meetings were no more than a farce designed to satisfy government regulations.

Looking over the town newspaper's presentation of the oil base development, two themes appeared to predominate. One was the fervent promotion of the golden opportunities which oil would bring to the area. Some three to five hundred jobs were anticipated on the base itself, apart from those which would be created by the establishment of new businesses, and the expansion of old ones. Doubters and critics were dismissed as selfish and short-sighted. It was implied that no reasonable person could object to a development which would set the region back on its feet, and provide work for everyone in the village.

The second theme was more subtle, and rested upon one of the crucial features of Ferryden social organization--the Incomer/True Ferrydener distinction. All protests were identified with the Incomer group, thus robbing them of legitimacy. Alec promoted this notion within Ferryden itself, and the local press promoted it throughout the wider area. True Ferrydeners, as defined and represented by Alec, were deemed to be valid spokesmen for the village, while the rest were reduced to frivolous and selfish pleasure-seekers trying to block progress.

Each of these themes bears scrutiny. Despite frequent predictions for a plethora of jobs, only twenty Ferryden residents were employed on the base in 1976. Of these, only six were men with full-time jobs--roughly two and one-half percent of the full-time employed population of the village. The rest were women with part-time cleaning jobs in the base offices. Opportunities for female labor have not been in short supply in the Montrose area, and therefore it is doubtful that employment opportunities made any direct impact on the village economy as a whole.

The theme of the Incomer monopoly on protest is also open to question. While it is true that the most vociferous and articulate spokesmen for the opposition were Incomers (with the exception of one of the Session Clerks--

see Chapter Five), many of the petition-signers and letter-writers fell within the True Ferrydener category. Many True Ferrydeners also admitted to disliking the development when questioned directly. The further question arises of the de-legitimizing of the Incomer voice. Most of the Incomers were not part-time, holiday-home residents. They were full-time residents with substantial investments in their property, and a vested interest in the welfare of the village. The outspoken ones were, however, a comparatively middle-class group, and therefore divided from the rest by class as well as "ethnic" affiliations. In any case, the Incomer group as a whole constitutes at least fifty percent of the modern population of Ferryden, and in the oil-base context it was treated as an unruly and unreasonable minority group.

The oil development alliance focused its public relations program upon a well-defined segment of True Ferrydeners--the Old Age Pensioners. This group includes nearly one-quarter of the village population, and is also conveniently organized into a Branch of the Scottish Old Age Pensioners Association. Thus it constitutes the largest and best-organized interest bloc in the village. The OAP's were courted assiduously. They were given teas and dinners in the village primary school, tours of the oil

base, and donations to their Christmas fund. They were even taken to Aberdeen to visit the International Offshore Oil Exhibition in 1975, where each one was handed batches of glossy literature on oil rigs and drilling equipment, complete with special folders. (A number of living rooms in Ferryden have these folders proudly displayed on coffee tables.) When the Base was formally opened in 1974, Margaret Thatcher, the leader of the Conservative Party (which holds the North Angus and the Mearns Parliamentary seat) came to cut the ribbon. The Old Age Pensioners were given front-row seats, and many had their photographs taken while shaking hands with the (then) Shadow Prime Minister. At public meetings, and ceremonial occasions, the Pensioners were harangued about the need for jobs for the young people of the village, on the moral dangers of standing in the way of progress, and of the chance for Ferryden to live again, by a new adaptation to the sea.

Alec, the Councillor, was the kinsman and agemate of the Old Age Pensioners. His roles as mediator and broker were well-established and accepted on both sides of the river. While his support in the village was far from being as solid as it once had been, he could still play his part in promoting the oil development, and in convincing the villagers and townspeople about its acceptability to

Ferryden. The oil development alliance thus had a ready-made public relations system at hand: a divided village, in which one side lacked a public voice, and in which the other side was represented, willy-nilly, as eager for change.

The prevalence of these themes in published reports is consistent with the long-standing tradition of redefining Ferryden interests to suit Montrose needs. The Harbour Board, which emerges as the crucial decision-making body in the local context, was under severe pressure from the business community and from P&O to ensure the smooth acceptance and implementation of the Sea Oil Services Base. Their position can be likened to Neville Chamberlain's in the ditty:

Oh, sad is the story of Neville,
He's between the sea and the devil;
What with Hitler at Rome and the People at Home,
How can he stay on the level?

Conclusions

The explanation for the divergence between the "town" version of events, and the story told by many Ferryden residents, must be sought in the context of the conflict between town interests, as defined by the Montrose Harbour Board and the Montrose merchants, and the differing perceptions of village interests and village

identity. The Harbour Board, with its closed network of information and its autonomous decision-making powers, nevertheless was closely tied to the commercial interests of Montrose. Both the Harbour Clerk and the Board Convener (also the newspaper editor and County Councillor) were included in the list of "Mafiosi." Alec, the village representative to the County Council and Harbour Board, was not included in the list, but relied upon his many contacts in the business and bureaucratic worlds to provide him with the patronage needed to maintain his position in Ferryden. The businessmen of Montrose, particularly those who stood to gain directly by new entrepreneurial activities, wanted the oil base established as quickly as possible, to insure the success of their schemes.

P&O made it clear that such obstacles as public inquiries and prolonged planning delays could weaken their commitment to Montrose. The combination of financial pressure and the intensification of patron-client business relationships meant that Ferryden could not be allowed to interfere in the progress of the proposal. In order to circumvent this possibility, the oil development alliance launched a special public relations program, which was based upon the ideological redefinition of Ferryden. Selecting one portion of the village as the target for

their persuasive efforts, they classified the other portion as irrelevant and obstructionist. In order to do so, they manipulated the already existing split between True Ferrydeners and Incomers. With the aid of Alec (who was well aware that his constituency lay solely within the True Ferrydener group, and that even this support was beginning to weaken), they used public meetings, Old Age Pensioners' gatherings, and the media to promote and disseminate the view that Ferryden the "fishing village" was to undergo a rejuvenating "sea-change." They promised jobs, and an increased cash flow to the general populace, and asserted the progressiveness of the True Ferrydener in contrast with the selfish Incomers. That they succeeded in promoting this viewpoint is partially due to Ferryden's history as a stigmatized community. Historically, True Ferrydeners had been a despised group of people. To be publicly proclaimed as progressive and altruistic was a heady brew of praise. To be singled out as better than the hated Incomer only sweetened the taste.

As a result of this public redefinition, many of the True Ferrydeners found a vested interest in supporting its validity. Those among them who questioned its truth, or complained about the oil base too loudly, tended to be ignored or suppressed. Hence the difficulty in discovering

the extent of the ambivalence actually present in the village. The redefinition of the two parts of the village into a pro-oil base consensus of True Ferrydeners underscores the fundamentally subordinate relationship of Ferryden to the Town of Montrose. The oil promoters were able, figuratively speaking, to freeze Ferryden in time, by preserving for their own purposes the myth of Ferryden as fishing village. They were free to manipulate this idea because they were not threatening the livelihood of a real fishing population. Ferryden's foreshore held symbolic and aesthetic importance for the village, but it had not been used for fishing for many years. Thus the oil alliance was able to offer the Ferrydeners a mythical catch from the ocean, of oil wealth instead of fish.

The Sea Oil Services Base in Ferryden must be regarded as the latest development in a historically consistent and logical sequence. The village began as a laird's fishing station. It developed a more diversified fishing economy, but never an independent one. The fisherfolk were perpetually in debt, and excluded from all participation in town government until the early twentieth century, when they obtained a representative to the Town Council. They were never an official part of Montrose, moreover, being classified as belonging to the rural parish

of Craig. With the 1975 Reorganization of Local Government, they lost their minimal representation in Montrose, as the Town Council was eliminated, and local government was run from the District (formerly the County) level.

The Ferrydeners were, and to some extent continue to be, a stigmatized group. Today they suffer from an inverted form of that stigmatization in the romanticization of their history and in the play upon their sense of social inferiority which exacerbates the True Ferrydener/Incomer conflict.

FOOTNOTES

¹Minutes of the Montrose Harbour Board.

²Ibid

³Ibid

⁴Report to the Angus County Council Planning Department on the North Sea Oil Conference held in Inverness, October, 1972.

⁵Minutes of the Montrose Harbour Board, November, 1972.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Babbie Shaw & Morton, "Development of Montrose Harbour: Report to the Montrose Harbour Trustees," September, 1972.

¹⁰Sunday Post, 1975.

¹¹Letter by an Old Age Pensioner to the District Planning Committee.

¹²Dundee Courier and Advertiser, November 22, 1975.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

Summary

In the previous chapters, we have seen Ferryden's transformation from a fishing village to the site of an offshore oil support base. This transformation really began half a century ago, before North Sea oil was even dreamed of. As a community solely reliant upon fishing, Ferryden depended upon the town of Montrose, and upon one fish-marketing company in particular, for its cash, credit, and market outlet. No alternatives were available. As the Company began to contract its marketing and export operations, around the time of the First World War, many villagers were forced to seek wage labor in the town. Although occupational diversity was thrust upon them, the villagers managed to maintain their sense of community identity and distinction from Montrose. Town-dwellers were viewed with suspicion and hostility, and Ferrydeners continued to choose their friends, allies, and spouses from the village itself.

Much of Ferryden's dislike of Montrosians sprang from the locally prevalent view of fisherfolk. Fishing

villages were regarded as dirty, vice-ridden warrens, whose inhabitants' behavior and beliefs were potentially contaminating. By the same token, Ferrydeners were regarded as inferior and dangerously interbred. They were ridiculed and avoided.

Ferryden reacted to its stigmatized identity in several ways. The young boys and men made a sport out of harassing and tormenting those Montrosians unwary or unlucky enough to have crossed the bridge. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, many Ferrydeners underwent an intense period of religious revival and spiritual conversion. Villagers sought to overcome their reputations for drunkenness and profanity by embracing Christ and renouncing mundane frivolity. By allying themselves with a recognized Higher Power, they sought to transcend their dependence upon earthly overlords. They joined a Presbyterian reformist movement, which culminated in their leaving the Established Kirk altogether. They gained a wide reputation for piety and strictness, but their spiritual elevation did not lead to social elevation.

The prosperous town of Montrose, across the harbor, viewed Ferryden as a natural part of its economic hinterland, first as a source of fish, and later as a source of cheap labor in the mills, factories, and building trades.

It did not wish to take responsibility for its administration, however. Ferryden remained part of the civil parish of Craig (which also included a large, though sparsely populated farming area). From 1894 to 1929, most village social services and poor relief were administered by a Parish Council, whose membership was drawn from the well-to-do farming and landowning classes. Other Council members included the Established Kirk minister and the president of the fishing Company. (One or two Ferrydeners also sat on the Council, but examination of the meeting minutes reveals an almost total lack of active participation on their part.)

Until the Reorganization of Local Government in 1975, Ferryden sent its own elected representative to the Angus County Council. There was seldom any contest for the position. One man held it from 1948 to 1975. His main role appears to have been that of a broker, between the Montrose elite and the village, and much of his popularity depended upon his ability to distribute patronage. Since his power was limited and dependent upon his relationship to the Montrose elite, and since no other allies were available from outside the elite's domain, Ferryden remained politically isolated and encapsulated. The Montrose elite's power stemmed from its control over harbor

trade. The town became a regional center, the funnel for the produce of a wide hinterland. By the eighteenth century, its mercantile class had established economic hegemony over the farms and villages of the region. Political power accompanied economic power. Through the Town and County Councils, the Harbour Board, and through less formal channels, the merchants of Montrose came to dominate local decision-making processes. Today, as in the past, they form a clique of insiders, privy to information and patron-client networks which bolster their position. This combination of economic and political leverage has been reinforced by social and kinship ties, some of which go back in time for several generations. The social coherence of the Montrose elite, a coherence evolved through time and shared experience, enhances the elite's ability to adapt to new opportunities in the modern world of oil.

When the possibilities for offshore oil support services began to appear on Montrose's horizon, the commercial elite made sure that no local opposition would balk their ambitions. When it became clear that the Ferryden foreshore was the only feasible site for the proposed oil base, the Harbour Board confidently offered the site to the developers, well before the village could

be consulted. In order to forestall possible delays and confrontations, however, they employed several public relations tactics. The town newspaper immediately launched a series of articles on the benefits of oil development to the "community." The village representative was persuaded to promote the base to his constituency. Public doubters were ridiculed or ostracized. Attempts to organize opposition from within the village were labelled the work of outsiders and troublemakers. By the time the landfill was in place, and the oil base facilities in operation, most Montrose memories appear to have been edited. According to those on the north side of the river, the entire village of Ferryden had been enthusiastic from the start. However, as we have seen, this was not entirely true. Many villagers had complained about the change in their environment. Appeals to lower property taxes and to ameliorate the aesthetic damage had been launched. The village representative had lost many of his supporters, and many villagers felt they had been cheated and tricked.

It now remains for this concluding chapter to assess the significance of recent developments, and of their public handling, for Ferryden's future. To do so, we must examine the concept of community and the operation of power in this context of long-term dependency and

social vulnerability.

The Community of Ferryden

"Community" is a rather nebulous concept, employed by anthropologists and others in different ways in differing situations. Like the institutions of marriage and religion, it carries strong connotations of universality. We seek for communities in dense, urban centers, as well as in dispersed rural settlements. In general, our criteria for community include some degree of territorial unity, regular interaction among members, and a basis of common interest. Because our criteria are so vague, however, it becomes very difficult to identify community boundaries. In Frankenberg's volume on British communities, he begins with a definition of community given by MacIver and Page:

. . . an area of social living marked by some degree of social coherence. The bases of community are locality and community sentiment.¹

This definition appeals to our intuitive, colloquial sense of what a community ought to be, but it does not help us to distinguish between one community, and another contiguous one. It also fails to address the problem of disagreement from within. If Montrose chooses to claim Ferryden as part of its community, and Ferryden, or at least a good portion

of it, rejects that claim, who is right? We cannot pretend to resolve the philosophical and methodological issues posed by the problem of community boundaries. However, boundary ambiguity must be recognized as a problem which lies near the heart of the social processes surrounding and engulfing Ferryden.

The location of the Sea Oil Services Base is variously placed at Montrose, at Ferryden, or at Ferryden, Montrose, both by the local press, and in promotional literature. This is not mere carelessness or accident. While it may or may not reflect conscious intent, it does indicate the extent to which Ferryden's community status has been cast into doubt, and the extent to which the oil base has become a catalyst for this ambiguity. Physically, the base lies closest to the village. Only a few yards of road separate the villagers' front doors from the chain link fence. When the base's address is given as Montrose, Ferryden's existence is ignored. When it is placed at Ferryden, Montrose, the village is subsumed as a district of the town. When the base is located at Ferryden, however, the village is restored to separate community status. These symbolic alternatives reflect a new confusion over the identity of Ferryden, as well as the deliberate attempts to manipulate that confusion. What is Ferryden

today, and what will it become tomorrow?

Before the decline of the fishing industry after the First World War, Ferryden's boundaries were easily fixed. Territory, primary relationships, and occupation coincided almost exactly. The village fit well within Arensberg's and Kimball's definition of a community as a "structured social field of interindividual relationship unfolding over time,"² as well as the unit for containing and transmitting culture. Ferryden fifty years ago was an occupational community, comparable to those described by Lummis³ for East Anglian, or by Horobin⁴ for Hull fishing communities. It had a four-dimensional texture. One belonged to the fishing village because one's parents had belonged to the fishing village. Father, grandfather, and great-grandfather alike were fishermen, and their wives mended nets, baited lines, and sold fish. All the neighbors were fisherfolk. The people one met in the pub, in the Kirk, or on the street were also one's workmates on the shore or in the boats.

When Ferryden was an occupational community, community sentiment or loyalty was also unambiguous. One could not simultaneously belong to Ferryden and to Montrose, because Ferrydeners were considered inferior by Montrosians. One could not simultaneously belong to Ferryden and to the

landward parish of Craig, because the farming folk thought fisherfolk were "queer," or because "the corn and the cod dinna mix."⁵ (See Chapter Three.) Administration might come from Craig Parish, but not community membership. Like it or not, a Ferrydener belonged to the fisherfolk, just as 'a fisher laddie needs a fisher lassie.' There was no one else to trust.

For most of its life, Ferryden was subservient to, but culturally distinct from, Montrose. Local political leaders were seen as unavoidable and onerous, but not ideologically legitimate. It was acknowledged that the powers that be could do as they wished, but Ferrydeners could and did grumble and complain about it. This antagonism was most acute when Ferryden's dependence upon the Company was greatest. At the turn of the century, the Company symbolized oppression and entrapment. A fisherman was only independent when he was out at sea, and then only in his mind. The shore was a place of bondage. The sea represented autonomy, the ability to make decisions on one's own. Thus within the village, fisherfolk status was a source of pride. All fisherfolk were equal before their God.

Today, Ferryden is a divided village. Roughly half of the inhabitants are Incomers, whether affines or

strangers, who do not share the fisherfolk heritage. Most of the remaining True Ferrydeners are elderly, or at least middle-aged. Though a good number of these have never actually fished for a living, they cling to their fisherfolk identity as a cultural lifeline to self-esteem. They ostracize, ignore, or at best tolerate, the Incomers in their midst. Today's True Ferrydeners maintain their community boundaries by deliberately excluding Incomers. Thus, old Ferryden survives in shrunken form, its geographical base eroded by the houses of the Incomers, and overshadowed by the oil base on the foreshore.

The Incomers, meanwhile, show no signs of coalescing into a community of their own. Most Incomers have lived in Ferryden for less than a generation. Many appear to have formed an active resentment of the village, because the True Ferrydeners clearly repudiate their intrinsic right to be there. Many are Council house dwellers, and may be shifted to different Council dwellings outside the village in the near future. The few private house owners who appear committed to the village life have no common meeting ground, and thus far, the oil base development has failed to provide an enduring basis for continuing social interaction.

These two factors--the insularity of the True

Ferrydeners, and the disorganization of the Incomers-- have made Ferryden especially vulnerable to manipulation from without, and help to explain why the village's response to the oil base proposal appeared so acquiescent. Ferryden lacked the material resources for community autonomy, such as control over land, labor, or capital. Half the village population had retreated into a defensive shell which prohibited cooperation with Incomers, and the Incomers were cut off, not only from the True Ferrydeners, but from each other. Now it is time to look at the ways in which the Montrose elite reinforced this condition by using economic and political control to exercise social and cultural power.

The Montrose Elite
and the Hierarchy of Power

As we saw in the preceding chapters, the Montrose commercial elite has dominated regional economics and politics for many years. Its members have exploited the vegetable, mineral, aquatic, and marine resources of North Angus to build a solid commercial base. By controlling land, river, and shore, they have also wielded power over the region's human resources. Small crofters and craftsmen sold their goods in Montrose markets, farmers sold their crops and hired laborers at town fairs. Fisherfolk sold

their fish through Montrose middlemen, and were finally tied to the Company, to which they were perpetually in debt. When the fishermen could no longer afford to fish, they supplied labor for the town's industries, or left the region altogether.

Through centuries of long-distance trade with Baltic and Mediterranean ports, the merchants of Montrose grew accustomed to foreign markets and large-scale transactions. They became adept at taking advantage of new opportunities. This history of entrepreneurial expertise has served them well in recent years. When the benefits of offshore oil became available, the businessmen of Montrose managed to keep out competitors from the neighboring cities of Dundee and Aberdeen. By providing the oil base operators with needed equipment and supplies, by establishing new ventures or expanding old ones, the merchants of Montrose maintained their "power domain." According to Adams:

A power domain . . . is a relationship wherein one party has greater control over the environment of a second than the second does over that of the first . . . In terms of power, success in a confrontation means that one so tactically uses his power that he eliminates the other or superimposes himself in a domain over the other . . .⁶

The issue of power is central to our analysis of Ferryden's relationship to Montrose, and of Ferryden's

community integrity.

Throughout village history, Montrose has taken its power over Ferryden largely for granted. As long as the villagers were inextricably bound by town needs and demands, their responses to elite-controlled decisions were either predictable or of little consequence. They were merely ignorant fisherfolk, after all. Recalcitrant workmen could be replaced by laborers from the town, and impertinent fishermen could have their boats repossessed. Insolent paupers could be denied relief.

By 1972, many things had changed. Not only were new demands to be made upon the village, but village social structure was no longer a known quantity. Both the Incomers and the True Ferrydeners contained potentially unstable components. The True Ferrydeners were dominated by a large group of retired elderly, who might have strenuous objections to the transformation of their village. These people received Old Age Pensions from the national government. They owned their own homes, or rented Council houses. Thus their livelihoods no longer depended upon Montrose patronage. Many of them were deeply attached to their maritime environment, and, as Old Age Pensioners, they could arouse public sympathy.

The Incomers, meanwhile, included a bloc of

property owners who were relatively well-off and articulate, as well as more knowledgeable about the local planning process. They could resent the impact of an offshore oil base upon the village where they had chosen to live, and they could lodge formal objections. Substantial delays resulting from such objections and inquiries would weaken the Harbour Board's position vis-a-vis P&O . In the high finance, high pressure world of energy development, time is a crucial and very expensive commodity.

Evidence brought out in Chapter Six indicates that the Montrose Harbour Board and its allies feared the possible development of a confrontation arena between themselves and the village when the oil base proposals were made public. In order to ensure the maintenance of their power domain, and to protect their vested interests, they had to forestall opposition before it could become a viable threat. They had to make sure that the Ferrydeners could not undermine the town's position within the multinational hierarchy of oil. The exercise of power between Montrose and Ferryden now involved levels of social, political, and economic integration far beyond the reach of most of the local participants. The Montrose elite was caught between the oil world's stringent demands, and the unpredictable reactions of a small village.

The Montrose elite's power over Ferryden was not only well established, it was also pervasive and diffuse. It penetrated the fabric of social and cultural organization, as well as dominating political and economic institutions. Because of this many-sided realm of power, the town's oil promoters were able to manipulate village response with great success. Ferryden's weaknesses became Montrose's strengths, and the village's former strengths became the town's weapons.

The Confrontation Which Never Occurred

At the beginning of this dissertation, I presented a mystery. Had a confrontation over the oil base arisen between Ferryden and Montrose? How valid were the clues which led me to suspect this confrontation? Why did members of the Montrose elite deny the existence of such a confrontation? I concluded that a confrontation had indeed arisen, and that the ambiguity of the clues was itself a signpost to the solution. The Montrose elite had exercised its power in a subtle way. It had employed cultural and ideological tactics which not only undermined opposition, but which enabled its members to rewrite history.

Despite the insistence of Montrose informants,

I found that many Ferrydeners had opposed the oil base. They resented the ways in which their village had been treated, and were bitter over their inability to gain concessions from the Harbour Board and the Sea Oil Services Company. These villagers had thought and acted almost entirely as individuals, however. Little collective action had been attempted. Those who did speak out were publicly derided, defined as outside agitators with dubious motives. The majority of opponents either wrote private letters of objection, or fumed in silence. Thus the confrontation between town and village remained more latent than active. Once the oil base was in place, the victorious elite was able to retire from the battle, leaving the Ferryden opponents frustrated and helpless.

Let us summarize the social and cultural features of Ferryden which permitted the development to advance so smoothly. Ferryden was a divided village. Incomers and True Ferrydeners did not trust each other. The Incomers were disorganized, lacking a basis of communal solidarity which could support a concerted effort. They could, and some did, circulate petitions and lodge official objections to the development proposals. However, their small numbers and lack of allies rendered their efforts futile. On the other hand, True Ferrydeners were a predominantly

elderly group, less familiar with the public planning process, and more accustomed to domination from Montrose. They resented this domination, but focused their anger on the past. Rather than admit to any immediate hostility toward the modern-day elite, they repeated stories of old injuries and exploitation. The Old Age Pensioners' Lunch Club was a regular forum for such recitations. However, attempts to draw upon contemporary grievances were often met with looks of annoyance or bewilderment. Discussion of politics, leadership, and public action were generally confined to the pre-war past. This was not due to senility. I believe that the primary reasons for this avoidance of current issues lie in Ferryden's sociocultural development as a stigmatized and dependent community.

Open discussion of controversial subjects within this small and threatened group of people is felt to be dangerous. Outside pressures upon the True Ferrydener community are no longer balanced by such cultural resources as occupational unity, endogamy, or even the promise of future generations. Thus private differences must remain private. True Ferrydeners today place a high value upon public self-effacement. They do not trust anyone who has willingly thrust himself into the public eye. In part, this is due to the importance which Ferrydeners place upon

equality and conformism within the village. Since the decline of their fishing base, Ferrydeners have generally channeled protest into such symbolic institutions as the Kirk, and into protected institutions such as the secret ballot. They could safely use these channels to defy the established elite without endangering their own social unity. However, public rifts within the village, such as the 1929 battle between the United Free and the Established Kirks, left ineradicable residues of bitterness which have persisted beyond the lives of most of the participants. In order to maintain any basis for continued community identity, True Ferrydeners hold firm to twin ideals of internal solidarity and of privacy. Even such legitimate and respected offices as those of Session Clerk and County Councillor have in recent years required social mavericks, people who did not mind being shut out from the common round of gossip and trust.

One consequence of this distrust of leaders has been a lack of competition for leadership positions. One man held the County Council seat (with its attendant membership on the Harbour Board) for twenty-seven years. During this time he formed firm clientship ties to the Montrose elite. His constituents needed help in employment, housing, and social services, and the most efficient

means of helping them lay with his patrons in Montrose. When the oil base was proposed, the elite trusted him to promote the development within the village, to appeal to his constituents' desire for progress and social respectability. He believed that his position, and the survival of the True Ferrydener community, depended upon his efforts.

By supporting their representative on the oil base issue, the True Ferrydeners maintained a show of public unity. They also gained an unprecedented opportunity to improve their image in the eyes of Montrose. They could demonstrate their commitment to the modern world, without sacrificing their special, "fisherfolk" status. Those True Ferrydeners who refused to go along risked social confrontations with their peers. Thus, egalitarianism from within helped to reinforce domination from without.

The True Ferrydeners were the victims of conflicting desires. They wanted their village, their community, and their fisherfolk identity to survive. They also wanted respectability, higher public status, and general prosperity. While some felt that Ferryden could not survive the imposition of the oil base on its one-time foreshore, others believed that only a new maritime resource could save the village from slow extinction. Most, perhaps, were ambivalent.

The oil base promoters played upon this ambivalence. They promised that Ferryden would enter a new era as an oil base village. They promised that the village's young folk would be able to find work close to home, that the village would be famed for its public spirit as well as for its glamorous new industry. They avoided discussions of planning control, or of actual employment prospects. They ignored responses from the Incomers, thereby convincing many True Ferrydeners that Ferryden was still their village, that the reins of the future were in their hands. They reified the True Ferrydeners' myths about themselves and about the nature of the modern-day village. They promised change without disruption, innovation without side effects. During the crucial development phase of 1972 through 1974, they invested a great deal of time and effort in this symbolic manipulation of the True Ferrydeners' values, beliefs, and wishes.

While the tactics of the Montrose elite were largely symbolic and ideological, it must not be forgotten that their local power base was material, and founded upon years of economic control. They were forced into this special public-relations effort by their own inferior position in the oil development hierarchy. They drew upon what Adams calls the "socio-psychological"⁷ aspect of power

in order to implement their decisions quickly, believing that "time and oil wait for no man."

Some General Implications

The story of offshore oil-related developments in Ferryden and Montrose is important for several reasons. Firstly, offshore oil exploitation is becoming increasingly significant in the current search for energy, and it is making demands upon coastal communities all over the world. Secondly, while the specific local events in Ferryden and Montrose were unique, they were constrained by the demands of a world stretching far beyond Scotland, Britain, or the West. These constraints were imposed by a highly integrated world-wide economy, and are thus pertinent to developments in communities everywhere. Thirdly, the crucial social issue in the Ferryden/Montrose arena is power, a phenomenon which continues to pose methodological and analytical problems for anthropologists and others.

There is a crisis in world oil, although it is debatable whether there is actually a current physical shortage. Much of the world's oil reserves are located in politically unstable or hostile areas, and OPEC's stringent price demands have stimulated exploration in new territories. Norway, New England, Mexico and many other

areas are facing problems engendered by offshore oil exploration and production. While each coastal community responds to development according to its own particular needs and organization, there are certain uniformities which limit the range of response. Offshore oil requires massive capital input and highly sophisticated technology. Thus the multinational oil corporations, their subsidiaries, and certain specialized oil service companies dominate the field.⁸ Even large national governments cannot compete with them. Most of these companies are American, with a few from Britain, Scandinavia, France, Canada, and elsewhere. The technology they employ puts limits upon the kinds of communities and harbors selected for development, the type and amount of labor required, and the opportunities for local entrepreneurs. Most managerial and skilled personnel are drawn from a common pool, located in the companies' home bases.

Development processes, whether for oil or any other commodity or service, take place within a world-wide context. Multinational corporations can be seen as constituting a nascent higher level of socio-cultural integration, one which links populations, communities, and governments together in a dynamic, asymmetrical system of production, exchange, and decision-making. In analyzing development

processes in any part of the world, we must take account of local, national, and supra-national organizations and alliances. In Ferryden and Montrose, for example, we saw that the Harbour Board's actions were in part determined by the demands of P&O, which was itself constrained by the international market for oil production goods and services.

Beyond the issue of oil, therefore, lies the issue of social power. In the case of Ferryden and Montrose we see a vivid example of the relationship between power and control over resources. We have seen that the history of power in the region was related to control over land, water, and their natural products. Today, the power drama is still centered on control over land and water as part of the petroleum process. This drama is not unique to Ferryden, to Scotland, or to oil. It is being played out in many forms throughout the world, wherever a scarce resource is controlled by an elite. However, while the basis of power is material control, its exercise can be far more subtle and obscure. Herein lies the special value of the Ferryden/Montrose case. We can see here not only the raw facts of power, but the ways in which the powerful use history, ideology, and myth to maintain their position. In adapting to new opportunities and demands, the merchants of Montrose have insured that while the

world changes, they will remain.

FOOTNOTES

¹R.N. MacIver and C.H. Page, Society: An Introductory Analysis (London: Macmillan, 1961) quoted in Ronald Frankenberg, Communities in Britain: Social Life in Town and Country (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1969) p. 15.

²Conrad Arensberg and Solon T. Kimball, Culture and Community (New York, 1965) p. 17.

³Trevor Lummis, "The Occupational Community of East Anglian Fishermen: an Historical Dimension Through Oral Evidence," British Journal of Sociology Vol. 28 No. 1, March 1977.

⁴Horobin, "Community and Occupation in the Hull Fishing Industry," British Journal of Sociology Vol. 8 No. 4, pp. 343-356.

⁵J.R. Coull, "Fisheries in the North-East of Scotland Before 1800," p. 23.

⁶Richard Adams, "Power Domains, Levels of Articulation, Brokers, and Career Mobility Systems in Complex Society," paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, 1968, p. 5.

⁷Richard Adams, Energy and Structure: A Theory of Social Power (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975) p. 10.

⁸See Robert Engler, The Brotherhood of Oil: Energy Policy and the Public Interest (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977).

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