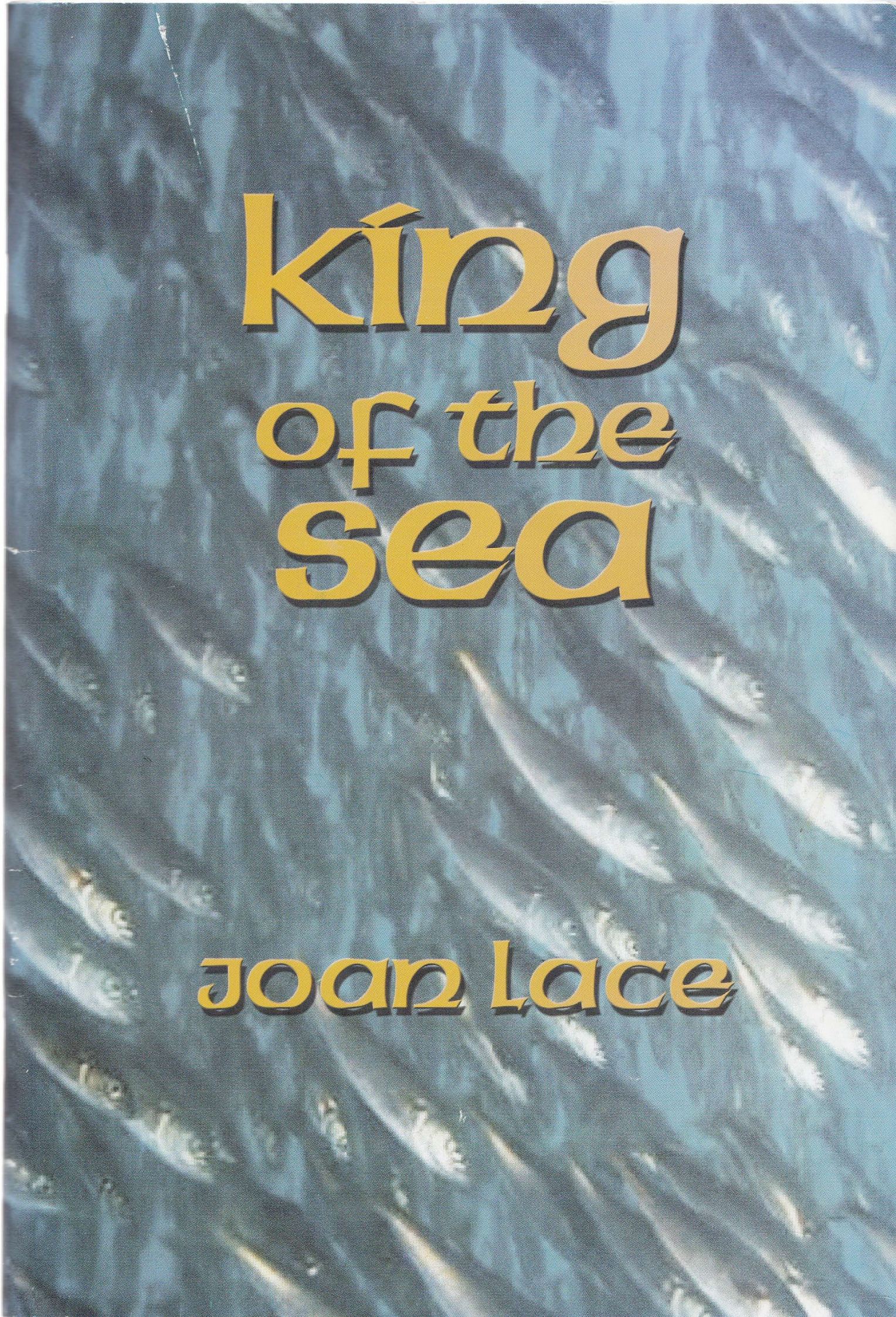

King
of the
Sea
Joan Lace

the story of a peel family

For Marion, Cathy, Juan and Peter, to whom I often used to talk about life in Peel when I was a child, and so they asked me to write down my memories. The fishing industry, fish shop and kipper yard, were a dominant part of my childhood, so I have recorded what I remember about them, and have also tried to imagine what life was like in Peel for my grandparents and their family, before I was born.

I have endeavoured to be as accurate as possible, but some snatches of the past tend to be more vivid than others, and memory is not always infallible.

I would like to thank my daughters Marion and Cathy for all their help and encouragement, and also pay tribute to my cousin, the late Marian Hart of Olympia, Washington, for letters and details of the Moore family in the U.S.A.

Joan Lace.
Nov. 2006

To Marion & John, with love from Mum Joanie xx
June 2007.

index

chapter 1. the moores and the boydes.

chapter 2. peel and religion.

chapter 3. peel at the end of the 19th century.

chapter 4. moore family from 1909.

chapter 5. 23 michael street.

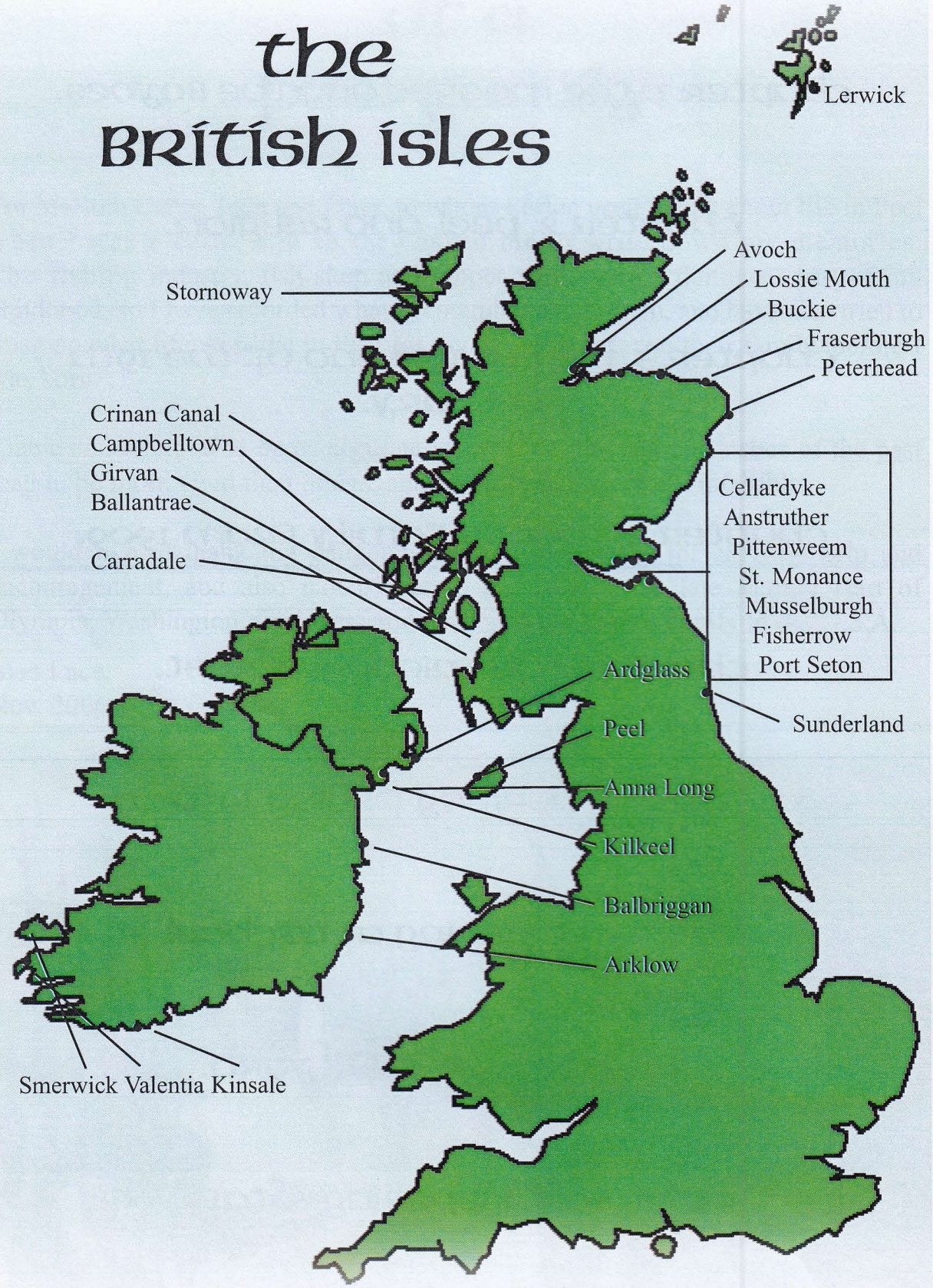
chapter 6. herring fishing 1930-40.

chapter 7. kippering at michael st.

chapter 8. kelsalls yard.

chapter 9. kippering - staff.

chapter 10. ending.


the
British Isles
Lerwick
Avoch
Lossie Mouth
Buckie
Fraserburgh
Peterhead
Stornoway
Crinan Canal
Campbelltown
Girvan
Ballantrae
Carradale
Cellardyke
Anstruther
Pittenweem
St. Monance
Musselburgh
Fisherrow
Port Seton
Ardglass
Sunderland
Peel
Anna Long
Kilkeel
Balbriggan
Arklow
Smerwick Valentia Kinsale

chapter 1

A short moment before the sun sinks below the horizon,
A gentle moment before the evening takes its course,
To remember those forgotten things
now lost in the dust of former times.

(Translation from the Welsh poem by Waldo Williams, from the obit. of George Howell Guest, born in Bangor-organist and choirmaster for 40 years at St. John's Cambridge).

the moores

On New Years Eve in 1881, in Peel Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Thomas Moore, a 21 year old fisherman, son of Thomas Moore, sailor, and his wife Ann, married Catherine Ellen Boyde, aged 24, a seamstress, daughter of William Boyde farm worker, and his wife Mary, and they started married life sharing the Boyde family home in Douglas Street, and they were my grandparents.

Great–grandfather Thomas Moore was born in Peel in 1829, and married Ann Keig, born 1830, in 1858. Thomas "sailed foreign" for 15years, and there are records of the ships he sailed in as an able seaman, and their destinations, dating from 1853 to 1869. They vary from 1 month to the south of Ireland, 4 months to Brazil, 6 months to the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. His seamanship and character varied from good to very good.

By 1870, he and Ann had 5 children, and perhaps tired of the sea and the long absences from home, came ashore and worked in one of the shipyards, as a carpenter.

As well as Grandpa Thomas, born 1859, there was Robert James (b.1861) a bachelor, who also "sailed foreign". He caught tropical fever, and left the sea and lived at home, and died aged 46.

Another son, Ceasar Keig Moore (b. 1870) married Lizzie Young, and emigrated to South Africa, and worked in the mines (gold?) there but died aged 35. Annetta Jane Moore (b. 1867) married Jim Cubbon, but died aged 31, and her sister Catherine Alice (b.1864) brought up her children Annie and Eddie Cubbon, and their baby Nettie was reared by the Cubbons. So by 1907 of their 5 children, only Thomas and Alice were alive. Ann died in 1892 and Thomas in 1910.

Great Grandmother Ann Keig Moore and her Daughter Alice

L-R. Eddie Cubbon, A Visitor, Annie Cubbon, Aunt Alice and seated Great Grandpa Thomas Moore

memories of great - aunt alice moore

Aunt Alice never married. She had been an infant school teacher, and lived in West View, and looked after her father and brother as well as teaching, first in Bride and then in Peel. When her sister Annetta Cubbon died, she reared two of her three children. Brother Thomas (Grandpa) and herself didn't always agree, and I remember them arguing-- mainly about local politics. Alice was a strong lady and the Moores did seem to be a bit argumentative.

Thomas and Ann's grand-daughter Annie Moore who emigrated to Seattle said in 1971-----
"Grandfather Moore was a ships carpenter, and Uncle Robbie and himself spent their retirement making models of ships he had sailed on. Every Sunday morning, Grandma sent Grandpa over with some of Mrs Tasker's knobs (Manx knobs) for us. We loved Grandma Moore-- she was very good to us"

the Boydes

Catherine Ellen Moore was the daughter of William Boyde (b. 1816) and his wife Mary (b.1818) nee Teare, and they came from Andreas and Ballaugh, and were married in Andreas Church in 1850, but by the time of Catherine Ellen's marriage, were living in Douglas Street Peel.

Round about 1860, William and Mary had been evicted from their croft at Ballacurn, on the slopes of Slieau Cuirn, part of the Bishop's Demesne in the parish of Ballaugh. Bishop Powys (1854-77) who was unpopular and "failed to understand the Manx people and their Clergy" (Canon John Gelling) decided to take over several small farms and crofts on his estate and make them into one large farm. His steward was ordered to evict the crofters, and family tradition maintains that Mary, defiant, refused to leave, but was forcibly removed together with her husband William and their children, the youngest was just a babe in arms. Forever after, they vowed to have nothing to do with the Church of England, and became devout Wesleyans. William was said to be a quiet peaceful man, very musical, being often called upon to "raise the tune" at Chapel meetings.

The family came to Peel where William found work as a farm labourer at Knockaloe-beg, walking there each day, and later Mary became a midwife and layer out of the dead.

Great Grandmother Mary Boyde
1818-1900

Great Grandfather William Boyde
1816-1887

Grandma Catherine Ellen Boyde
Aged 19

Great Aunt Ann Jane Boyde

Their Children were:

Anne Jane (b. 1851)
Margaret "Maggie" (b. 1852) Hannah "Emma" (b. 1853)
William (b. 1855) Catherine Ellen (b. 1856).
James Henry (b. 1858) and Mary Ann (b. 1860) both of whom died young.

the Boyde aunts

Grandma (Catherine Moore nee Boyde) had three sisters Emma (Mrs Wildman) who lived in Liverpool, and Maggie and Jane who were unmarried and lived in Peel. One of them had been a lady's maid and was quite genteel but the other was more down to earth. They kept a boarding house in Stanley Terrace, and later in Mount Morrison. As well as summer visitors, they took long term lodgers—people sent over from England for their health, as the bracing air was said to be beneficial. Stories were told about "remittance men" who lived in rooms in the town- perhaps retired or discharged army men living on a small pension, or "black sheep" from good families in England, pensioned off to keep out of the way.

Maggie and Jane didn't always see eye to eye, and the tale is told of nephews Fred and Percy being summoned to help them move furniture at Spring-Cleaning time. Maggie would order something to be moved to another room, but when Jane found out, she would demand that it be put back, so the boys spent a lot of time and muscle power, humping furniture up a couple of flights of stairs- only to have to take them back down again!

But the Aunts were good to their nephews and nieces, and the youngest boy Percy (my Father) remembered, as he got older, being allowed to have a bath in their new bathroom—a luxury indeed. Their oldest nephew William wrote many years later, that Maggie and Jane were good religious women, who were kind to their mother.

Percy also said that Mr Norton, the founder of the famous Norton motorbikes, was once staying in an adjoining house at T.T.time, and he was asked to clean Mr. Norton's bike and was paid sixpence for doing it. What riches and what an honour.

From 1907-11, racing was on the original course, from Ballacraine to Kirk Michael, down the coast road and round the devil's elbow to Peel, and back to St Johns, a round trip of 15 miles, and I don't suppose the roads would be very good in those days.

It is interesting that of the four Boyde sisters, Grandma Catherine lived the longest. Jane and Maggie never married, Emma (Hannah) married and had one daughter also called Maggie—but Catherine, who had twelve children, and not the easiest of husbands, outlived them all. She must have been a strong woman both mentally and physically.

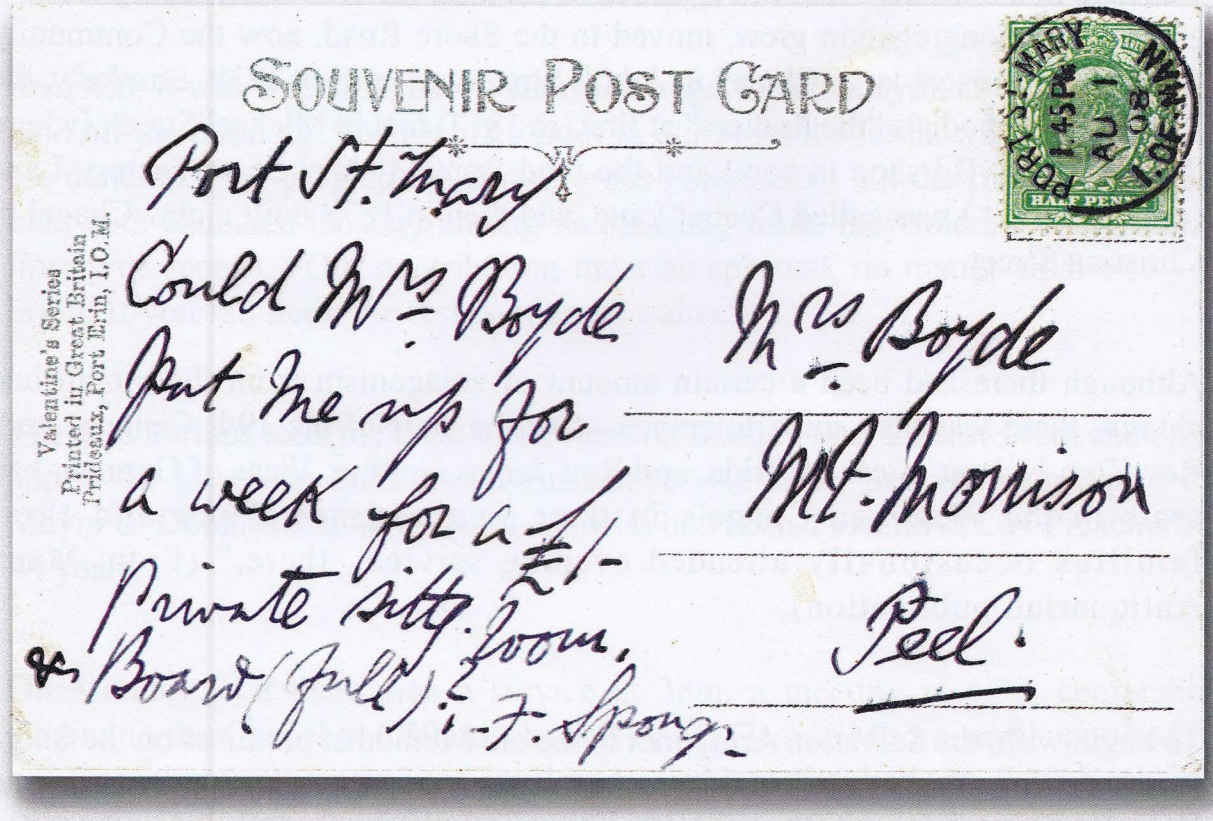
Young Ladies
Ann Jane and Margaret Boyde.

Older now, outside their Boarding House. Creg Malin View. Mount Morrison.

Their Brother William and his Wife in Seattle.

Great Aunt Emma and Grandma Catherine

TT Bikes at Kirk Michael. 1913
Tom Peek on a Peerless and W. Creyton Ariel



The Aunts were kept busy.In August1908 - £1a week for full board and a private sitting room!

chapter two

peel and religion

I imagine that in 1881 Peel would have been quite a clannish little place. Many people were related either by blood or by marriage and had a common background. There would be a good community spirit, with people relying on each other in times of illness or hardships. They would certainly know each others business, and it was said that there were some who "wouldn't be wanting to know anything for the want of asking"!

The ruined Cathedral and ancient round tower were constant reminders of their Christian heritage, as well as St. Peter's Church in the Market Place, which at one time served both Peel and the Parish of Patrick. The foundation stone of the new St. German's Church "on the edge of town" was laid in 1884 and it was consecrated in 1893.

Methodism was well established. The first meeting of the Wesleyan Methodists was held in a Summer House in a garden in Mount Morrison overlooking the bay, and as their congregation grew, moved to the Shore Road, now the Community Centre. The present large Chapel in Atholl Street was built in 1839. Similarly, the Primitive Methodists "the Ranters" at first (in 1813) met in Michael Street, (where the Electricity Bd shop is now) and the road from Michael St. to Factory Lane (now Beach St.) was called Chapel Lane, and then in 1878 built a new Chapel in Christian Street.

Although there had been a certain amount of antagonism from the established church, there was also some tolerance---"At the start of the 19th Century, both Rev. Tom Nelson, Vicar of Bride, and Rev. James Gelling, Vicar of German, had seats in the Wesleyan Chapels in their own parishes. They and their families occasionally attended evening service there." (From Manx Antiquarian publication).

To begin with, the Salvation Army met in the old Methodist premises on the Shore Road, sharing with the Rechabites, and later moved to Douglas St. (Dearden and Hassell). They were a familiar sight distributing the "War Cry", and their band led many a parade. Unfortunately, they are no longer a presence in Peel.

Religion in Peel

Extracts from **Peel Primitive Methodist Church Handbook and Souvenir of the Jublilee Celebrations 1878—1928**, held on May 20th-21st. (price sixpence).

"In 1874, the Quarterly meeting of the Circuit, gave Peel Primitive Methodist Church, permission to raise money by all prudent means, for the erection of a new Chapel, as due to overcrowding, increased accommodation was needed."

"The new church was opened in 1878, and cost roughly £3,000 and could seat 700 people. The members were mostly fishermen and their families, earning a precarious living, and church collection never reached a pound in those days, and farthings were common coins in the plate. The Minister's salary was £36 a year and the Chapel-Keeper's 25/-. Candles were the mode of lighting, and the balance in hand was usually two pence, but was often on the debit side. Yet the trustees took the risk, and many people made sacrifices to raise the first £1000. There were 27 original Trustees, 6 of whom were Local Preachers. Exhorters were J. Corlett and P. Moughtin." It is interesting to note that all but one of these 27 had Manx surnames.

In 1928, it was recorded that "a short time ago the last payment of the debt was paid off the building. Their work abides in our present church, which contains all the material for a progressive and rigorous community. All the fundamentals are held with unabated tenacity among its officials, while they tolerate considerable liberty of speech. Our contribution must be spiritual, no matter what else you bring. If you fail here, the rest is of small value."

The celebrations took the form of services on Sunday May 20th at 11am and 6pm, and in the afternoon there was a musical service under the chairmanship of the Mayor of Douglas, Mr Wm. Quirk J.P. who had been a Primitive Lay Preacher for 44 years.

On Monday 21st there was a service at 3pm, a meeting at 4.30, community singing in the Chapel at 6.30pm, chaired by Mr George Moore, and supported by no less than 10 Reverend gentleman, which finished at 9.20 with the Benediction. People must have had stamina in those days. Sadly, this once thriving community church closed in 1960.

Around the early and middle part of the 20th century, Methodism became very influential, and it has been said, that to attain any position of importance in the Island, one needed to be a Methodist!

There was a small Roman Catholic community who after several years of veiled opposition, managed to acquire land at the bottom of Patrick Street, to build St Patrick's Church.

Nearly everybody attended either one or other of the churches, which were the centre of much of the social life, and their Christian spirituality was interwoven with the old Celtic beliefs and pagan customs, to say nothing of the fairy folklore which built up for the expanding tourist trade. But when people became members of the Chapel, they were supposed to put all that "boghtynid" behind them, so Thomas and Catherine never spoke of the old superstitions, and didn't seem to know any Manx Gaelic. One man who had a charm for getting rid of styes, became a Methodist Local (Lay) Preacher, and ever after, refused to use the charm as it was considered to be witchcraft.

In the days before adequate street lighting, with mostly lamp or candle-light in the houses, the countryside would be pitch black on moonless nights, and the scream of the wind on stormy nights could be quite unnerving. So with a drop of "jough" it is understandable that tales of ghosts and bugganes would be told, and the old customs observed in order to keep the "li'l people" happy and ensure good luck. Fortunately Sophia Morrison of Peel recorded many of these old fairy-stories in her book "Manx Fairy Tales," the second edition of which was published in1929.

pubs

In the early years of the 19th century, there were a large number of pubs and alehouses in Peel, a lot of them selling home-brewed ale. But by the end of the century, there weren't nearly so many. In 1829 for a population of 3,612 there were 43 pubs and 4 breweries in Peel, 3 times more than in 1889. I remember that Father referred to the Ballaquane road as the Brewery Road.

I wonder if the decline in the number of pubs was partly due to the Methodist tradition of total abstinence and "signing the pledge" at the Band of Hope? Many Methodists belonged to the Rechabite Friendly Society, a branch of which existed in the Island up to about 1994. Cousin Tom Moore tells me that Rechabites were non-denominational and teetotal. From Jeremiah 35:-

"Go to members of the Rechabite clan. . . and offer them some wine. . .But they answered "we do not drink wine"

chapter three

peel at the end of the 19th century

the sea and fishing

Around the time Thomas and Catherine were married (1881), the main occupation in Peel was the fishing and the associated trades of boat building, rope and sail making, net making and barking (preserving and dyeing the new white nets brown) and there would be ships' chandlers, blacksmiths, carpenters and masons, coal merchants, hauliers, and provision merchants—there is a ships biscuit making machine from such a Peel shop in the Castletown Nautical Museum—and many other small tradesmen.

The catalogue of International Fisheries for 1883 states that "Peel is the most important port (of the Isle of Man) having 194 1st class boats with full trains of mackerel or herring nets, 24 other boats having only a herring train, and 35 second class boats making 253 boats in all. The total capital invested in the fishing being £147,700.00, with 1,727 men and boys employed in the fishing (and associated industries).

The year's earning of the Peel boats amounted to:-

Kinsale Mackerel fishery £42,000
Herring fishery £40,000
Long line fishery £1,500.
(From October to May, Ramsey boats went to the long line fishing for cod, but during the summer months, four of them fished for conger (eel) on the west of the Island.)

The boats which are built in the Isle of Man for the herring fishing are probably the finest and best found in the world. The Insular Government have of late years spent large sums of money in improving the harbours of the Island. (It is at the present moment improving the harbour at Peel, with the specific object of improving the fishing industry at the cost of £24,300.00)

There is no other portion of Europe, and with the exception of Newfoundland, there is probably no other country in the world where so large a portion of the population is dependent on fishing for their livelihood. "Manx fishermen have followed the herring fishing for hundreds of years. In 1610 the government of the I.O.M made laws controlling the fishing and appointed an Admiral and Vice –admiral of the herring fleet at a salary of £5 and £3 per annum respectively. The only duties they have now, are to represent the fishermen in any disputes that may arise, and the salary is still the same as in 1610".

For the people of Peel, the sea, an all pervading presence, was at the heart and soul of everything, and the winds and the tides controlled their comings and goings. It provided a livelihood and sustenance for the fishermen, and all the connected trades and industries depended on it, and the local farmers and crofters collected the wrack from the shore for fertiliser. At times a fierce, temperamental and powerful taskmaster, taking its toll of lives and boats lost in sudden gales. The men knew it well, and accepted that it could never really be mastered. But the peaceful times and calm seas, sunshine and beautiful sunsets, perhaps would be a balm to their spirits.

T.E.Brown (1830-97) recognises the heroism, strength and seamanship of the men, in his poem "The Peel Lifeboat", when they rowed to the rescue of the Norwegian vessel the "St George," which went down off Peel in Oct 1889.

"Of Charley Cain, the cox
and the thunder of the rocks,
And the ship "St George"
How he balked the sea-wolf's gorge
Of its prey,
Southward bound from Norraway;
And the fury and the din
And the horror and the roar,
Rolling in, rolling in,
Rolling in upon the dead lee-shore."

Another brave group of men belonged to the Rocket Brigade, who sometimes would have to make a hazardous descent down a steep cliff face, carrying their equipment, to rescue people stranded at the bottom, and they often worked in conjunction with the Lifeboat.

naval reserve

Grandpa Thomas was a member of the Royal Naval Reserve, which started in 1884 and he was required to attend for drill at regular intervals, at the Battery building on the headlands on the northern outskirts of Peel.
It closed in 1906 and the premises later became a Co-op holiday camp, and housed groups of visitors, mostly from the north of England, for many years. And what a beautiful view they would have of the Castle, bay and coastline, looking north to Jurby head.

Hymns too had a nautical theme, and the following is a 19th century hymn of Manx Fishermen.

What vessel are you sailing in?
Declare to us the same!
Our vessel is the ark of God,
And Christ our Captains name.

Hoist every sail to catch the gale,
Each sailor plies his oar,
Though storms and tempest may arise
We soon shall reach the shore.

Our compass is the Sacred Word,
Our anchor booming—Hope;
The Love of God—our main topsail,
And Faith our cable rope.

But are you not afraid some storm
Your barque may overwhelm?
We cannot fear, the Lord is here,
Our Father's at the helm.

We've looked astern on many a toil,
The Lord has brought us through:
We're looking now ahead, and lo!
The land appears in view.

the weather

No wonder that, on rising, the first concern of many of the men was to weigh up the weather, and remark on which way the wind was blowing, perhaps gauged by the smoke from the chimneys or the flag on the Castle, either inshore or offshore, or veering round to a different art, and a mini weather forecast would be given. Even in the 1960s, one wag, probably fed up with being asked which way the wind was blowing used to say "up and down the mast", and somebody who was too impatient to remember essentials, was said to "never mind the mast , get the sail up!"

Rainy weather could be detected in the sound of the whistle of the railway engine, and when the weather was really stormy, battling one's way around Looney's corner was said to be worse than sailing around Cape Horn, and people were often described as going along like "a ship in full sail". But when the weather was fine, they would greet each other with "it's a grand day"

the mackerel and herring fishing

When Thomas was a young man in the 1870s, boats sailed from Peel to Stornaway on the Isle of Lewis and Lerwick in the Shetland Islands for the herring fishing, also to Southern Ireland, to Kinsale and Fenit on the south coast, and around to Valentia, and Smerwick in the west for the mackerel fishing. In 1904 there were about 16 Peel boats, mostly Nobbies at the Irish herring fishing at Balbriggan, on the east coast.

"The Rose she left Peel harbour in the year of 83,
Bound for the W. of Ireland,
for the Irish girls to see."

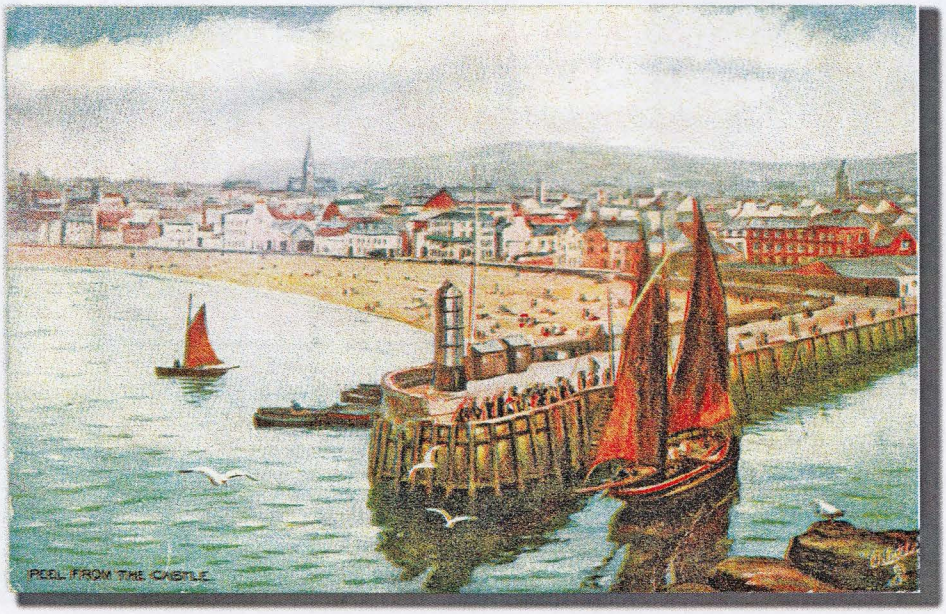
Thomas and Catherine's youngest son Percy, writing to his sister Annie in Seattle, says that their brother James (b. 1893) remembered 50 boats going to the mackerel fishing in Kinsale, and then they would come home and get ready to go to Lerwick (for the herring fishing) and then followed the fishing down the east coast of England as far south as Sunderland. Percy comments that they must have been splendid seamen. Nickies were only 40-50 ft long and 25-30 tons burden. The distance to Kinsale, Valentia, Fenit and Smerwick was 400 miles, and they came home and went to Lerwick, 600 miles from Peel and another 400 miles to Sunderland, a round trip of 2800 miles. It was said that some of the skippers could barely read or write, but they certainly knew how to navigate.

Many years later in March 1954, at the age of 73, Thomas and Catherine's eldest son Bill (b. 1883) wrote from Seattle USA to his sister Annie, also living there, this description of Peel boats setting off for the Mackerel fishing. Before he emigrated at the age of 19, he had been a cook on a fishing boat.

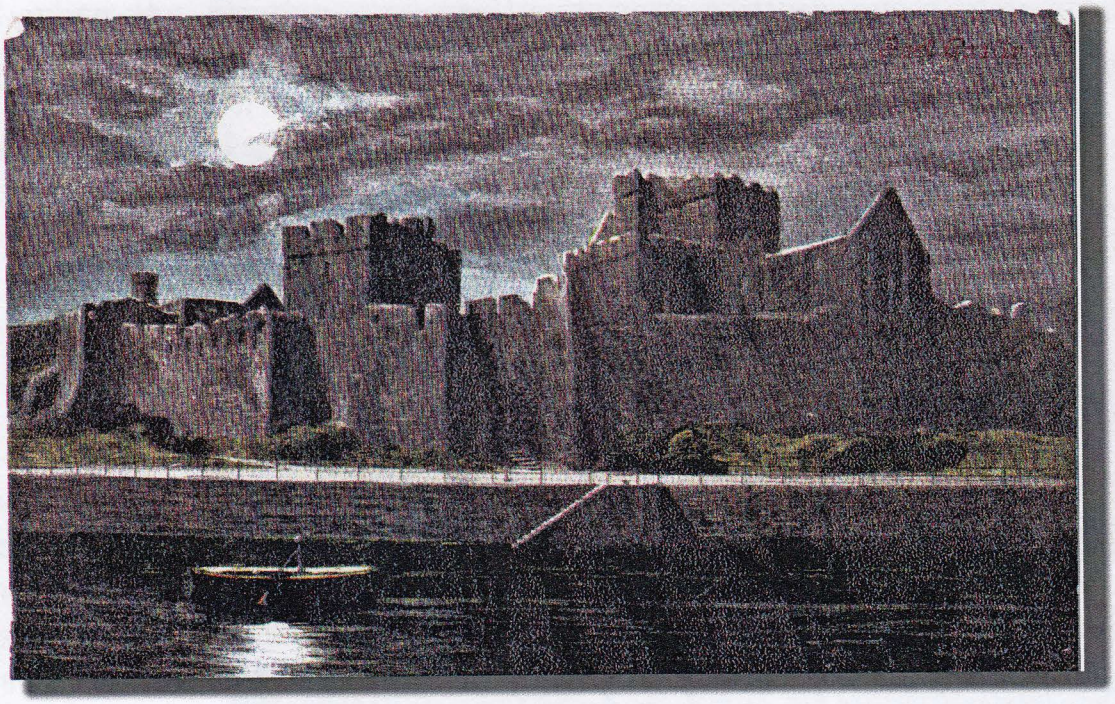
"I have been thinking about Peel and how the boats would get ready for Kinsale, and how busy Peel was in the middle of March getting the boats rigged up. What a thrill it used to give me when I was a boy.

Peel
1907

Lerwick
1906

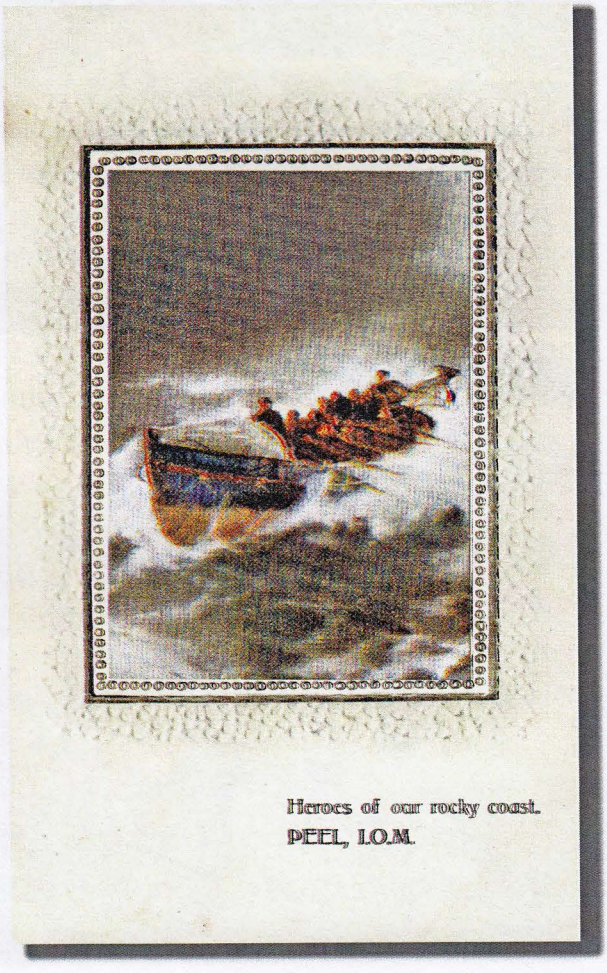


Peel
1906



Peel Castle in the moonlight and the ferry steps. 1907

Young at 90.- Mrs. Christian Wilmot. B.1847 of Peel one of the town's oldest inhabitants, who is expert maker of fish nets. 1937



We used to get a rope on the nickeys, with the three lug on the mizzen mast, and the big lug on the foremast, and with the waves dancing in the harbour, the boys and men would pull on the rope, the skipper at the tiller, and round the harbour head on, sail across the bay down toward the Stack rocks. Then lower the sail and put it over the port side, the wind would fill the sail, and away she would sail aback of the Castle, and on for Kinsale. What a sight, it thrills me yet as I think of the moonlight evenings, and lots of boats leaving the harbour, and the girls and sweethearts down on the quay to see the boats leave. How they would sail those nickeys and luggers, 30 hours to the Old Head of Kinsale, and Kinsale was seven miles from the Head lighthouse.

I remember Billy Mylrea, Will Christian the skipper of the Ocean Belle; Richie Rodger of the Lily, and Tommy Quirk skipper of the Golden Plover and many others. Do you remember when I went as a cook on a Nobby? Willie Collister was skipper, and Father sent me a telegram to come home straight away, and he let me go, and I asked Tommy Quirk of the Golden Plover, PL77, and he said I could come home with them. They fished on Monday night, and we left Valentia on Tuesday evening, and got to Peel on Friday evening, and I had to go out on the fish cart selling herrings on the Saturday. I did not earn anything that season on the Nobby, they were poor fishermen so I was glad to get away, and I remember that the Nobby did not get home to Peel till August. Well, such is life. The other two seasons were better, with me and James Clinton on the Emily, and with Susan Quirk's father's boat the Golden Stream."

Living conditions probably weren't very good in the boats. The Nickeys were bigger than the Nobbys, and had a crew of 7, including a 14 year old cook. When they went to Southern Ireland for the Mackerel fishing they would be away for about 3 months, and would leave a stock of herrings and potatoes to feed the families while they were away, and the local shopkeepers would give credit until the boats came home and the bill was settled.

Fred Palmer in his "Glimpses of Old Peel" speaks of a report in the Peel Guardian of May 7th 1892 of the Fishermen's Tea party at Kinsale, held in the Fisherman's Hall. Tea was provided by the local ladies, and at the following concert, bandsmen from the Manchester Regiment took part, and a local ladies choir, vocal and violin solos, and comical items. Mr T. Cowley of Peel sang "Nelson", and "A Flower from My Mother's Grave" was sung by Mr Harry Quayle, and the programme ended with a hymn and "God Save the Queen".

Another letter written by Bill Moore to his sister Annie and her husband Albert in Seattle describes the boats going to Kinsale.

"Just a story about the boats going to Kinsale. I have been thinking about the boats when they used to go to the mackerel fishing in March.

It is a Saturday afternoon around the 20th March in 1898 or 99. The tide is in, the wind blowing North-east. The water in the harbour is ruffled up, and the sun is shining on the water. The nobbies are coming in from the line (cod) fishing to sell their catch on the quay.

PL 77 – the Golden Plover is tied up across from the Weather Glass. The 3rd lug is hoisted on the Mizzen Mast and sheeted tight, she is still tied at the harbour, the skipper is ashore, and 2or 3 of the crew, making last arrangements before sailing. Perhaps they were waiting to buy a big cod fish. Soon everybody is aboard.

The men hoist the big lug, and then they throw a rope on the quay and willing hands pull on the rope and pull down to the end of the quay. She lays over towards the ferry steps and the wind catches her sails, and on she sails proudly across the bay, down towards the Stack rock, and when the skipper thinks she has plenty of room to clear the Castle Rocks, she is put in the wind, and the big lug sail lowered to the deck. Then all hands pull the big sail and yards aft of the foremast, and then it is pulled forward of the mast on the port side. It is hooked to the ring on the mast and pulled tight, it is also hooked on a hook on the bow, as the sail is getting hoisted. Soon the wind fills the lug sail, and they slack the sail and give it some sheet, and she ploughs through the water, past the Castle, and onward she sails running before the wind,

The boys climb up the lighthouse stairs and look between the Castle and the hill, and soon she is just a speck on the waters.
The boats on their way to Kinsale, Fenit and Bearhaven, take a straight course to the Tusker Rock, and past the lightships of the south coast of Ireland. Soon we see the Old head of Kinsale lighthouse, and some boats sail on to Fenit and other fishing places. Some turn into Kinsale after 30 hours at sea, and Kinsale is 7 miles from the Lighthouse, if my memory is right. Just outside of Queenstown which is about 30 or 40 miles from Kinsale you can see big full rigged ships loaded with grain, which have come from the West coast of the USA. They wait for orders telling them where to take the ship to, and small pilot boats will give them the owner's orders. You will see big liners leaving for New York, after Queenstown.

Soon the boats reach their stations, The Nobbies fish from Valentia and soon they start fishing, casting their nets out to catch the Mackerel, and we leave them wishing them good luck. This is just living over old boyhood scenes of long ago.

Do you remember Willie the Perkin from Glenmaye, and Jota Mac, remember him? –he lived in an old Nickey, always looking for a drink. In the summer he would be around the ferries and rowing- boats hoping to pick up sixpence from visitors. Remember Poker Cashin, fond of a drink but a good man in a fishing boat, and Joe Clucas who used to ring the church bells, "O God our help in Ages Past", and "Now the Day is Over " and many others.

I think of old Mag Sheard selling knobs, and Mrs Graves in Michael St., and Auntie Bowden's shop and Ceasars, Nix Kelly, Richie Kelly's uncle who used to get after us boys when he was janitor of the Peel Wesleyan Chapel and the Hall. I guess us boys had it coming. This is all this time.

If you like this story about the boats and the fishing I will write you another tale about old times in the Island fifty years ago.

Best of love to you both,
Bill and Luella."

(Father said that "Willie the Perkin" was so called because he had rather a humpy back) Perkyn is Manx for a Porpoise.

Decline of Fishing

When Thomas and Catherine married in 1881, the fishing industry had started to decline, but the visiting industry was expanding, and facilities improving, with boarding-houses being built on the promenade, and cafes and "eating houses" opened.

In 1873, on 1st July, Peel was the first place to be connected by a rail link to Douglas, and improvements to the harbour were made in1880 and 1884, when the west quay was built, and the causeway between the Castle and the hill was finished in 1882. Work started on the extension of the breakwater in 1891, and in that year there was a steamer service between Peel and Belfast. The open air Traie Fogog swimming baths were built in 1893 on the beautiful headlands site, just north of Peel and Peel Golf Club started in 1895 (Dearden and Hassell) So Peel was changing.

By the early 1900s, the fishing industry was declining and investment in it was curtailed by the failure of Dumbell's Bank in 1900. The mackerel fishing eventually failed, (was it fished out?), and the men came home with very little money. The Mackerel and Herring fishing were seasonal, so there wasn't much work for fishermen in the winter, so with a growing family, Thomas gave up the sea, borrowed money from Catherine's sisters Maggie and Jane Boyde, and bought a horse and cart to go selling fish around the countryside.

Hawking the Herring

The horse he bought, was a light coloured mare called Dolly, and she had been a circus horse who was trained to rear up and walk on her hind legs. The story goes that on one dark and stormy night she got out of the field, and trotted along the quay, where on seeing a man who had been out checking his boat, she immediately reared up and did her walking act, and frightened the poor man to death. Another horse called Captain enjoyed relaxing in his field, and needed a great deal of patient coaxing before he could be caught and harnessed for work. The field would be rented—Peel was a lot smaller in those days, and there must have been grazing land available.

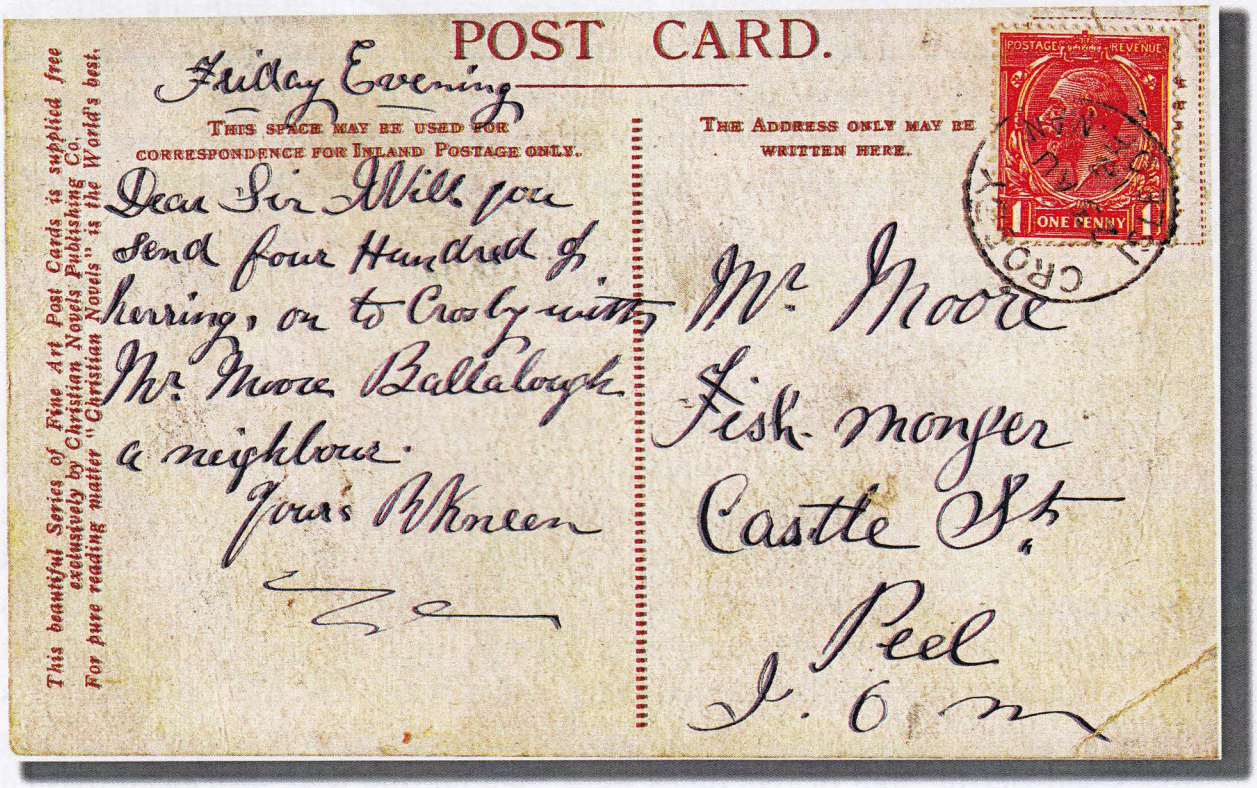
In 1891 Thomas and Catherine had moved to 13 Stanley Road and had six children, William, Thomas (who died as a baby), Frank, Mary Ann (Annie), Edward and Alice. Thomas would buy fish, mostly cod in the winter and herring in the summer, and sell them round the country, mainly in the Kirk Michael and Ballaugh area. Everyone would buy herrings which were a comparatively cheap, staple and nutritious food, which would be fried and eaten with new potatoes or potted (pickled). Most of the old people liked their potted herrings well cooked in a slow oven, so that they could eat the whole fish, bones and all. But the bulk of the herrings were sold for "putting down" (salting), and they would keep all winter—a boon in the days before fridges and freezers. No wonder the Manx people called the herring "the King of the Sea". Most people would put down their stock of herrings in an earthenware crock or small barrel, enough to tide them over the winter, and they were very particular that the herring were the right quality—medium sized and nice and firm, and were careful not to leave it too late in the season, when the herring would be spawning and be past their best and be soft in the belly, called "spent" herring.

There was a big demand for herrings from the farmers' wives, who would send a postcard ordering two or three hundred for their stock. A hundred herrings was actually 124—called a long hundred. Generally families were large, and the bigger farms would have two or three men living in, and perhaps a dairymaid and a general maidservant. I think the salt may have been supplied with the herrings, which would be gutted and put down in the crocks and packed tightly head to tail in layers, with a good sprinkling of coarse salt on each layer, making the pickle and preserving the fish, and if properly done would keep for well over a year. Father would say after eating salt herring "that was lovely and sweet!" meaning that it was properly cured. In those days the salt came from the Ramsey Salt Works, which had been operating since 1902. (A Chronicle of the 20th Century).

Spuds and Herrin (Skeddan) would be eaten in most households at least once a week. The potatoes (praase) would be scrubbed and boiled whole with the herrings on top, which would give the potatoes a good flavour. They were served with sliced raw onion or pickled cabbage, with buttermilk to drink, and were a handy and nourishing meal, easy to cook in a big pot on a fire. Sometimes the herring would be soaked overnight in water to leach out some of the salt. But anyone can have too much of a good thing, and a tale is told of a farm worker's reason for giving up his job at Hollantide was because he was fed up of getting "Spuds and Herrin" four or five times week. Salt herring were also eaten roasted on a special herring sized spit which hooked on to the bars in front of the grate.

When there was an order for 3 or 4 hundred herring for a farm, it would be difficult to know the exact date of delivery, perhaps due to stormy weather, or poor landings, so supplies could be erratic, and Thomas's son James remembered arriving with herring s for a farm in the Ballaugh Area, only to be told "Oh boy, boy, we can't do with the herring today, because our daughter is getting married." Fifty years later he was home on a visit (his first) from Seattle, and brother Percy took him round the old haunts, and they called at Ballaugh Old Church, where he met a lady, and thought she looked familiar, asked her name, and told her he remembered the day her mother got married, and of course they couldn't do with the herrings on that day! But what a lovely co-incidence.

Thomas and Catherine were Wesleyan Methodists and strict teetotallers. But their youngest son Percy remembered other hawkers who liked a drop, and would stop at the pubs on the way home, and sometimes fall asleep in the cart, and rely on the horse to bring them home safe and sound.



chapter four

the moore family 1909

From 13 Stanley Road they moved to 5 Peveril Road and by 1909, were living in 32 Shore Road, on the corner of Stanley Road and Shore Road, and I remember Father saying that Grandma used to let some of the rooms in the summer, and that the boys had to sleep three in a bed in the attic, and as he was the youngest, he was always shoved into the middle, and how hot and uncomfortable it was and how he hated it.

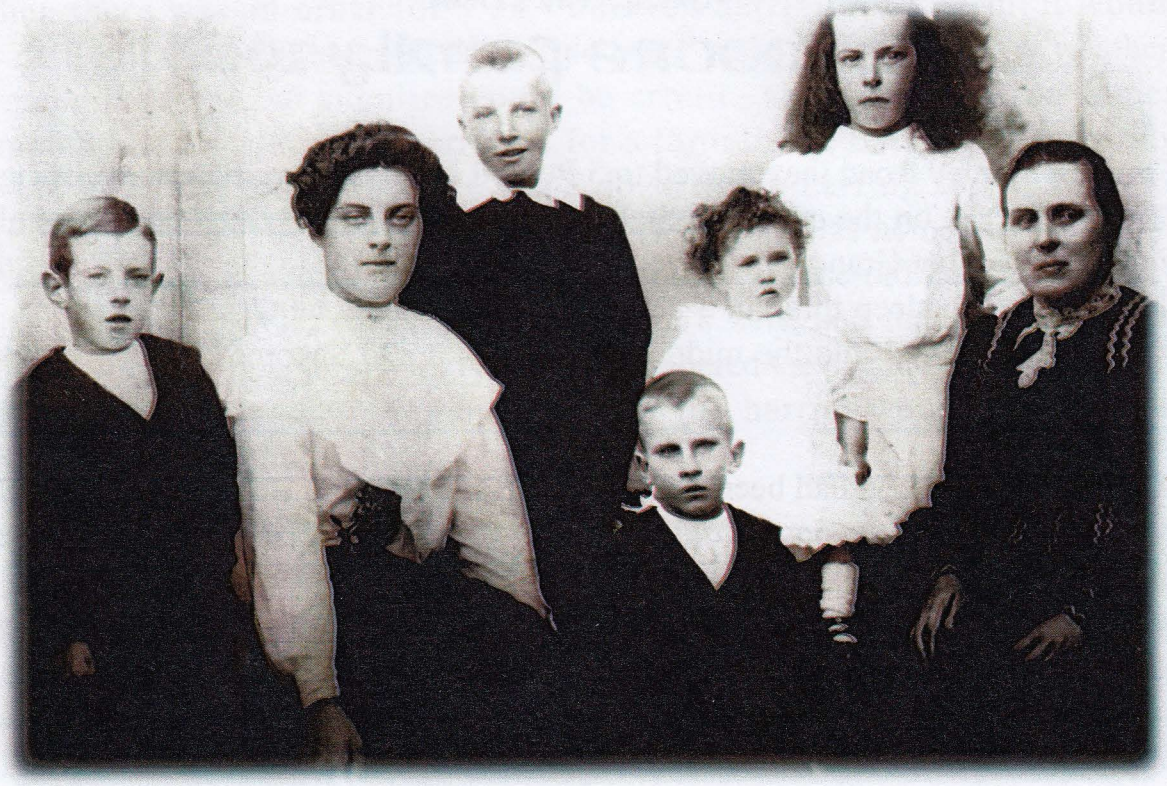
A further six children had been born: James Boyd in 1893, Robert Caesar in 1894 who died as a baby. Leonard Andrew in 1895 who died aged 7. Frederick Caesar in 1897. Percy John (Father) in 1899 and Margery Annetta in 1903. So out of twelve children nine survived. But by then the four oldest children had emigrated to Seattle, USA. Where their uncle William Boyde had settled earlier, and later James and Margery also went there. Margery however returned to the island in 1935.

In the Wesleyan Chapel, it was customary to sing the hymn "God be with you till we meet again" on the Sunday morning before a member of the congregation was due to leave for America, Australia or South Africa, and it must have been a heart-breaking and emotional time. In those days the large congregations really knew how to sing, and mothers and fathers would realise that it was quite possible that they would never see their sons and daughters again. Grandma's sister, Aunt Emma in Liverpool said she remembered "Dear Willie leaving for America with his bible in one hand and his bundle in the other," and remarked that they probably wouldn't meet again "this side of Jordan." William was a devout Christian all his life.

William and Frank never did return, Annie promised her mother that, if at all possible, she would come home for a visit before she got married, and this she did in 1913, and also came with the big homecoming in 1952. James came back for a visit long after his parents had died and Edward came back for a visit in the early 1930's

annie emigrates

Annie wrote down her memories of leaving the island in October 1909.
"(Brother) Frank had wanted me to come out in time for the Alaska Exposition in Seattle, but I could not get a berth on a steamer. Jessie and Edith Callin had got on the boat before me, but I had to come out here all alone....



The Moore Family in 1909. L-R Fred, Annie, James, Percy, Margery, Alice and their Mother

And in 1913. L-R Percy, Father Thomas, Annie, Margery, Alice, Mother Catherine, Fred and James

I cried my eyes out leaving my mother. We were sailing on an Empress boat from Liverpool, and I cried from Peel to Liverpool steady. I stayed a couple of days with Aunt Emma, my mother's sister in Liverpool, and I remember her taking me to Prince's Park. It was beautiful then, I would like to see it now. Her daughter Maggie had been taking piano lessons and we sang a new song I had never heard before "God will take care of you." After I got on the boat at Liverpool, I cried again thinking I might never see my mother again-I helped fill up the Mersey River. Next day it was stormy and I was seasick- I couldn't lift my head, and it continued for nearly 10 days more"

Annie came back home for a visit in 1913, before she got married, as she promised her mother. Her brother James decided to emigrate, and went back to Seattle with her. She writes about their Journey on board the S.S Laurentic on April 26th 1913.

***"Saturday 26th**, Went aboard at 1 o'clock, the boat being due to sail at 2.30pm. We got passes for Aunt Emma and Maggie, so they came aboard, and we showed them round. It was so miserable when we left Liverpool- raining, blowing and cold. That made everybody miserable, although just as we were leaving the pier the sun shone on us. There were hundreds of people seeing us off and the sight was one of a lifetime to hear the goodbyes and see the handkerchiefs waving. Everybody looked homesick after it was over.*

There is quite a nice class of people on board, but an awful lot of young children and they make a terrible noise. The people in my berth are very nice – three of them are going to Toronto, so will only have a day and a night on the train after we land at Montreal. Jim and I have met quite a lot of company on the train. We have met some splendid young men on board – Sunday-school boys who are mostly going to Canada"

She goes on to mention a man from Bradford, and a Welshman going to Edmonton who was a good singer and musician.

"The second class accommodation on the Laurentic is splendid and the food very good, we have much more deck space and better sleeping rooms than on the Empress boats."
"The stewards are fairly civil, but the one at our table is a little snappy, but we take no notice of him"
***"Sunday**. Very stormy. Sick today so not much to say. There are some good singers in the 3rd class it is delightful to hear them singing in Welsh. Some of them have powerful voices and so sweet. Nearly everybody is sick today and those who are not sick look miserable"*

*"**Tuesday.** Have not missed a meal today, just beginning to feel alright. I went down to hear the band, afternoon and evening"*
*"**Wednesday.** Still feeling fine. In the afternoon about 3o'clock, a dense fog came down and the boat has gone very slowly, and it is very dismal listening to that foghorn blowing every 3 minutes and it continued until the next morning. The steward told me there was a double watch on account of the fog, and that we passed a very large iceberg at 2.30 this morning, and the boat came to a standstill till it passed, and the cold was intense. The captain has not left the bridge since the fog came on." The sailors say "He is a very careful commander."*
*"**Thursday**. Still foggy. We are having sports this afternoon and evening. I was amused on reading the menu this morning to find "Manx kippered herrings" on the list. I hardly think the boats have caught enough (in April!) to kipper yet.*
We have a good orchestra on board of six players, and they play in the dining saloon from 3-4pm, and from 8-9pm, it is very enjoyable and worth listening to. We have also had a fairly good concert, and today there is to be sports at 10 o'clock. We have been having some good fun skipping on the deck, and some of the gentlemen can beat the ladies, and there are other deck games provided."
26 year old Annie is quite solicitous of 19 year old brother James and writes that *"He has not missed one meal through sea-sickness and is quite proud of himself. I am very glad he feels well".*
She had been firmly established in Seattle for 4 years working as a dressmaker, and was looking forward to her marriage to Robert Stewart on 25th of July.

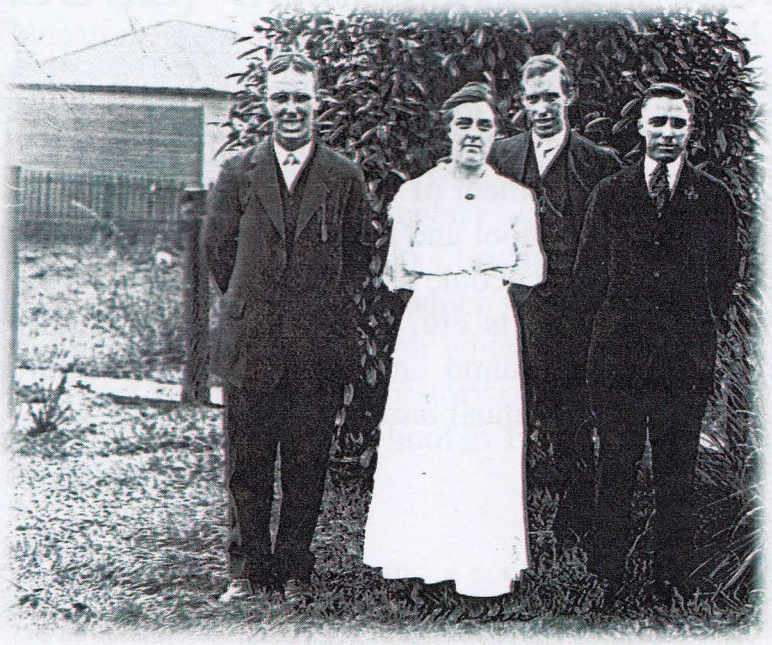
James Annie
On board the S.S. Laurentic. April 1913

Although it must have been a big wrench to leave family and friends and the familiarity of the close- knit community, and launch out into the unknown, the young people would be eager to start a new life, with more opportunities and freedom, in a developing country. The streets of the U.S.A. weren't paved with gold, and they all had a struggle, but eventually with their Manx way of hard work and carefulness with money, they carved out a good life for themselves and their children. They kept in touch with each other—Annie and her husband walked 9 miles to visit uncle William Boyde—and attended meetings of the Seattle Manx Society, and loved to get together to sing the old Manx songs, and perhaps at times there was a longing for home.

"I wonder if in that far isle some child
is growing now like me, when I was child;
care-pricked, yet healed the while,
with balm of rock and sea"

T.E. Brown.

After Their father died (in 1938) and mother (in1942) Fred and Percy who stayed in Peel and worked with their father, kept in regular contact with their sister and brothers in Seattle, and their children still keep in touch with their cousins in the U.S.A. and Canada by visits, phone calls and letters, and many of their cousins down to the fourth generation, visit the Island and are very proud of their Manx ancestry. So ties are not broken.



Sister and Brothers in Seattle.
L-R Bill, Annie, Frank and James

Life for the Moore family

At the turn of the century work was scarce and seasonal in Peel, and life wasn't easy, especially at home where Thomas was a typical Victorian hard taskmaster. In son Bills letter to his sister Annie-(both living in Seattle) he says---

"Remember when our father would tell Frank and me in the winter to come home at 7 o'clock? He would give us 5 minutes extra, so when we would hear the church clock strike 7, how we would run home to 13 Stanley Road to be in the house in time to save our hide. Well, we sure learned one thing, when we were told to do anything; we had to do it at once."

But there was a busy social life around the Chapel and they all loved to sing in the choir, and in concerts. Annie was apprenticed to a dressmaker, but Frank was the only boy to have a trade, and he was a blacksmith, and Percy the youngest boy was very proud when his big brother made him an iron hoop and crook. Toys seemed to be few and far between and probably home- made. Reading matter would consist of the local newspapers, especially the Peel City Guardian, and there would be Sunday School Prizes, and the family bible took pride of place. The only reading allowed on Sundays was from the Bible and the Christian Herald. But there would be other books in the house, and there were reading rooms attached to the churches and chapels. The Ward Library opened in1907, and there was a record of Fred borrowing books in1912, when he was 15.

Life for the Moores (about 1909)

The family attended Chapel on Sunday morning and evening, and often a mid week prayer meeting, where there were many impromptu fervent and emotional outpourings, to the embarrassment of the younger members of the congregation. There was a large Sunday school and no shortage of teachers, and when too old for Sunday school, the young people could attend the Wesley Guild which would organise picnics and concerts etc. For a few years a group went out "on the blackberries" in the autumn and gathered large quantities for the older women to make jam for the annual bazaar.

In the summer the boys would go up the river to the "Red Dub" for a dip, I don't think many of them—or the fishermen for that matter—could actually swim. Father called this area "the Congary", and I think it extends from the river, to part of the Golf Links, and out to Sammy Coffey's Lane, on the Douglas road, Peel side of the Cemetery.

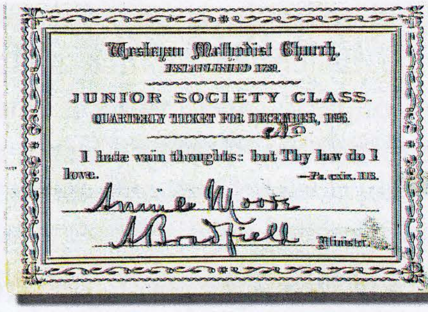
Daring boys would pinch a "gig" from the shore, for a row round the bay. A "gig" was a small rowing boat used by the crew of boats anchored in the bay, to come ashore, and when they were ready to return, the "gig" would be missing, and the owners would hop up and down, stranded at the waters edge, furiously yelling at the lad to bring it back. I expect the boy got a clip round the ear; nowadays no doubt, he would land in court.
Playing cards was considered to be "the work of the devil", and not allowed in the house, but Father spoke of playing cards in the Peel Castle Hotel stables, in the Market Place, as a young man, and said there was a "card school" (gambling?) going on there.

Football was becoming established, and in 1885, Clothworkers' School formed a team of teachers and boys, and in 1913 the Peel Board (Education) Team were joint holders of the School Shield and Percy, aged 14, was in the team. Brother Fred was very keen, and when younger, would risk retribution to get to a football match. He was a member of the team in 1921-22 when Peel was the league champion. His grandson Colin Moore, carries on the interest and has written the booklet "Triumph and Controversy" to celebrate the Centenary of Peel F.C. 1888-1988. And in 2004 has published another one for Castletown F.C.

In 1893 The Education Acts were consolidated and amended. Among other changes, the age of compulsory attendance was, except under certain conditions, raised to14. (A.W. Moore-History of the I.O.M.)

All the family had a pretty good elementary education at the Clothworkers' School, founded in 17th Century by Philip Christian who was born in Peel. The older boys would attend the boys' school which was built in Derby Road in1878, and the younger children would finish their education at the Senior School, built alongside in 1898. (Leslie Quilliam –A History of Peel). Annie, for a short time attended the Wesleyan Methodist Day School in Tynwald Road, which functioned from 1863-1905.

The senior school boasted a woodwork and a cookery room—quite advanced for the time. Teaching was based on the 3 Rs, and learning by rote, and a lot of poetry was learned by heart as well as parts of Shakespeare plays.



Wesleyan Methodist Church.
ESTABLISHED 1739.

JUNIOR SOCIETY CLASS.
QUARTERLY TICKET FOR DECEMBER, 1896.

I hate vain thoughts: but Thy law do I love. —Ps. cxix. 113.

Annie Moore

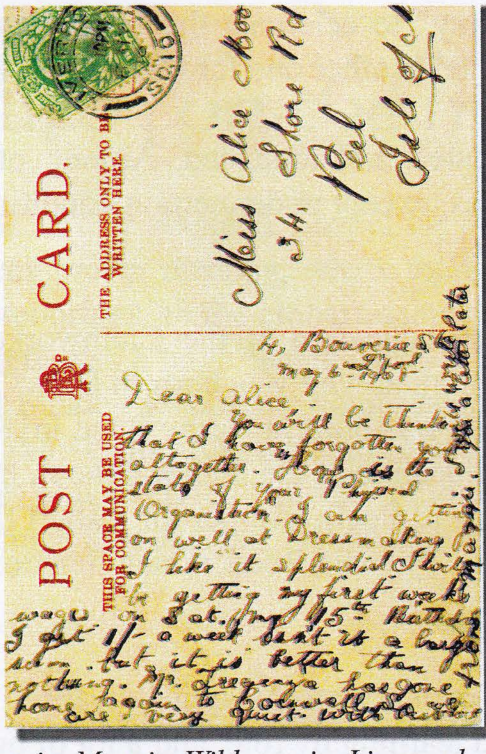
A Bodfiell Minister.

Annie was nine years old!

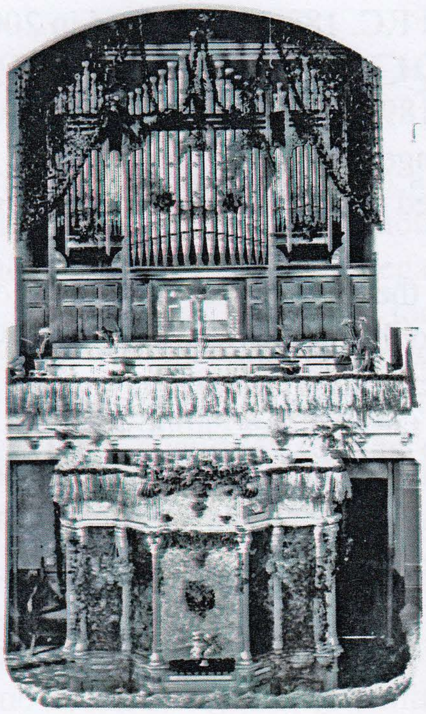
Peel Board School Shield Team.

Harry Teare (capt.), Philip Quirk, Kenneth Cain.
Robert Quirk, William Watterson, Ben Gregeen, Mr. W. Henry.
Tom Teare, Percy Moore, Robt. Corrin, Roy McCormick, Jas. Walker.

Joint holders 1913



Cousin Maggie Wildman in Liverpool got one shilling for her first weeks wages as an apprentice dressmaker, on her 15th Birthday in 1908



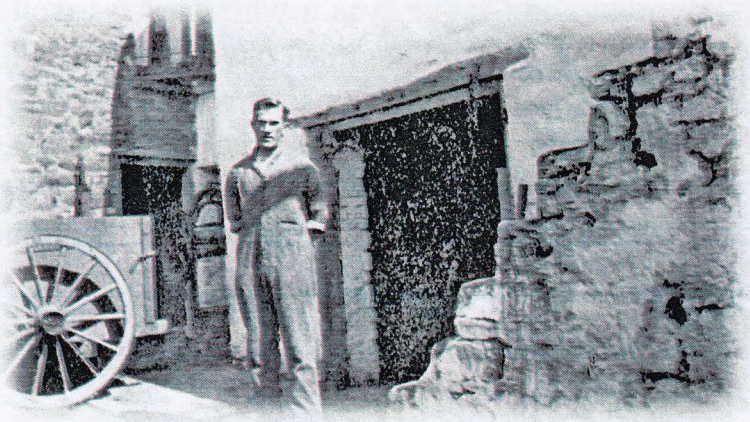
The Chapel decorated for Harvest

Mental arithmetic was very important, and father was a whiz at it, as well as being able to recite chunks of Shakespeare. I think he must have liked school. Discipline was strict, and the cane not spared. The headmaster round about 1910 was the well respected Mr P.C. Moore (no relation), who was keen on music and had a very good school choir which competed in the Guild, and the children were taught in tonic sol-fa. Some of the songs were in Manx Gaelic which still hung on by a thread.

move to castle street
1912

In 1912 Grandpa Thomas at the age of 52 rented premises at 13 Castle Street – once the main street of town- from Robert Harrison, described as a house and part yard, and the rates £7.04p, were the same amount for ten years. There was a large yard and garden, and some out-buildings, and it was here Grandpa decided to try his hand at kippering, while still selling herring and fish around the countryside, and with the boys helping him, he did quite well as he was a great worker. By then the family living at home were Alice aged 21, James aged 19, who was soon to emigrate, Fred aged 15, Percy was 13 and Margery, 9.

Always looking for ways of supporting his family, as well as selling fish, Grandpa would buy a field of turnips (swedes) in the winter, and the boys would be sent out to dock and bag them, and father often talked about the misery of docking turnips in a hilly field at the Beary above Glen Helen on an icy, windy winter's day. When the turnips were bagged they would be carted down to Peel Quay, and stacked there ready for one of the Steam Packet cargo boats to ship them to Liverpool. There were, I think three cargo boats, the Conister, the Cushag, and the Tyrconnell, which was always called the Triconnell. Later boats were the Peveril and Fenella. The harbour was a very busy place, for as well as the activities of the fishing boats, there were coal boats bringing supplies for the coal yards, as all house holds would have coal fires, and timber boats from Sweden. The Mannin dredger came regularly to clean the silt from the bottom of the harbour. The Harbour Master whose house was on the quay, was in charge, and kept things running smoothly---and collected the harbour dues.



Father (Percy) in Castle Street yard. Percy and his Father had made the cart which was nicknamed "the Tank"

Grandpa Thomas tentering in Castle Street

An order for Herring - a "mease" was five hundred.

The Castle Street house was situated directly opposite the Central Hotel-locally called the "Deaf House", because the Kermode family who ran it suffered from profound deafness. The hotel had no yard or garden, and Grandma used to let Mrs Kermode dry her washing in the Moore garden, which was very neighbourly considering that Thomas and Catherine were such strict teetotallers, and very much against strong drink.

The Castle Street premises were sold in 1919 to Thos. Curtis, and although Grandpa bought the Michael Street yard in that year, records show that he remained the tenant of Castle St. until 1924, and the Curtis Family eventually took over. It is now a private house and part of the yard and garden have been made into a public play area.
But even today (2005) the name of Thos. Moore can still be seen, high on the chimney breast. It must have been good paint in those days.

T. MOORE'S
KIPPER CURING
ESTABLISHMENT
ORDERS BY POST AND RAIL
PROMPTLY ATTENDED TO.

So mail order kippers had arrived.

I was told that Grandpa bought the Elvira PL 44 at the fall of the fishing for £5. Then Percy and himself set to and reduced the entire ship –20 tons of her, to manageable sized baulks, with hand tools! They used the gunwales for building the kipper house in Castle St, and burned the last of it for kippering in Factory Lane (Michael St.)

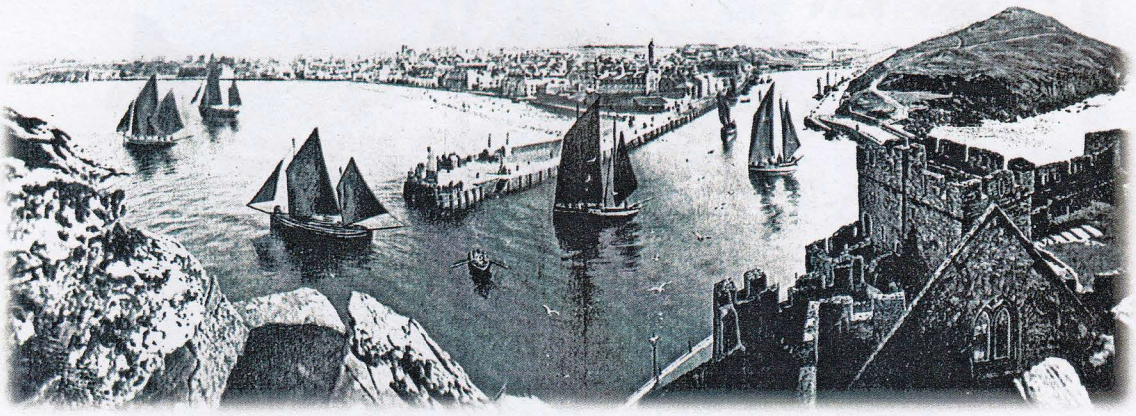
1914-18 WAR

Work was still scarce and seasonal, and Fred went to find work in Barrow—would it be in the shipyard?—before the war, when he would only be about 16, and gave a false age to enlist in the Navy there, when war broke out. He served in a minesweeper, which was a converted steam drifter, and father Percy, two years younger, served on the light cruiser HMS Dauntless as well as the cruiser Cleopatra, for 18 months. He used to say that new naval ratings were very zealous in washing their sailor collars, to make the colour fade, so that they wouldn't easily be recognised as rookies, and avoid being bullied by the regular old hands.
Father would sometimes wake us up in the morning by shouting "Wakey, Wakey rise up and shine –the sun's burning your eyes out—show a leg", reminiscent of his time in the navy, and he taught us a few steps of the Hornpipe.
During the war, with conscription, many Peel men joined the navy.

At home, food was scarce, and by 1917 prices had gone up by 60%, but wages remained the same, and eventually the government made an order controlling the price of bread.

After the war, the business went from strength to strength. In May 1919 Grandpa bought 23 Michael St., and opened a shop there, selling all kinds of fish as well as milk. I wonder if they kept cows, or did they buy in the milk. Kippering was done in the yard in the back, and they still kept on selling fish in the country. With the older children well settled in America, Fred and Percy ran the business with their father. Margery was still at home, but she eventually went to Canada.

But 1919 was a sad year for the family, because daughter Alice died then, aged 27. I never actually heard the cause of death, but suspect it may have been T.B.



Percy, Joe Clucas and Fred about 1917

Arthur McDonald and Percy

Gathering greenery for the Chapel Harvest
(Probably the Wesley Guild Members)

Thomas Moore1859 - 1938

Catherine Ellen Boyde Moore 1856 - 1942

Grandpa - Great Aunt Alice - Grandma

chapter five

23 Michael St.

Early in 1923 Fred and Percy both got married, so Thomas and Catherine were on their own, now living in the house and shop in Michael Street, which had a cellar kitchen in the front and a back kitchen looking out to the yard at the back. Behind the shop was a small sitting room used at night, and a door from this and down a couple of steps led to the "dairy", a small bare whitewashed room with a concrete floor and a large raised stone slab running along one wall. The door from here led out to the yard which had several old outbuildings which may at one time have housed a couple of cows or stabled a horse or two or perhaps just a cart shed. Further down the yard were the pickling vats, benches, storage places for the sawdust and chippings, and of course the smoke houses. All needed for the kippering.

Up stairs on the first floor, above the shop, was the main sitting room and one bedroom, and on the top storey two attic bedrooms. The back one had a dormer window with a good view of the bay and the breakwater.

I remember clumping down the lino-covered stairs to the cellar kitchen, which had a big black range, with broth being cooked in a pot on the fire, and if you were about at dinner-time you were told to "sit up behind" on the horse-hair sofa (very scratchy on bare legs) along the wall at the back of the long table covered with oilcloth, and given a basin of broth.

The rest of the room contained a "chiss" of drawers, kitchen chairs at the front of the table and grandfather's chair on the rag rug by the fire and a coconut mat on the lino-covered floor. There was also an old Grandfather clock with a moon face, and I wonder if this was the one that Uncle Bill, in a letter to Annie, mentioned had belonged to great-grandmother Mary Boyde. He said it was about 5ft high.

The back kitchen was basic and dark, and grandma wore dark clothes. There was a shallow brown stone sink or slopstone with a coldwater tap, a cupboard, a wooden table and a pantry, and quite a large black gas stove, on which grandma would sometimes boil a big Cod's head for her grey cat called "Tut". When I was older I used to wonder if he was called "Tut" after Tutankhamen, but I doubt it. Grandma made barley-meal bonnag, which was rather grey looking when sliced, and to a child looked very unappetising, and now and again I had to help clean the knives by rubbing them hard with a powder on a sort of stone slab. There was always plenty of homemade jam, and if you had a cold, out would come the blackcurrant jam, and mixed with hot water, you had to drink it- bits and all-ugh! But of course it was a good source of vitamin C.

The main bedroom too, was pretty basic (but later on had a wash basin and hot and cold water). There was a dressing –table, and an iron bedstead covered with quite a dull patchwork quilt, made of a random mix of squares in the centre, with a border of triangular shapes- a miniature history of the clothes and furnishings used by the family in the past, and an object lesson in re-cycling, and I wonder how many long patient hours the hand stitching had taken. Sheets were white cotton or twill, and in the winter there would be several white wool Manx blankets which seemed to wear for ever, going smoother and yellower with age, and the women would have a heavy job in the late Spring, on a sunny breezy day, when blankets would be given their annual wash. Beds would be warmed in the winter with a stone hot water bottle, before rubber ones were available.

By contrast, the fair-sized sitting room above the shop, which had two nice windows with a pattern of coloured glass, was quite luxurious, boasting a mid-blue velvet settee and chairs, with white crocheted chair backs. The piano occupied the wall between the windows and there was a solid mahogany sideboard which Grandma called the chiffonier, on top of which was a model sailing ship in the large glass case, and two ornaments made of a circle of cut glass spikes hanging round a central glass column, which clinked if touched. But touching wasn't allowed in those days.

Doing Grandma's hair

When I was 10 or 11, in 1934-5, I would be sent up to the bedroom after Grandma was dressed, to do her hair, because she suffered from arthritis in her shoulders, and couldn't manage herself. She would be 77 then. I didn't like the job, but that was no excuse, and I was- and still am- hopeless with hair anyway, but her long hair would have to be well brushed and then plaited, and wound round at the back in a "bun" which was fixed firmly (supposedly) with hair pins. Nobody showed me how to do it, so you just had to get on with it, and poor Grandma had to put up with it too. I suppose this would be in the summer, when everybody was rushed off their feet in the shop below. [Hairs stuck in the brush had to be removed, and put in the "hair tidy"- an embroidered triangular pocket which hung on the dressing-table.] In the winter, especially if she had a cold, Grandma would put pieces of red flannel across her chest, anchored by being tucked into the top of her stays-(corsets). Red flannel seemed to have special properties, and houses could be very cold unless you were "on top of the fire".

christmas

At Christmas, the home-made Ginger Wine and a few heavy wine-glasses and tumblers were kept in the chiffonier cupboards, together with the best china tea-set, and a traditional "kissing bush" was hung from the ceiling. This was a circle of greenery, holly and mistletoe, with apples and grapes hanging down on strings, and we children had to stand underneath- the little ones on chairs- with our hands behind our backs, and try to get some grapes or a bite of an apple, and if you managed a bite it was yours. And in those undemonstrative days, the men had to kiss any lady who was standing under the mistletoe. Presents were simple- a pair of fur backed gloves, a fancy scarf perhaps, a special book, or a board game-Ludo or Snakes and Ladders, or a paint box. In your stocking you would get one or two large gifts and "stocking fillers" consisting of an apple and an orange, and a sugar mouse or a pink or white sugar pig, and if you were lucky a small box of chocolates and a tiny bottle of scent.

The room would be decorated with holly which Father had brought from the country, and a few home made paper chains. We would sing carols and hymns round the piano- always part singing- treble only, was scorned, and Grandpa's favourite hymn was "Praise ye the Lord" to the tune "Justification" which he sang with gusto, and "Jesus shall reign"- to "Rimington". Simple pleasures compared to today's excesses.

The apples on the kissing-bush usually came from Canada, sent for the family by Edward, who had moved there from Seattle. There was a whole tea-chest of big Red-Delicious apples, sweet and juicy, in perfect condition. I can still see Grandma sharing them out and remember the pronounced dimples on the top of each one. Much nicer than the locally grown apples or the ones we could buy. I wonder how long it took them to come from Canada in the 1930s.

Grandma writes in a letter to Annie in 1933-

"Fred and families and Percy, spent Christmas afternoon, (with us) the children had a fine time with the kissing-bush, trying to get an apple or grapes off the bunch. I had a letter from Ed. He sent a box of apples, they are lovely eating. It was very good of him" She also mentioned that Christopher Shimmim had died. He was the MHK for Peel. "We all send our best wishes to you, and may God's blessing rest on your home. Your loving Mother, C. Moore."

grandmother

Grandmother, as I remember her was a quiet but kindly person. Father said she often gave food to many a poor soul who came to the back door for help. She was always dressed in dark clothes, and on Sunday, wore a black cardigan, crocheted in shiny silk thread, and a lavender silk scarf for Chapel. She had a good singing voice, and sang in the Chapel choir when she was younger, and her daughter Annie remembered her Mother "singing like a bird" when down on her knees scrubbing the floor.

Grandma didn't make a fuss of the grandchildren, probably having had twelve children herself, she accepted them as a natural progression and we seemed to fit into our own slot in the order of things. We ran for messages- children were there to "save your feet" and were sent for potherbs for the broth--sixpenny worth of carrots, turnip, celery, curly cabbage, leeks, parsley, the same as today, and a bunch of thyme would always be kept in the kitchen. We went for three-penny-worth of oatcakes from Quirks the bakers at the "top of the town" (Atholl Place) and a Madeira, or seed cake or perhaps a bunloaf from Callister's shop and café next door. The main grocery shopping was from Clucas's in Douglas Street (where Clague's carpet shop is now). There were several bakers, grocers and butchers in Peel at that time, all living above their shops, and if you were a Wesleyan, you usually dealt with a Wesleyan shop.

To me, as a young girl, the weekly shop was a tedious business. Grandma's movements seemed to be so slow, but you would have to go along to help carry the groceries home, and the Clucas family were lovely people. Grandma, seated on a chair by the counter, would be given little samples of Irish, English or New Zealand butter on the end of a knife, so that she could decide which tasted the best, and the same thing with the cheese, and I think the only varieties on offer were Cheshire or Cheddar. Plain biscuits were preferred, and I remember looking longingly at the small selection of the sweeter ones, hoping she would buy some-but she never did. It seemed to take an age, and she was only shopping for two people at that time. I was probably longing to get away to play on the shore, but it was worth it because I got sixpence a week. Mother always told us that we mustn't expect to be paid for doing messages for a friend or neighbour, but I suppose Grandmas were different.

In the 1930's children more or less did as they were told, and I certainly wouldn't have grumbled to Grandma but must have been fidgety at times as I remember her saying "rest yourself child"!

Children didn't have much money in those days, but Grandma always gave us money to go to the Sunday School picnic and on Tynwald Fair day, and we had to go down with our turnip lanterns and sing Hop-tu-naa for her at Hallowee'n. Father used to decorate our turnips with a house, a witch, cat, a moon, and of course a boat, and there would be droves of children going round the neighbours and friends with their turnips of all shapes and sizes. No-one dressed up or wore horrible masks.

grandfather

Grandfather was more lively, and when I was 6 years old he would be seventy, and by all accounts had mellowed quite a lot. He would recite to us very dramatically, given half a chance "The Wreck of the Hesperus". "It was the schooner Hesperus that sailed the wintry sea, The skipper had brought his little daughter to bear him company".

In a letter to Annie, Percy said that the winter gales reminded him of a couple of lines from the Wreck of the Hesperus by Longfellow-"Down came the storm and smote the main, the vessel in its strength; She shuddered and paused like a frightened steed, Then leaped a cables length." He said that Grandfather could recite all 26 verses.

When I was a bit older Grandfather would tut-tut over the length of my well over the knees dress, and say "go you home chile and tell your mother to put a piece on your skirts".

I was always in a hurry and a bit of a tomboy, and often had sore knees, and he would threaten to get me some leather knee-pads like the horses wore.

After he got too old to work, he took to painting pictures and used the back attic bedroom where there was a good view of the breakwater from the dormer window. And of course he painted boats, with bright blue skies and greeny-blue seas, white clouds and lots of white horses, and fishing boats with brown sails riding the waves. I wonder what happened to them?
Grandma would send me up three flights of stairs to "tell Dada his dinner's ready".I suffered from Asthma when I was young and used to puff up the cellar kitchen stairs and try shouting, to no avail, and then go up the next flight and try again, but he was very deaf and I could never get out of going the whole way up.

He was well known round the town, off on his daily walk round the quay and up the hill, never without his old homburg hat, walking stick and his dog "Dick". The story goes that Grandpa loved attending auction sales and buying all sorts of old rubbish- much to Father's annoyance- and one day, at a farm a dog was for sale, but nobody wanted it, and it was going to be put down. So Grandpa took pity on it and bought it for a shilling, and its name was "Dick". I don't know what breed Dick was, but he was quite big, and a light gingery colour with a thick coat and a sheep-dog type face, and he was a real character. When not at grandpa's side, he was down on the shore with the kids who would call and say "Can we take Dick-the-dog out?" He just loved retrieving sticks from the sea, and never tired of swimming and playing in the water. He certainly was worth every penny of that shilling, and when Grandpa died, Father brought him home to live with us.

the chapel

Grandma and grandpa were devout Wesleyan Methodists, and attended Atholl Street Chapel, morning and evening every Sunday, and sat in their own pew before rents were abolished. They really knew their Bible and Hymn book, and always discussed the merits of different tunes, knowing most the names of the tunes as well as the metres. Preachers all started their sermons with "and the text today is.....", and would expound the subject sometimes at great length, although one lady was known to complain that a certain Local Preacher always gave "short measure".

Young men and boys would sit in the two "box" pews, situated in each corner at the rear of the gallery—as far away as they could get, and some of them whiled away the sermon by carving their initials in the wood or writing mild graffiti in the hymn books. A lad would get the job of pumping the organ by hand for which he would get paid, and the names of many of them can still be seen carved in the woodwork around the pump handle.

I don't remember there being many flowers decorating the Chapel when I was a girl (bought flowers were a real luxury and not always available) except at the Harvest Festival when the ladies made beautiful fringes of corn (oats) which hung from the choir gallery, as well as corn stooks, perhaps at the entrance. There would be displays of vegetables , and big bunches of chrysanthemums, and of course up until quite recently, the herring nets were draped all round the gallery. For many years there wasn't a cross in the Chapel, and certainly no candles, as these were considered to be "papist". Thankfully this has now changed.

In England, mid 19th Cent. (1856) Public Worship Regulation Act. forbade the use of a cross and lighted candles on the altar, let alone incense and vestments. Did this apply on the Island?

After Grandpa died and Grandma was too frail to go to Chapel, cousin Freda, sister Alice and I would be sent to have tea with her on Sunday afternoons, and we would be asked "and what was the text this morning", and if you had forgotten- or not even listened- you had to think quickly and perhaps make something up, and hope she wouldn't find out later, which she never seemed to do.

The three of us took turns to have tea with her on Sunday, and this was taken in the small back sitting-room behind the shop. We had to go down the cellar stairs to the kitchen to carry up bread and jam or cheese, blancmange or prunes and custard, seed cake or Madeira, and after tea, everything went back down again, and the washing up done. I never enjoyed those quiet Sunday teas, thinking longingly of the tinned fruit and cream, and sponge cake etc., which would be on the table at home, but I do wish I had listened more attentively to Grandma, when she talked about her family connections and relations who lived mostly in the Michael, Ballaugh and Andreas areas. The only reading she allowed on Sunday, was the Bible and the Christian Herald, or perhaps Sunday School prizes.

W.W.1 Books

I remember Grandma and Grandfather had a set of books about the 1st World War, which were kept in the sitting-room. Work was scarce after the war and ex-servicemen used to go round from door to door selling them as well as sets of encyclopaedias. When I was about 12, in 1936, I used to browse through them with a mixture of fear and curiosity, and was horrified by the lurid pictures of men dying in the muddy trenches, or advancing through gunfire, and the cruel slaughter of thousands of men on the battlefields. Three years later, with these pictures in mind, and with the realisation that W.W.2 was imminent, I was very frightened, and couldn't bear to listen to radio broadcasts about Hitler and events in Europe and the possibility of war.

As grandma got older, she needed help in the house, and I remember Mrs Cannan, Mrs Moore (no relation) and Irene and Elvie. Some of the single girls "lived in" and were treated like family.

work available in peel

Most of the children left school at fourteen, the girls finding work either in Corlett's knitting factory in Michael Street (Shoprite now) making Jumpers and cardigans etc, or at Moore's (no relation) Woollen Mills at St. Johns, which was a thriving business producing mainly tweed. Some were apprenticed to dressmaking, tailoring or the millinery trades, or trained as confectioners. Others did domestic work, or served in the local shops. Those who were fortunate enough to have higher education usually trained as teachers or nurses or worked in offices. Similarly the boys would be apprenticed to the building and boat-repairing trades, trained to be butchers, bakers or postmen or perhaps worked on the railway, went to the fishing or became labourers, or followed their father's footsteps in small businesses. Some went to Colleges in England and often these men and women couldn't find work at home and lived out their lives in England.

In the 1920s and 30s, much of the work was seasonal, and a lot of men were unemployed, so the Government set up a "Winter Work Scheme" for them, repairing roads and doing other manual labour. I think Father went to Barrow (to work in the shipyards?) in the winter of 1925.

fred and percy got married

Both Fred and Percy (his friends always called him P.J.) got married in 1923. Fred to local girl Kitty Shimmin, and they started life in "half a house" in Mona St. and later lived with Kitty's widowed mother, Mrs Shimmin, a dressmaker, in Atholl Place. They had a family of six. The eldest was Mildred who died aged 2, then Freda, Tom, Andrew, Franklin and Malcolm. All of them except Andrew, still live in Peel.

Percy's wife, Florence Ethel Parry, came from Manchester, the third daughter of Martha Ann Swann and Moses Parry. She had two older sisters, Lizzie and Emma, and the three youngest children were Louise, Richard and Benjamin. Her father Moses came from Wrexham and his mother's maiden name was Griffiths- good Welsh names- he was a blacksmith's striker, and was the captain of Newton Heath Football team, which became Manchester United in 1895. Sadly he died aged 40, and Martha was left to bring up six children on her own. She worked in the

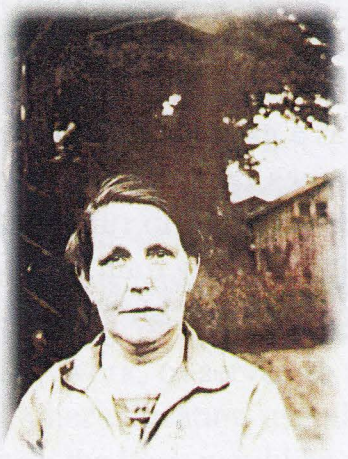
mill as a weaver, and much later on she re-married. Florence (called Florrie or Flo) had worked as a blouse machinist, on piece work, and against her Mother's wishes, had gone to work in the fish market with her friend Agnes. They worked for Kelsall Bros., who in 1881 bought land, described as a garden, for a kippering business in Peel, in the Mill Road, so Florrie and Agnes came to Peel for the summer herring season in 1920 or 21. Later they were kept on to run Kelsall's shop in Douglas throughout the year, travelling there and back by train from their lodgings with Mrs Cleator in Factory Lane, now Beach St. Peel. Mr Cleator was the Harbour Master.

Florrie and Percy were married in Peel Methodist Chapel on 22nd February 1923, and had their wedding reception at Callister's Café next door to the fish shop, on the corner where Barclay's Bank used to be.
I think the meal cost about 1/6d a head, and 6d extra for the dessert, and they had two bottles of blackcurrent (non-alcoholic) wine.

Florrie's brother Richard, aged 19 had come from Manchester to give her away. It was his first sea trip, and the weather was terrible and the journey took much longer than usual and the boat actually had to land at Peel. Mother remembered that as they walked up to their new home after the reception—obviously no honeymoon—it started to snow. They also went to live in "half a house" in Glenfaba Road, which was owned by Mr Gill or Gell and his daughter. Father always pronounced it as "Geel". I was born there in 1924.

They lived for two years in Glenfaba Rd, and their very good neighbours were the musical Clucas family, and the well-known Cowley family. Three of the Cowley sisters ran a lovely dress shop in Michael St, and favoured customers were taken into the back room for a cup of tea and a piece of delicious ginger cake.

When I was a year old, we moved to 9 Church St. which I think grandpa had bought , and like many other people, Mother took in summer visitors for a couple of years, and sister Alice was born there in 1927.



Grandma Parry

Mother and her friend Agnes

Mother aged about nineteen

Kitty and Fred

Mother and Father on their Wedding Day

memories of church st.

In Church St. our next-door neighbours were the Bridsons at No 11. Their house boasted bay-windows, which made it a bit more superior, and downside at No 7 were the Clagues. My sister Alice was born here in1927, when I was 3yrs and 9mths old, so in September I started school. I don't remember being taken there, but I suppose I was to begin with, and the entrance to Peel Clothworkers Infants' School was just around the corner in Derby Road. Miss "Catty" Moughtin was the teacher, and the only thing I remember was the outside toilets, which I hated. The walls were tarred halfway up, and the top half whitewashed, and they were a bit smelly.

The Bridsons' only child Dorothy was 2 years older than me, and must have longed for a sister or brother, and when Alice was born she asked her mother why they didn't have a baby in their house, and was told that when Nurse Kneale came with the new baby, the Bridsons were out, so she gave the baby to the Moores next door! Ever after, I think Dorothy thought the baby partly belonged to her, and to this day she is very fond of my sister Alice, and we all still keep in touch. The origin of babies was kept a mystery from children, and many funny explanations were given.

Mrs Ruby Bridson was a good singer, and used to compete in the Guild, so at the beginning of April she would start practising her scales—trilling up and down, which gave us little girls a good giggle.

Granda Crellin, Mrs Bridson's father lived with them, and he had an allotment in Albany Rd, and I remember being sent up there with the shopping basket, for vegetables. When he died, the coffin was placed on two chairs outside the front door, and neighbours and relations, mostly men, gathered round for the start of the funeral service, and sang a hymn which was nearly always "Jesu, lover of my Soul" or "Rock of Ages", before proceeding to the cemetery. This would probably be in the early 1930s.

We also used to giggle at Mrs Clagues bloomers blowing on the Monday washing line—Mother was very modern, and wouldn't have been seen dead in the like. The Clagues lived down side at No 7, and their daughter was Kitty who was a few years older than me, and they had an older daughter Flo, who lived in America. Their dog Tony, was part of the street scene, and we always called him Tony Clague, they also had a parrot in a large cage. Mr and Mrs Clague used to ride a tandem bike to visit relatives in the north of the Island.

Our very dear friends Maise and Beth Quilliam lived opposite us in No 12, with Grandma Teare and her daughter Auntie May. Sylvia and Leslie Watterson were a few doors down, and with other children in the street we played outside all the time—rounders with the gatepost of the houses for "dens", skipping---"eeper weeper chimney sweeper; had a wife and couldn't keep her; had another didn't love her; up the chimney he did shove her."—hopscotch, top and whip, hoops. There was very little traffic, and if two or three cars went up the street in half an hour, an elderly neighbour would stand at the gate and say "the traffic's terrific today"!
Girls were taught to sew and knit, and I can't believe that Sylvia and I knitted jumpers for ourselves aged 10 or 11.

At the bottom corner of the street (where the chip-shop is now) was Miss McCullough's grocery shop, where we got our weekly order. Kitty McCullough ran the shop and her sister Liza kept house. Their brother Willie was "delicate", and was a shadowy figure in the backround. Kitty had a stiff leg, and I remember her hobbling up the little wooden step ladder to reach goods from the top shelf. People who had sat too long and had difficulty getting up would say "I'm as stiff as Kitty's leg." For a treat, or if anyone was coming for tea, I would be sent to Kitty's for half a pound of chocolate biscuits. They were special, made of dark chocolate, some were triangles of wafer, and others were decorated with "violets"- purple petals made of sugar, and there were several other shapes and varieties. Chocolate biscuits were a real luxury, and were weighed out from a large tin, with a glass top, as were all biscuits, and the plain rich tea biscuits were oval shaped. We girls used to play a ball game up against her wall, and she never complained. At that time her shop was all part of the scenery , but looking back now, I realise how hard she must have worked, with very little help, probably maintaining her brother and sister, and what quiet and uneventful lives they led.

On the other corner of the street, opposite McCullough's was Miss Cain's shop. I think there were two sisters, and they sold sweets and odds and ends. It was where we spent our "Saturday pennies", you could buy a "hipporth" (halfpenny worth) of sweets, and Mother would tell us not to buy "Lucky Packets", as they were only "the sweepings up of the floor". I remember going to buy garters to keep our knee-length socks up. They were made of rubber—like a wide rubber band, and were displayed on a card hung up on the wall.

"Auntie Bawden's" toy shop was at the bottom of Christian St, next to Kinrade's who sold wallpaper etc, and they had much less variety or stock than shops have now, and apart from the main shopping area there were several small shops dotted about the town in the residential areas.

The house in Church St. had a small parlour containing the piano- a lot a people owned a piano- a sideboard- a couple of easy chairs. Behind that was the living kitchen with a black range, and this looked out to the small back yard. Then down a little corridor alongside the stairs was the small back kitchen, and I think the wash boiler was in here.

At the top of the first flight of stairs was the door to the "outlet" room, which was above the back-kitchen, coal house, and lavatory, and before it was made into a bathroom, was our playroom, used mostly in the winter. It was cold there so we had a Valor Paraffin heater, on top of which, we actually tried to heat water in a toy kettle. Talk about health and safety regulations, they were unheard of, and although the heater could easily have been knocked over, we were pretty sensible, and kids were strictly disciplined, and weren't allowed to be boisterous, or run riot in the house. We had our books, games, dolls and prams and spent a lot of time playing there with our friends in the winter.

On the first floor of No 9, there were two bedrooms one front and one back, and a box room over the hall. Father had this as a little office, housing his roll-top desk, and in the late spring, I would have to help him to send out price- lists to all the customers for kippers sent by post. Father was very good at book-keeping, and was always complimented by the accountant on the excellent state of the ledgers .

Alice and I shared the back bedroom, and I remember trying to do all sorts of athletic exploits on the big iron and brass bedstead- lots of head-over-heels etc. Sometimes we would take a fight, and when Mother heard us shouting and arguing she would come running upstairs and give us both a slap. I think we were sent to bed pretty early-- Mother was a great believer in a good sleep- and probably we weren't very tired.

In the back yard was a shed housing the mangle and washtub etc. and on the other side was the coal-house and lavatory, and beyond that the back door leading to the lane, which bordered a field (where Derby Drive and Cubbon's close are now). By the back door was a small open shed which we had as a play house, furnished with old mats, stools, boxes, and we had little tea sets, and baby dolls, and a good imagination, and with our friends we spent many a happy hour there. We were thoroughly domesticated, as little girls were expected to be.

In the summer, as we got older, we spent a lot of time on the shore, and made "houses"- shaping the damp sand with our hands, and decorating them with little white stones. For a change we made "shops", a chip-shop had pebbles for the chips and bright green seaweed for the peas, and the larger ribbon-like brown seaweed was bacon. The boys always made boats of a large flat stone, piled high with wet sand, with a stick for a mast, and a little paper flag for decoration, and I'm sure they sailed away over the sandy waves to exotic imaginary places. We would bring our bathing costumes, neatly wrapped in a towel under which we had perfected the art of getting undressed and dressed again quite modestly.
Another favourite activity was to run bare-footed over the sandstone rocks, at the promenade end of the shore. These had been smoothed by the action of the tides, and the countless battering of storms, but between the boulders were rock pools or "dubs" where we would try to catch darties, buckies (tiny fish) and small crabs with our hands to put in a bucket or more often, a jam jar with a bit of string tied round the rim to make a handle. We liked to prod the red sea anemones so that they squirted a little jet of water.

On Thursdays, the Steam Packet ran round-the –Island trips, and the boat usually got to Peel about 4.30pm. and would come in quite close, so we would run back into the sea then to have fun dodging the series of waves which followed in her wake.

We would go for walks with our friends, just kids, no adults, up Teddy Cain's lane, Pat Clague's lane, or Knockaloe Beg lane, or up the river, picking whatever flowers were in season, catkins, celandines, primroses, dog –daisies, bluebells. Father was good to tell us the names of the flowers, and was also interested in birdlife. At the "back-end" we would be out picking blackberries. Father didn't like the seeds, so Mother always made pounds and pounds of Blackberry and Apple jelly, the stewed fruit was put in an old white pillowcase and hung on a hook to strain the juice which dripped into a bowl underneath.

When Alice was 7 she had rheumatic fever, and had to rest in bed for several weeks. When she was finally well, she was allowed to go with us kids for a picnic up the river, and I had strict orders to look after her. But naturally she didn't take any notice of me, and went too near the bank and fell in, and I was frightened to go home in case she caught pneumonia and died. So cousin Freda and friend Margaret went ahead to keep the peace and tell the tale, and Alice was none the worse for the ducking.

Both of us were sent to piano lessons, as a lot of girls were, but just the occasional boy, and Alice had been learning for only 3 months when she , aged 10 won the competition for her age group, in the Guild, so there was rejoicing all round, and she is still a very good pianist.

I remember Mr& Mrs Cocchi who went round the streets in the summer selling ice-cream from a cart. I have been told that it had big brass lids on the ice cream container, and a plaque engraved with "Purveyors of Ice Cream to the Italian Royal Family". Mr Cocchi was Italian, and you could buy a "penny cornet" which was quite small compared to today's ice- cream cones.

John and Katy Marshall were street entertainers – if you could call it that.
John, on his accordion, played a tune that he seemed to make up as he went along – not very melodious; and Katy collected coppers from the passers by, and by calling at houses, and if one of her "regulars" was out, she would say the next time round, "you owe me for last week"!

(From Mrs Phyllis Long, nee Quirk)

At Christmas, church and chapel choirs came round the streets singing carols, and they made a lovely sound in the open air on a dark winter's night singing all the old familiar tunes.

The highlight of our summer was when Mother's brother Uncle Richard and his family came over from Manchester for their annual holidays. A couple of days before they were due, the railway lorry would arrive with their luggage, sent in advance, and Alice and I would be moved up to one of the bedrooms in the top of the house. Auntie Alice was good fun and had a hearty laugh, and Uncle Richard, more serious, taught us to swim. The boys, Kenneth and Gordon were a couple of years younger than us, and we had lots of outings and fun when they were over. Our parents had very little spare time in the summer; it was a case of bed-to-work most of the time.

On a Saturday we would be sent to Mrs Clague's, or Maggie Johnson's in Michael St. for chips—a shillingsworth in the big dish you brought with you, covered with grease-proof paper and a clean tea-towel. I also remember getting lovely steak-and-kidney pies from Quayles who had a butcher's shop and confectioner's on the corner of Bridge St. and Christian St. I think the pies were fourpence each.

Then in October, when the herring season was finished, we would go to Manchester to stay with Auntie Alice and Uncle Richard, and visit our grandmother and Mother's family. We really enjoyed the big city, riding on trams, and visiting the zoo at Belle-Vue, as well as seeing motorbike dirt track riding and our first fire-work display.
We moved to Derby Drive in 1936, and the house cost £800.

Uncle Richard and Auntie Alice with my daughter Marion

the Business and family

In 1921 or 2 Percy, always interested in new technology, had bought a small lorry in Manchester, when he went with Florrie to meet her family. He had an hours driving tuition, and that was it—I don't think a driving licence was necessary in those days and there was very little motorised traffic about, and people used to drive gaily down the middle of the road.

By 1930 Grandma Catherine was in her early seventies and took a back seat, and Fred and Percy took over most of the work from Grandpa. Percy still went "on the country" selling fish, and Florrie and Kitty worked in the shop in the summer. Later, Mother worked full time in the shop.

coal yard

In the early 30s Grandfather bought the coalyard in Atholl St. (where the Petrol Station is now), and Fred ran it with the help of cousin Nettie Cubbon's husband John Quirk, and Mr Cowell. But it closed down after a few years, and Fred returned to work in the fish business, but in the 40s he left the kipper yard, and worked at Jurby Airport.

"rapern towels"

Mother made "rapern" towels (a kind of fine sacking) for Father to wipe his hands on after handling the fish, and these, slimy and smelly when he got home, would be scrubbed on a rubbing board, together with his shop coat, and boiled in a galvanised bucket on the gas stove, when we lived in Church Street and she made Alice and I little "rapern" aprons which hung on a nail behind the back door, so that we could "help". Father, in his younger days liked to do a bit of woodwork, and he made us little stools to sit on in the kitchen. I also remember having leather boots which had lots of buttons down the side, and you used a button hook to fasten them.

I have tried to find out about the word "rapern" without success, and I think it must have been a Manchester dialect word. "Rapern" aprons were worn for any heavy or dirty work, scrubbing floors etc., and perhaps the word comes from "wrapping round". "Sacking" aprons were in common use for rough work, often made from used sacks, but I don't know where Mother got her "rapern".

the shop 1930 and 1940's

Like many other businesses, the shop just ticked over all winter, but Fridays were always busy because apart from it being the weekly shopping day, many people still ate fish on a Friday. The first busy time of the year was the Thursday of Easter week. Everybody ate fish on Good Friday, and there was a mad rush on the Wednesday and Thursday to prepare orders, and serve customers in the shop, and work started very early and finished very late. All shops closed on Good Friday. The main worry was getting supplies of fish, mostly from local boats if possible, but if the weather was stormy—which it often was—these small boats couldn't go out, so Father would make frantic telephone calls to the fish markets of Liverpool and Fleetwood to get supplies of Icelandic cod, and good big cod it was too. People seemed to like cod the best, often steamed and eaten with potatoes and parsley sauce, and skate was also a favourite. Skate was horrible for the men in the yard to prepare, as it had to be skinned and one variety had many spiny hooks on the tough skin of the back, and if they weren't careful, they could have many scratches on their hands—no tough rubber gloves in those days, and no plastic bags. Fish would be wrapped in good greaseproof paper, and newspaper or brown paper and string.

March was the time for cod's roe, or "pea", as the old people called it. The roes were much bigger than we get nowadays, and were boiled in a big pot in the cellar kitchen—a tricky business as care had to be taken to avoid the roe bursting, and they were delicious sliced and fried with bacon.

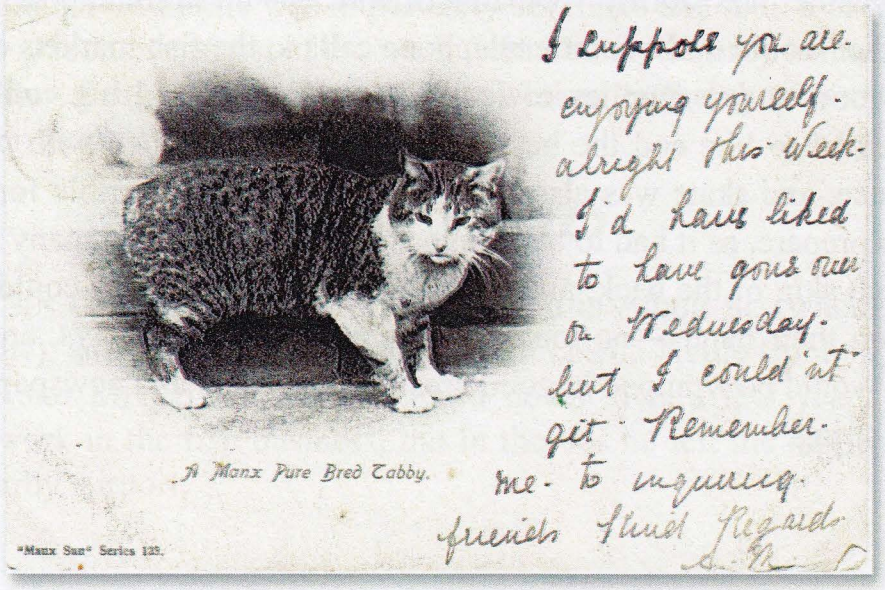
There was a big demand for fish in the summer from the boarding houses, cafes and "eating houses", and a message boy was always employed (as in most other shops) to do deliveries on the bicycle, which had a metal frame in front of the handlebars to hold a basket or box for the goods.

Plaice was a favourite and always cut into 4 fillets, not just 2 like today, and of course kippers, often eaten for breakfast by visitors, but seldom by locals who preferred to eat them for tea. There were several visiting families who came each year—one or two owning holiday homes, and seemed to be well-off and would order the occasional fresh salmon or lobster, and black (Dover) sole, Brill or Turbot. Very little fresh salmon was eaten compared to today, people thought it was tasteless, and preferred the tinned variety and even that was quite a luxury.

Crabs were plentiful, but there were no prawns or scallops. The locals liked cod, hake and haddock, skate and flukes (plaice) lemon sole, and witches (white sole), whiting callag and herring and mackerel, but nobody would eat mackerel caught by anglers off the breakwater. Local people reckoned they fed on the sewerage, and called them an appropriate name!

Best kippers were sold at 4d a pair (in cellophane bags) and 3d (thruppence), according to size and "seconds"—small and a bit broken, were threeha'pence. Earlier in the century, queenies were used as bait, by boats going to the long-line fishing, for cod, and the lines could only remain in the water for 2 or 3 hours as this bait was tender and would fall to pieces.

In the winter there would be salt cod or ling and an odd time, salt conger (eel). People also ate stockfish, which was cod or haddock split and dried in the open air without salt, and could be bought at the grocers.



kippers - parcel post

As well as buying Isle of Man Rock, and watching it being made with the "3 legs" in the middle, in Gore's shops in Douglas, sending kippers to friends by parcel post was a "must" when on holiday in the Isle of Man, and this was a very busy time in the shop in the summer.

Extra staff would be taken on to wrap the 3, 6, 9 and 12 pairs of kippers in greaseproof paper and pack them into oblong cardboard boxes, which were tied with string—a slip knot round the middle, pulled tight and the string put round the long side, and tied well to keep the lid on firmly. (I think I could still do it).

The boxes were made of strong brown cardboard and came in flat packs from Eversheds, in England and later from Radcliffes in Douglas, and were printed with our name and had a place for the address. I was often sent a few doors down the street to the Post Office (where Trio hairdressers is now) for sheets of 6d or 9d stamps for the 3 pair or 6 pair boxes, and then getting the job of stamping them and the message boy would go back down to the Post Office to get the handcart to load up the boxes of kippers, to meet the parcel post deadline. Kippers were never posted off late in the week, because if they were lying in the P. O. all weekend, it would be disastrous, especially in hot weather, and smelly too!

Many customers ordered a regular supply throughout the season, and each year Father would have price lists printed and sent off to them.

flynns

The wholesale trade was a very important part of the business, supplying the shops in the Island and in the north of England, and sent to the fishmarkets of Liverpool, Fleetwood and Manchester.

Flynns in Douglas was our most important customer, and Mr Daniel Flynn, a one-time Mayor of Douglas and Grandfather Thomas would have many a heated argument on the phone about the price—each one trying to get the best deal, until Father would intervene and get things settled. Later Mrs Black and her daughters Wyn and Josie managed Flynn's Douglas shop and did a brisk trade, and when a boatload of day- trippers descended on Douglas there would be frantic phone calls for extra supplies to be sent in on the lorry- and more haggling over the price!

The herring boats never fished on Saturday or Sunday, so the first landing of the week was Tuesday morning, consequently Monday afternoon was half-day in the yard. So often on Tuesday, there would be urgent phone calls from Mrs Black for more kippers. So the smoking process had to be hurried up, but care was taken not to let the smokehouse fires burn too fiercely and produce "cookies"—a soft pale kipper, "cooked" instead of a nice firm brown one by the longer smoking process.

A bit later we supplied Clucas's in Douglas, who also had a florists shop, and Mr Quayle was the owner or manager. Also, Mr Harry Faragher and Mr Cowle in Ramsey, Mr Kneen in Port St Mary and eventually Desmonds in Ramsey, and a firm in Belfast, were some of our customers.

Kipper Boxes Designed By Ian Coulson

chapter six

the herring fishing 1930's and 1940's

"In the end it was Skeddan,
the Herring, the Li'l Silver Fella,
who was made King of the sea."
From Manx Fairy Tales by Sophia Morrison

The herring fishing usually started slowly, round about the last week in May, with small catches being landed. There were a few local boats going to the herring, and gradually the Scottish and Irish boats would arrive, and the harbour and town would be busy and lively. They came from Kilkeel, Annalong, Ardglass and Portavogie in N. Ireland, and Arklow in Eire. Many of the boats came from the east coast of Scotland, from Musselburgh, Fisherrow and Port Seton on the south side of the Firth of Forth, not far from Edinburgh, and so were registered in Leith, and were the LH boats. On the north side they came from the fishing villages of St Monance, Pittenweem and Anstruther in Fifeshire, and had the KY registration of Kirkcaldy. Further north they came from Peterhead (PD)
Fraserburgh (FH), Buckie, Lossiemouth, and Avoch's (pronounced "Auk") registration was INS.

They would sail through the Caledonian Canal and perhaps south via the Crinan Canal, into Loch Fyne and through the Firth of Clyde, and into the Irish Sea-a much shorter journey than having to go right around the north of Scotland.

A record of the fishing boats passing through the Caledonian Canal says that in 1931-2, 1,000 boats went through, but in 1938-9, under 400 used the Canal, and Canal income fell by almost a half in 7 years. The decline was put down to the depression in the fishing industry. 1939 saw a major overhaul of the canal, and when war broke out, ships in Government service again resorted to using the canal, to take advantage of the safe passage from sea to sea, which took about 12 hours. Earlier boats had used the Forth and Clyde Canal, which was no longer in existence, but it was re-opened in 2000, and the Falkirk-Edinburgh Canal was re-opened two years later in 2002.

From nearer home on the west coast of Scotland, boats came from Campbeltown and Carradale (CN) on Kintyre, and the BA boats were from Ballantrae, Girvan, Maidens and Dunure, and were mostly "Ringers" working in pairs using a ring-net instead of the drift-net used by the other boats.

The boats using the ring-net, worked together, making a circle with the net to trap the herring. You could always spot the "ringers" because their sides were festooned with old tyres to prevent damage when they worked closely together. The other boats used the drift net and worked singly. LH men would come earlier in the season and use the drift net, and as the herring became more plentiful, they would change to the ring net. CN and BA men however, used the ring net all season.

In Campbeltown, family, friends and neighbours would go to the pub to celebrate the purchase of a new net, which cost £4,000 in 1950-60.

In 1937, 80% of the herring sold on the Island was caught by non-Manx boats.

I think in the 30s and early 40s there were still a few of the larger steam drifters and trawlers coming to Peel and berthed at the breakwater. Also I vaguely remember Father pointing out the last of the cod boats, which went to the long-line fishing.

Most of the boats were owned by individual families and worked by six men—the skipper, four crew, and a teenage cook, and would often include father and sons, brothers and cousins, and wives and mothers might own a net. The boats were usually well maintained, clean and smart, some painted and others varnished.

The first boats to arrive in May were always the KY registered Providence, owned by the Wood family and the Paragon, also KY, owned by the Hutts, a Peel girl Eileen Hughes married Jimmy Wood of the Providence.
Other Peel girls who married Scottish fishermen were:

Esme Quane	m.	Lockie Horsburgh		KY
Helen Crawley	m.	Neil Speed	of the Moira	CN
Betty Moughtin	m.	Willie Clarke	of the Golden Dawn	LH
Sheila Kinley	m.	Willie Gibson	of the Achates	LH
Ivy Wilson	m.	Andrew Wilson		KY
Janet Cleator	m.	Bill Blackley	of the Golden Effort	LH
May Carroon	m.	James Anderson		KY
Lilian Robinson	m.	Lawrence Thorburn		LH

sunday walks and the harbour

On a fine Sunday afternoon, it was customary for the Peelites, dressed in their Sunday best, to take a walk to the end of the promenade and "kick the rock"- touch the red sandstone rock face with your foot- and turn round and go back over the prom and Shore Road and round the Weatherglass corner, which everybody called "spit corner", because at that time, the old men would stand there, put the world to rights, smoke their pipes, and spit! Then off down the quay, chatting to all and sundry, and perhaps go out the breakwater and round the Castle to admire the profusion of sea-pinks and white bladder-campions growing there.

Often, instead of walking round the Mill Road, past the Gasworks and Brickworks, and over the railway crossing to the West Quay, we would go over the "Blackboards", which was a walkway attached to the railway station wall at the top of the harbour, before the present road was built. It linked the east and west quays, and was made of two tarred planks of wood, and was about 2 feet wide, and at high tide the water would be level with the top of it. Everybody used it including unaccompanied children running along. There were no railings and no health and safety regulations, and I don't remember anyone falling in the harbour from there. The Blackboards ended at the slipway near the bridge, and "cousin" Frank Keig who is 91, said that area used to be called the Scotch Quay. There would often be boys fishing for eels from the bridge.

You could also get to "the other side", by taking the ferry, a sturdy wide flat bottomed boat which was rowed back and forth between the entrance of the harbour and the Castle steps, or, when the tide was out, go across on the portable wooden walkway, mounted on small wheels, which sat on the bottom of the harbour, and boasted a rope handrail. When the tide came in, it would float to the surface, and be moved out of the way so that the boat could operate.

The Wilson family ran the ferry, and I remember Connie Wilson taking the money at the top of the steps and I think it cost 1d for children and 2d for adults. Later the Tate family ran the ferry, and for many years the Cannon family had rowing boats for hire.

Throughout the summer, on a Sunday afternoon there would be special open-air services in the Castle. Each of the three main churches would hold their Sunday School Anniversaries in what Father called the "tilting ground",

and the children would parade along the quay, dressed in their best clothes—the girls always had new dresses for the occasion. There would also be morning and evening services in their churches, as well as a service on Monday evening- lots of singing and lots of practising by the choirs and children, and always large congregations. We would go to the Lifeboat Service in the Castle, and every body sat round on the grass. Mr Johnny Kelly and Cleveland Medallist Mrs May Cowley were the soloists, singing "Pull for the Shore Sailors" and "Throw out the Lifeline". Mr Kelly had sung at the Lifeboat Service for 52 years.

During the week there were Sports in the Castle probably arranged by the Town Commissioners, and very popular with the visitors. The Castle grounds were used a lot for community events in those days. With the exception of the Shakespeare plays in the summer, nothing much happens there nowadays.

In those days nearly all work stopped on a Sunday, and the boats made a lovely peaceful sight in the harbour. Many of the fishermen had been coming to Peel for several years and were old friends, and they would be sitting in the sun on the decks, or taking a walk round about. To me they appeared to be talking "double dutch", especially the Fife men who spoke very softly and quickly, but Father had no trouble at all. He always told us the names of the registration ports, and sister Alice and I made a game of trying to identify them from the letters written on the sides of the boats along side the name-- and we used to try to guess the origin of the wonderful variety of names.

The fishermen always wore their best navy-blue suits and beautifully knitted ganseys, on a Sunday, and I often wondered how they managed to look so neat, as there couldn't have been much room down below on the boats, but a fisherman's wife told me that they were fitted with little wardrobe cupboards.

Quite a lot of fishermen attended services in the two Chapels, and the Primitive Methodist Chapel always held a special fisherman's welcome service and afterwards supper was served in the hall in Michael Street (where the Electricity Board shop is now), when the locals would be able to renew old friendships and make new ones.

A small number of fishermen were Plymouth Brethren, and some of their members and friends holidayed in Peel and held open air services on a Sunday at the Weatherglass corner. No music, just Bible readings, talks and prayers. You could always spot the Brethren—quiet gentle people who didn't mix with the common herd. The women, prim and demure, quietly and neatly dressed,with their long hair scraped back into a "bun", and wearing a hat.

There was an open and closed sect, and I was told that members of the latter, wouldn't eat or drink with non-members, causing a lot of unhappiness and divisiveness in families. The local Meeting House was in the old Court House situated between Castle Street and the quay, and is now the Leece Museum. Nearby on the quay was the Sailor's Shelter, an open house and meeting place for both local and visiting fishermen and yachtsmen, who could sit around the old coal-burning stove on a stormy day. It contained lots of information about Peel boats and some very interesting nautical memorabilia. The Shelter was founded in 1877, and is still in use today, run by a local committee.

Some of the fishermen from N. Ireland were Orangemen, and would always return home for several days around the 12th July for their annual celebrations.

Although there was an influx of men in the town, I never remember the fishermen causing trouble. The majority were law-abiding family men, and it would be rare indeed for any of them to come up against the law.

Fishermen's wives and families would often spend the summer in Peel, or come for a visit, and would lodge with local families, and so generate a welcome bit of extra income for housewives who had a room or two to let.

Shops too, benefited from the extra trade, as the boats would need provisions, and the young cooks would be sent up to Michael St. to the grocers' and bakers' shops, and as well as doing the shopping had a chance to meet the local girls.

Of the few Manx boats that I can remember, One of the oldest was the Girl Emily, built in 1917, and there was the Eeasteyr (Fisher of fishermen) owned by the Cowell family. Another was the Cair Vie, Ronnie Sayle owned the L'il Marina, Laurie Leadley had the Seven Sons and Lockie Horsburgh had the Signora 2, which was later bought by Jack Greggor and Jim and James Coulson, and worked by Jack and James. Later with the help of Government grants several young local men were able to buy boats.

admiral of the fleet

June 1962 saw the re-creation of the ancient title, as an honour for a distinguished person and "The office of Admiral of the Fleet, was held by the famous naturalist Sir Peter Scott, and his vice-admiral was Lockhart (Lockie) Horsburgh, who later became admiral, and I don't think there were many appointments after that, as the position seems to have lapsed". Extracts from Mona's Herald and Fred Palmer.

"By night the silver harvest of the sea"
(Manx Fishermen's Evening Hymn)

Herring boats fished at night, and starting on Monday evening about 7 0'clock, it was a lovely sight to see the boats going out one after another, heading round the castle, and out past Niarbyl Bay, and into the sunset, the sea shimmering like crystal on calm days.

There was a boat called the "Crystal Sea", and Father used to say that it reminded him of the last two lines of the chorus of a wonderful Welsh hymn—"Sing it with his Saints in glory, gathered round the crystal sea".

In the olden days Niarbyl Bay was called "The Big Bay", and seemed to have a special significance for the local fishermen, and is the setting for the rather eerie Manx fairy-tale recorded by Sophia Morrison called "The Child Without a Name",

The boats returned in the morning, and the catches were auctioned at 8 am by the salesman. [Over the years they were Mr. Quirk, Mr. McEvoy, Mr. Colin Makin, and Mr. Barry Horne].

Early on, the herring were sold by the mease, which was 5 hundred herring, but the Manx hundred, called a long hundred, consisted of 6 score + 4 fish making 124, and so there was 620 to the mease. Later they were sold by the cran, and now in units and tonnes.

The Kipperers gathered at the breakwater for the auction at 8 am, and as well as T. Moore and Sons there were Curtis, Devereaus, McEvoys, Orrells, Phillips, Donald Clucas, Jackie Robinson, and George Rodgers.

A sample of the catch from each boat was hauled up in a basket, and an estimate of the quantity given. It had to be a fair sample or there would be trouble, because if the herring were too small, they would be no use for kippering. Bidding would be brisk and fiercely competitive, especially when the catches were poor. Supplies could be erratic, perhaps because of bad weather, and sometimes, before the days of Sonar, the fishermen had no luck in locating the herring shoals.

As the auction progressed, lorries would be standing by to rush the herring to the yards to get a good start. All would be hustle and bustle in the unloading from the boats on to the lorries, involving lots of muscle- power and skill at manoeuvring the lorries in a limited space. The voracious gulls would be cruising overhead, or perched in strategic positions, noisy and ever watchful to snatch a good breakfast. Visitors loved to watch the scene, and on a bad day, Father would complain that they were a nuisance—"stuck in the way", but it was part of their holiday, and a special treat for the men, and the local lads, was to persuade the skipper of a boat, to take them to sea for a night at the herring.

"And, maybe, it's because the Herring is King of the Sea that he has so much honour among men. Even the Deemsters, when they take their oath, say; I will execute justice as indifferently as the herring's backbone doth lie in the midst of the fish." Sophia Morrison.

Fishing was more hazardous than ever, during and just after the 1939-45 war, and in July 1946 an Anson plane from Jurby involved in an evening search for a missing RAF Aircraft off the south of the Island, struck and carried away the mizzen mast if the "Boy Alex", which was in company with other Herring boats out from Peel. And there was the danger of mines, "Sea mines from the minefield south of the Calf, were swept ashore by stormy weather around the Manx coastline early this year. Several exploded, but about a dozen were made safe by R. Navy experts. Some reached as far as Kirk Michael, and this led to agitation that the minefield should be cleared as quickly as possible". From A Chronicle of the 20th Century.

Isle of Man Fisheries Ltd

On 27th Feb 1937, a company called the I.O.M. Fisheries Ltd., was registered at the Registry Office in Douglas. It had been formed by a group of local businessmen "To encourage, organize and develop the (fishing) Industry, and to purchase, charter, hire, build or acquire fishing boats and equipment" The registered office was in the Peel Town Commissioners' office in Castle St. Mr. H.C. Clarke (printer) was the secretary, and the directors were :-

Mr George Higgins	Fishmonger
Mr George H.W. Moore	Retired stockbroker.
Mr John Curtis	Fishmonger
Mr Percy J. Moore	Fishmonger
Mr H.K. Corlett	Woollen manufacturer (Chairman)
MR W.O. Quayle	Timber Merchant

The 50 shareholders were mostly local businessmen but included one fisherman and seven women, one of whom was the Peel M.H.K. Mrs Marion Shimmin.

Hoping to revive the fishing industry, and with a 75% Government loan, the Company arranged for 4 boats to be built in Cellardyke on the Fifeshire coast. They were PL 43 Manx Fairy, PL 35 Manx Beauty, Manx Lad and Manx Lass. Father and Harry Clarke went out to Cellardyke to take delivery of them, and the Manx Lass was christened by Deemster Cowley on June 15th 1937 at Peel Breakwater, and the Lad, by Lady Butler, the wife of the Govenor Sir Montagu Butler.

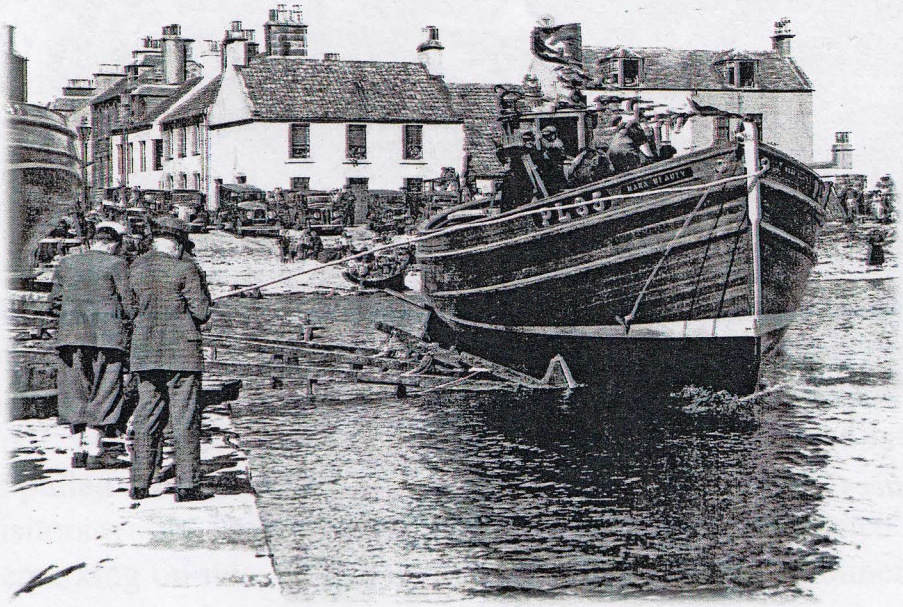
A further 5 boats were built during the war, in Arklow, Eire. And Father again went to take delivery of some of them. These boats were:

The Manx Lily,	built in	1940, skipper David Craine
Manx Clover,	"	1941, skipper E. Cain/L. Greggor
Manx Fuchsia	,,	1941, skipper Stanley Gorry
Manx Rose	,,	1942, skipper J. Deas.
Manx Belle	,,	1943, skipper J. Quilliam.

There was a tragedy in Jan 1945, when two crew members of the Manx Lily died in drowning accidents. Her acting skipper Thos. Wm. Quilliam was dragged into the sea when the scallop dredge fell back into the water as it was being hauled on board, and unbelievably, four days later the skipper David Craine died when he fell overboard while taking the boat to Scotland for an overhaul. (A chronicle of the 20th Century).

In 1947, the sea claimed another Peel man, Mr Johnnie Cain (Mrs Mona Dunworth's father) was lost overboard from the Manx Clover, skippered by Lockie Horsburgh. His brother Harry Cain was skipper of the Fuchsia, and his brother Edwin (Neddy) was skipper of the Clover in 1941. On a happier note, his niece Sheila (Kinley) Gibson, was chosen as Peel's first Herring Queen in 1952, and was crowned on board the Clover, which was broken up in Peel in 2004.

The company carried on through good times and bad, for 35 years, but the fishing industry was declining, especially the herring fishing, and in March 1972, they went into voluntary liquidation.



Launch of the Manx Beauty. Cellardyke Fifeshire June 1937

The Manx Fairy's away. June 1937. P.J. Moore pictured far right.

christening the fleet

Fishing Revival

Deemster Cowley christens the "Manx Lass" on June 15. 1937

The four new fishing boats belonging to The Isle of Man Fisheries Ltd, lying alongside Peel Harbour. ***Manx Beauty. Manx Fairy. Manx Lad and Manx Lass***

chapter seven

kippering in michael street

1930s-40s

When the lorries arrived at the yard, the herring would be unloaded on to the bench, ready for the first stage of kippering. This was the splitting, and in the 1930swas mainly done by hand by local women, who were very deft at the job. I particularly remember Mrs Curphey and her daughter Mrs Hughes, and Mrs Clucas, and there were many others over the years. They stood at a bench in an open shed, and wore oilskin aprons over their working clothes, always with sleeves well rolled up, and wearing stout boots or wellies. The women worked very quickly, and seemed to develop a rhythm—anchor the herring with the left hand, then make a sharp slit halfway down the back to the tail, then back up to the head to open up the fish. A quick flick with the knife would remove the guts, which were scraped into a barrel alongside each worker, and another quick fling of the split herring into a basket on the floor.

While doing this they would be chatting away to each other, but always keeping their eyes on the job—the small knives they used were very sharp! On their fingers they wore "thumb rags" (stalls) which they made with any old cotton material wound round and round the finger and thumbs, and tied with string or wool, which were much needed protection. They moulded into shape, and could be pulled off and put back on again as needed.

Visitors would often walk into the yard to watch – fascinated by it all.

Remarking on this, there was a letter in the I.O.M. Examiner of 27-06-06, from Mrs Margaret June Meakin, of Netherton, Merseyside, where she says that she had been coming to the I.O.M. for 84 years, and remembers "long ago seeing women at Peel or Port St Mary boning (?) herrings as the trawlers came in, their fingers all bandaged up"

kippering

In later years, Father, always looking for ways to make the job easier, and ever willing to consider new ideas or try out new equipment, was the first kipperer to hire a herring splitting machine from "Fiscadco" in Hull at the rent of £4 per week.

The split herring were washed down with the hosepipe, and immersed in the pickling vat, (still in the baskets)—which was a large oblong concrete double trough filled with a mixture of coarse salt and water, for about 20minutes. At that time (1930s-40s) the salt came from the Ramsey Salt Works, and there would be a gauge floating in the pickle to check the salinity.

Tentering was the next stage. After the baskets of herring were taken out of the pickle—this was a man's job—they were drained and tipped into wooden troughs (called trows) which were oblong, and had a narrow piece of wood built up at the ends with a groove to hold a tenter stick. This was a wooden stick about four and a half foot long and 1" thick, which had large right-angled nails on opposite sides, and blackened by years of use in the smokehouse. The slippery herring were hooked by the shoulders on to two of the nails, split side out. This was often done by students doing summer holiday jobs, and woe betide them if they neglected to remove the "swims".

kippering – smoking (michael street)

A "swim" was the long thin silvery swim bladder, which didn't always come out with the guts, and they were fiddly to pull out, but if left in they spoiled the look of the kipper.

Two people stood either side of the trough to hook the herring split side out on to their side of the tenter stick, and worked very quickly –especially the old hands. This was tough on the thumbs, and the older women used thumb rags. As soon as the stick was full, it was lifted off the trow, and handed to the man loading the smokehouses. He did this by walking into the smokehouse on a plank of wood places lengthways down the middle, perhaps about halfway up the "chimney", and slotting the sticks in one by one onto the lugs on each side. This was done from the second floor of the building, but the fires were on the ground floor, ready to be lit when the smokehouse was loaded.

smokehouses

The five smokehouses in Michael St. were rectangular chimneys, three storeys high, and about 10 feet deep and 4.6" wide –just wide enough for the tenter sticks to fit on to the wooden slats, or lugs, which went right up to the top on each side at 18 inch intervals. There were shutters in the roof to control the draught, worked by a rope that hung down. On the ground floor, made of brick, fires were made of six or seven heaps of wood shavings—oak if you could get it—topped by dampened sawdust, called mush, which made the smoke. If the day was windy, the fires would have to be well dampened down, but on a still day they would smoulder on and the process would take longer. The fires were also controlled by the opening and shutting of the stable type doors at ground level. It was quite a skilled operation, especially when there were large quantities of herring and a good smoker was worth his weight in gold. He usually started work at 6pm, and continued until 6am next morning.

In the early days, local men would do the smoking, and Father used to tell us that when he was a young man –in the 1920s, he would often work in the yard all day, and then work in the smokehouse for a good part of the night as well. Later, a smoker from Scotland, Whitby or Hull would be hired, one of the skilled workers who followed the herring fishing round the British Isles.
Some of these were tough men,-and it wasn't a very nice job-working all the time in the smokey atmosphere, and one year we had a smoker who was a bit too fond of the booze and perhaps would have friends who kept him supplied, and when Father found out he said he couldn't sleep at night because of worrying that the place could have burned down. When Grandfather was in charge, he absolutely refused to have fire insurance, being a religious man, he was convinced that the Lord would protect them. Father, however, didn't have his faith, and continued to worry.

The smokers worked through the night, tending the fires, and usually having to move the half-smoked herrings about---just like a woman would move a cake from the top to the bottom of the oven---to ensure even smoking. When the kippers were ready, they were taken out of the smokehouse, still on the tenter sticks, which were loaded on to large wooden movable racks to cool. He would finish work at 6am, or earlier if there weren't many herring in, and then the day staff came in. Their first job was to pair, grade, and pack the kippers, and to get out the orders. Kippers were packed into stone and half stone wooden boxes, some to be loaded onto the lorries to catch the 9 o'clock boat bound for Liverpool, Fleetwood and Manchester. In those days before containers were used on the boats, a certain amount of pilfering took place, and Father would get complaints from his customers that they were several boxes short.

The rest of the output supplied local retailers as well as our own shop, and the surplus was frozen and used throughout the winter. There was quite a demand for "seconds" the small or broken kippers, which sold a lot cheaper, and were just as fresh and tasty as the others.
After the packing was done, the day staff went for their breakfast from 8-9am and by then the day's catch of fresh herrings would be in the yard, ready for another day's processing.

Students and school children, both boys and girls from the age of fourteen had summer jobs in the kipper yards, mostly doing tentering or picking melts.

On slack days, and on Monday mornings—Monday was a half-day—the wooden boxes would be made. Mother was very quick at this. She was left-handed, "kithagey" (from the Manx kuithagh or kithakh) but at school was forced to write with her right hand, and seemed to be able to use both hands equally well. The wood for the boxes came from Kelly Bros. in Kirk Michael, and consisted of 6 thin rectangular pieces for the tops, bottoms and sides, and two thicker, smaller ones for the ends. The ends sides and bottoms were nailed together, packed with 26-28 pairs of kippers to weigh a stone, then, the lids were nailed on. The sides were stencilled with "T. Moore & Sons" etc.

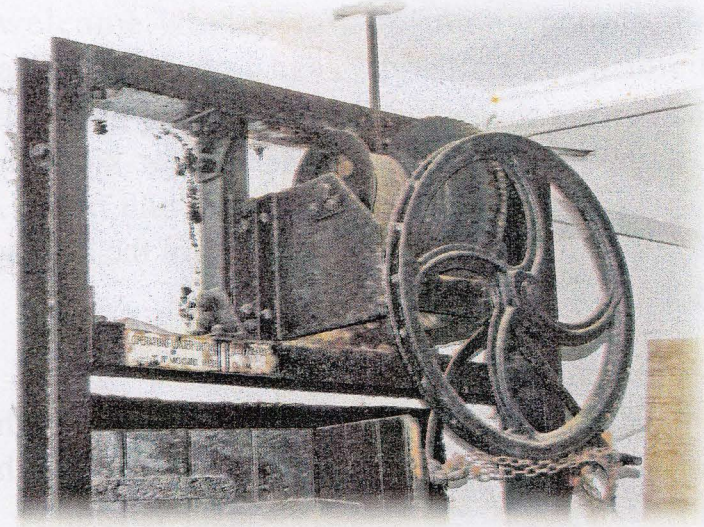
During the war years 1939-45 kippers were not rationed, so there was a big demand for them from firms in England for their works' canteens, and Aunty Alice, Mother's sister-in-law from Manchester had 20 stone every week, to sell to neighbours and friends to eke out their rations. Cousin Gordon had the job of delivering them.

As many of the local men were serving in the Forces, it was hard to get staff, so parties of "aliens" from the Peveril internment camp, which stretched from the Creg Malin end of the prom, up the Walpole Road and north up to the top of Peveril Road, came, along with their Pioneer Corps guard to work in the yard. Cousin Gordon remembers some of them. There was a Dutchman "Villum", very clean and very tall, who wore home-made sabots. Marcel was a small Frenchman who had no bone in his nose, and he teased Gordon about being left-handed—"guachiere".
Haakon from the Lofoton Islands was a Quisling, and there was a Polish fellow who hated people whistling. I wonder if he had been a sailor?
If there had been a lot of herring in, and they had worked late, we provided them with sandwiches and tea. The guard lent a hand at times too. I'm sure it was against the rules, but he was probably glad of the extra money. I think it was laid down what the Internees could be paid.

Father had the idea of rigging up a mechanical hoist to load the smoke-houses, as it was a horrible job, and he asked one of the Internees, Villum, who was a clever engineer, if it could be done. So the two of them, with the help of Uncle Richard (Mother's brother and Gordon's father) over on his summer holidays, the new mechanism was designed and set up, and it is still in place today, although not in use.

Michael Street Yard

Father (Percy) ? Willmott and Jimmy ClucasTentering - 1940's



The Hoist

Rabbits were another good source of food during the war. There were plenty of them about the countryside, but they were a real pest to the farmers and did a lot of damage, so the local men and boys were able to earn a bit of extra cash by snaring or lamping them—it wouldn't be allowed today. The van or lorry went out round the country in the winter collecting the rabbits which were shipped off to England.

Fish Workers

Working in the herring was a seasonal occupation, and the workers followed the shoals around the coast, as there would be very little work available in their home ports and fishing villages off season. It was a way of life, and I think the next fishing after Peel was Whitby. This was when there was still herring in the North Sea, and before the days of quotas and restrictions.
Fish workers came to the Island from Hull, Whitby, Shields, Peterhead and later from Ireland, and were all skilled at the job. I remember when helping out at the office, getting in touch with an Irish woman, by writing to her, c/o Letterkenny P.O., who undertook to get staff for us from Donegal. I think it would be during, or shortly after the war, when the local men were all serving in the armed forces. Sometimes you had to find them digs and send the fare, which was probably deducted from their wages later on. I think there are at least two families in Peel now who originated in Donegal, and came here as fish workers. A few men stayed on for the winter and worked on the farms, and made up a gang for picking potatoes.

But there was always a nucleus of key workers, and many had worked in the yard for years.

By the beginning of September the herring shoals moved round to the East coast and the spawning grounds off Douglas. They were less suitable for kippering –called "spent" herring, but there was a small market for the roes and melts. A locum G.P. told father that they were by far the most nutritious part of the herring, but they were not popular with the locals for eating.

When the season got under way, large quantities of herrings were bought by the Curers, for salting down in barrels. This was an entirely separate process from the kipper curing, and was mostly carried out by firms from outside the Island.

"Barrel" boats would berth at the breakwater, laden with empty barrels which would be stacked on the breakwater, or West quay. Herrings would be emptied into long wooden troughs and the "Gutter Girls" would gut them and pack them tightly in the barrels head to tail, in layers sprinkled with coarse salt, a back-breaking job done in the open air. I believe one exporter used to add some sort of spice as well. A wooden lid would seal up the barrel, and later on, the barrel boat would return and load them up for export to the Baltic, Russia, Germany and Holland. Visitors would stand and watch and marvel at how speedily the girls worked.

Father always "put down" some barrels of salt herring for sale in the shop, and it was customary when I was a child, for many households to have their own stock of herrings-"salties". Some people liked to have a feed of salt herrings a day or two after Christmas, to settle their stomachs after all the rich Christmas fare.

At the end of the season when most of the visiting boats and fish workers had moved on, the local staff would set to and do a big clean up. Both Mother and Father were very particular about cleanliness, and every thing was scrubbed down and the tenter sticks scraped to get rid of the burned on accumulation of oil from the herrings, and by 1st November they were ready to take on more local workers for the start of the scallop season.

scallop fishing

In the early part of the 20th century, scallops were used as bait for the line fishing, and I don't think they were ever eaten, so there would be no demand for them commercially. But eating habits change and in about 1935 many local boats started to go to the scallop fishing. They were dredged up from the bottom by specially designed or adapted boats, and to begin with, were mostly exported to France, and cleaning scallops provided welcome winter work for many people. Father exported them to France, and had special heavy plastic bags printed with "Coquille St. Jaques"

chapter eight

kelsall's yard

1955 onwards

In 1955 Father bought Kelsall's yard in the Mill Road by the harbour bridge, from Mr. George Rodgers who had been kippering there, and events going full circle, Mother had come here from Manchester to work for the Kelsall Bros., around about 1920. Father was anxious to move the business out of town, as he was worried about the smoke from the kippering being a nuisance to the towns people, although many of the older Peelites living around about didn't seem to mind, because they had depended on the fish trade for work, even though most of it was seasonal, but by the 1950s, it was becoming more unacceptable.

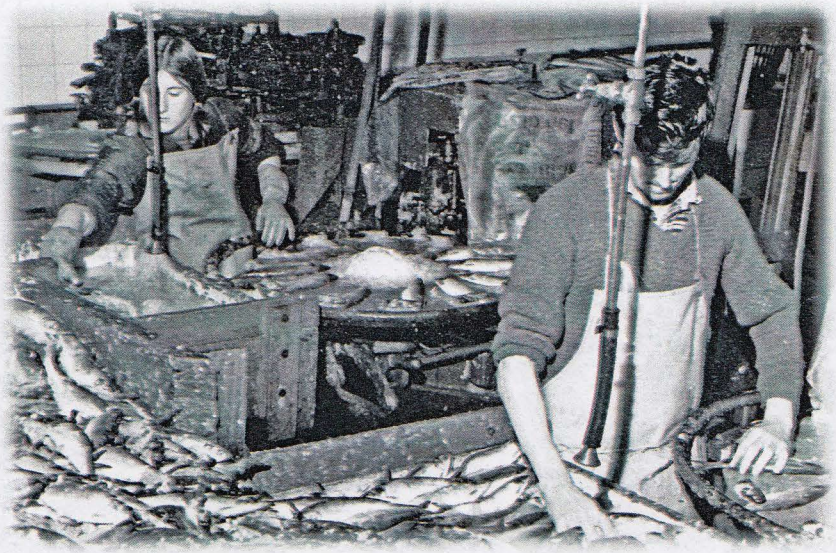
In 1958 the Mona's Herald reported that "Scottish boats using the ring nets landed 2,000,000 herrings. Manx boats whose crews will not use ring-nets do not catch any herring"!

Also in 1958 the Ramsey Courier published an article by the Director of the Marine Biological Station on the Manx Scallop Industry, 20years after it had first started.

Herring were for sale in Douglas at 15 for a shilling in 1959, and in that year herrings reached a record price of £25 a cran, because of scarcity due to bad weather. Also in 1959, the Government were negotiating with a British firm for the establishment of a deep freeze store at Peel, mainly for scallops and prawns.

Miss Eliza Jane Kerruish died in February 1963. She was the last of a long line of women who mended herring drift nets, ending a link with the old days and old ways. (From The Weekly Times)

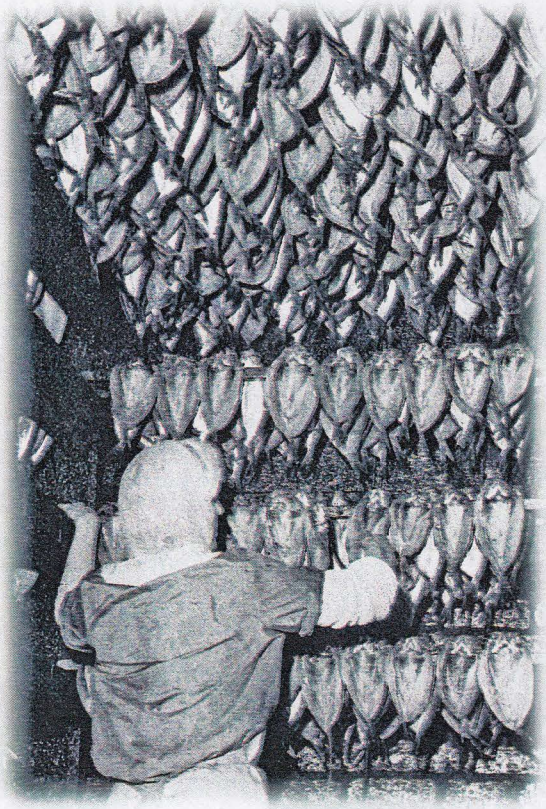
The kippering was done in the Mill road yard, but the shop and most of the other fish business still carried on in Michael St. Grandfather Thomas had died in 1938 and Grandma in 1942, and her upstairs sitting-room had become the office, and the little back sitting-room was used for preparing the parcel post. Crabs and lobsters were still boiled in the cellar kitchen, but the rest of the house was unoccupied. The shop had been modernised and extended over the years, and a sturdy modern tiled display counter was installed, and is still there today.



Splitting Machines

Tentering

Loading
the smokehouse



Smokehouse nearly full

Tenter Sticks

BUCKINGHAM PALACE 10th October, 1984

Dear Mr Moore

Princess Anne has asked me to write and thank you for the marvellous box of kippers you so kindly gave her.

Her Royal Highness enjoyed her visit to the Isle of Man enormously and looks forward to tasting her first manx kipper, which she knows are the best.

May I add my own thanks for the other box.

Yours sincerely

Jean Legge Pemberton

Lady in Waiting to
HRH The Princess Anne
Mrs Mark Phillips

T. Moore, Esq

After 23 years, Mother gave up working in the shop, but it was kept going for a few more years, with the help of several local women, and at one time was rented by Mr & Mrs Higgins, but in 1967, was sold to Mr Harry Maddrell, who along with his wife Angela, ran it successfully until 2000. The premises were then taken over by Jackie and Frankie Horne, but the shop is now closed, and there are plans to turn the outbuildings into residential accommodation.

The Kippering process in the Mill Road yard was much the same as it had been in Michael St., but the premises were bigger and had been purpose built. There was a raised loading bay, the floors of the twelve traditional smokehouses, splitting machines and a filleting one, as well as the pickling vats, all on the ground floor.

Upstairs was a large L-shaped room for tentering, loading and emptying the smokehouses, and a moving belt for the packed boxes—now made of cardboard, and a machine which strapped them. As well as the lorries there was a fork-lift truck, and in the yard there was a large walk-in fridge, and alongside the office, a small shop.

Fish meal factory

In the 1960s, a Fish Meal factory was established by the Government, in Mill Road. It was an attempt to help the Industry by coping with the large amounts of small unsaleable fish mostly herrings, and the fish offal, but it was never very successful, probably due to the seasonal nature of the fishing and erratic supplies.

In Sept 1965 the Peel Town Commissioners made a strong protest about the offensive smell- and I can remember how bad that was--, causing distress to visitors and residents. In Jan. 1970 there was a controversial plea to close it down, and the premises were sold to the Government in 1974 (Weekly Times 3-9-65)

1972 saw record catches of herrings, but by 1973, fishing controls were brought in, and by 1975, herring were scarce. With the introduction of decimalization 1974 saw the end of the cran measure, the new unit was to be 100 kilos

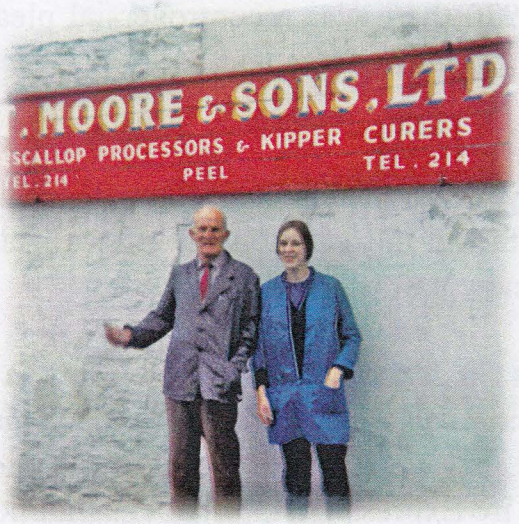
Kippers were still sent via the Steam Packet Co. to long standing customers in the Manchester, Liverpool, and Fleetwood fish markets. There was very little demand for Manx Kippers in the South of England, but we supplied Harrods in London with small quantities, which had to be sent by Express Post. Small consignments were sent by air to Belfast. With the decline of the visiting industry, the parcel post trade had diminished considerably.

As Father grew older, Jim Coulson took over a lot of the work, and eventually became the very able and successful Managing Director, with the support of his wife Bella, who continued to work until the business closed, and in the 1970s their son Ian designed a smart new logo for the kipper boxes and plastic bags. Father gradually took things easier, but still going down to the yard each day until he was 80, and died in 1982 aged 83. Sadly, Jim suddenly took ill in the summer of 1987 and died the next year, aged 60. He was very much missed.

At that time the fishing was declining- many of the herrings landed were too small for kippering, and there were just two visiting Irish boats- and one Manx boat The Friendly Shore, owned by Mr. Norman Sansbury from Port St Mary. There were only two other kipperers left, Curtis's and Devereau's, who used the modern Torrey kiln method of smoking, which was quicker than the old traditional way.

After Jim's death, there was nobody interested in taking over the business, and it closed in 1989.

Eventually, the Desmond family from Ramsey acquired the premises, and kipper in the old traditional way, and the only other kipperer left is Devereau's, owned by Peter Canipa. Both have to use imported herrings, because by the year 2000, after 400 years, only the odd few herrings have been landed in Peel, and sadly the "li'l' silver fella" is no longer the King of the Sea. Now, nutritionists tell us that herrings are good for us—something past generations already knew. So hopefully kippering will continue to be part of Peel for a very long time.



Father and his Grand DaughterMarion 1967

Peel's Kippers are among the world's best.

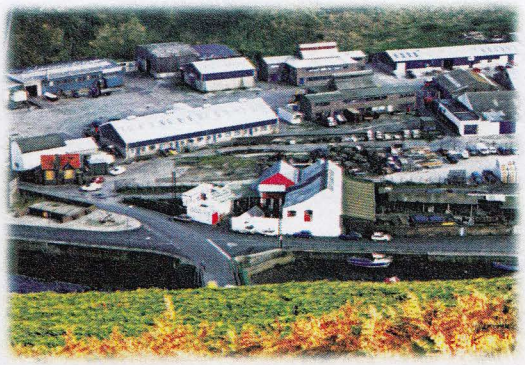
Ruth Pugh Jim and Bella

T. Moore's original kipper yard and home. Castle Street (September 1993)

T. Moore and Sons Ltd. Kipper Yard. Mill Road. Peel

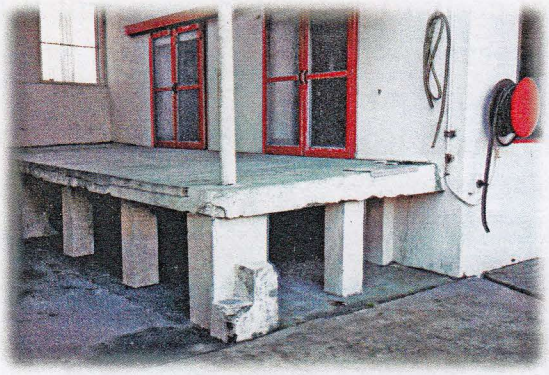
From Castle Street to Michael Street (September 1993)

Mill Road Premises
September 1993



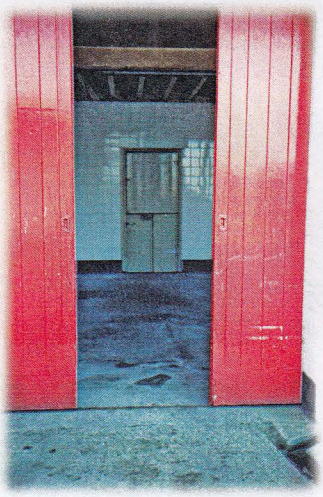
Mill Road Premises Mill Rd Yards
from Peel Hill

Mill Road Yard Ground Floor



Unloading Bay

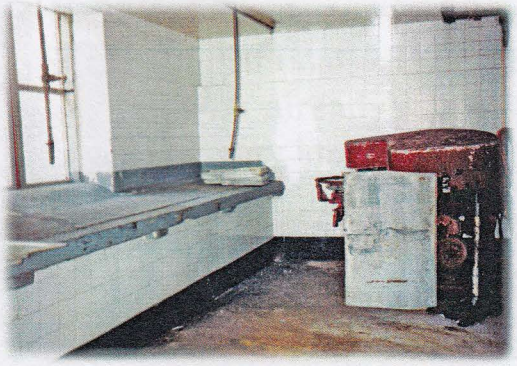
Office and Shop



Entrance and Smokehouse

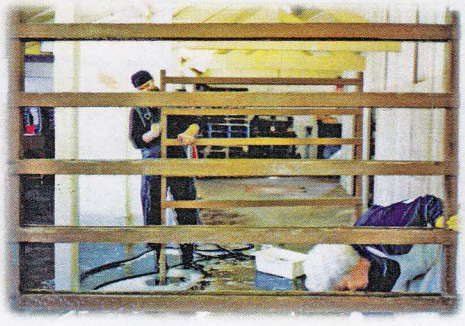
Smokehouse

Smokehouses



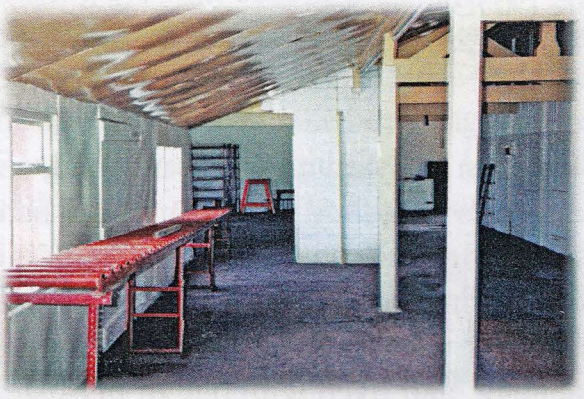
Splitting Machines

Pickling Vats



Cleaning Racks (Tony and Bella)

upstairs



Packing Area

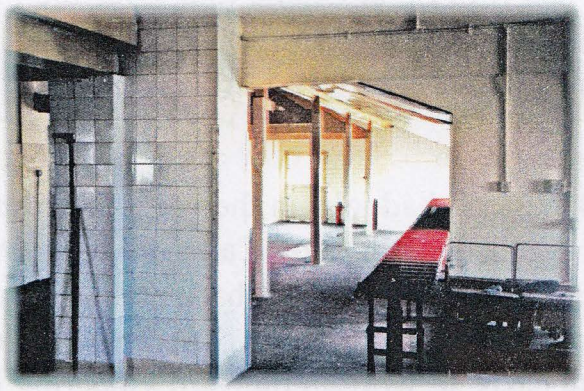
Smokehouses

Cooling Racks

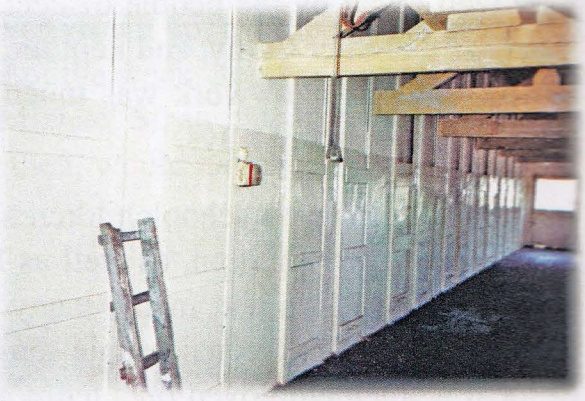
General View

Storage Area

Tenter Troughs



General View



Smokehouses

chapter nine

kippering - the staff

There was a nucleus of loyal staff who worked in the yard all the year round, and in the slack times in the winter when there was no fish, they would turn their hand to whatever needed doing-painting, maintaining and improving the building, cleaning drains, and stocking up with wood shavings and sawdust, salt and kipper boxes ready for the summer season. The worker who had been there the longest was "Uncle" Charlie Quayle. He was a bachelor, and lived with one of his sisters and her family, and he had lots of nieces and nephews, some of whom worked in the yard in the summer, as well as another sister. So he was Uncle Charlie, and everybody in the yard called him "Unc" He had bright blue eyes, which would widen when he told us about the old Manx superstitions and folklore, he had a charm for styes which I think involved the use of a wedding ring. "Unc" was foreman in the yard, and knew the job inside out, and must have been there for most of his working life.

Some of the local people who worked in the yard were members of the Wilmott family, the Gorrys and the Mackays, Loweys, Hornes, Quayles, as well as Albert and Anita Gallagher, and their son Ricky, Mr Pugh, and Gerry Reid. Billy Caley was a stalwart right to the end, and as well as women from Ireland, mostly Donegal, they also came to follow the fishing from Scotland and N.E. England. In latter years I remember Betty Hartley, Dolly Tate, Frances Caley, and especially Ruth Pugh who worked there until the yard closed. Earlier on, Nellie Sayle and Mary Quilliam helped in the shop with the parcel post, and Winnie Gorry, Jackie Ford, Edith Shimmim and Doris Quilliam served in the shop.

During the war, Mrs Piper, a war widow and a lovely lady, worked in the office with my sister Alice, and later Mr Barlow who had retired from the army, took over the office. He was extremely conscientious, and seemed to love the job, and stayed until shortly before his death. His wife Shelagh was an Irish lady who was very well loved by the people of Peel. Then Mrs Ethel Craine took over the job from her daughter Cathy, and kept the office going very efficiently until the yard closed, and her hard work was much appreciated. Latterly Bernie Wade was a good friend in many ways.

In the summer, many schoolchildren and students had jobs in the yard, including three of my own children, as well as Ian Coulson, Billy-boy Caley, Jean Miller, the Horsburgh girls and many, many others. The pay wasn't bad, and some of them had saved up a considerable sum by the end of the season. There were a lot of local women employed on a temporary basis, to work in the yard kippering in the summer, and cleaning scallops and queenies in the winter.

During the war, cousin Gordon came to stay with us. He would be about 10 or 11, but returned to Manchester after winning a scholarship to the Central Grammar School. At the same time, Rose Coulson, her husband Horner, and son Jim came from Hull to escape the bombing, and work during the summer in the kipper yard. Rose had worked with Mother, I think in Whitby. When the season finished, Rose and Horner returned to Hull, but after Gordon had gone back to Manchester, Jim stayed with us and worked in the yard when not at school. I remember Mother getting him his first long trousers. In those days boys up to about 15 wore short trousers, and must have suffered with chapped knees in the winter. Later Jim stayed with the Pugh family.

In 1947 Ruby Davidson came from Peterhead to work in the yard, and a year later, her sister Bella came. Ruby married Peel man Glen Garrett, and settled happily in Peel, and Bella married Jim Coulson, and they both worked in the yard for many years, as did Ruby. They were very well respected in the Industry, and Jim, with the loyal support of Bella became the much loved Managing Director.

flukers - characters

Over the years, Father owned three Flukers—small boats manned by one or two men who fished in the bay, near the coast, mostly for flat fish (plaice, soles, witches, turbot, brill). They were:-

Margaret PL8 worked by Leslie Lowey.
Mona, worked by W. Kneale- broken up 1936.
Thistle, worked by Willie Sayle (Siley)
and Mr McMeiken, broken up 1955.

SILEY was a real character, and lived with his wife Nellie in Queen St. Father used to say he was like a boy who had never grown up, and he always seemed to be good-natured and full of fun. At the end of the week, he would pad up the short distance from Queen St. to the office in Michael St, in his slippers, to settle up, and sister Alice who worked in the office then, would have the money ready.

There would be a share for the boat, and shares for the skipper and the crew, and the separate envelopes would be tucked up inside his cap. He was full of stories and sayings, and his favourite quotation was:-

"Extricate the quadruped from the vehicle,
Revive and restore him with the best
nourishment you can procure,
And when the dawn rises over the eastern horizon,
He will amply repay you for your kind hospitality".

In spite of this apparent lightheartedness when ashore, Siley was an expert seaman and was coxswain of the Peel Lifeboat for many years, and like the rest of the crew, considered the hazards of manning the lifeboat as all in a days work. I don't think either Nellie or Siley had ever been off the Island, or even strayed far from Peel.

One of Siley's stories was about when he was a young man out in the boat with his father, and they rounded a headland into a secluded bay, his father spotted some lady visitors skinny dipping, and shouted "look out Siley—rocks ahead"!

chapter ten

ending

In the last 50-60 years, Peel has expanded. When I was young, a short walk on any or the main roads, would take you to one of the many family farms which surrounded Peel, and were an important part of the Manx countryside, and there were at least half-a-dozen milk carts delivering daily in the town.

We would walk down the lanes and through the fields, picking primroses and bluebells, and in September, blackberries in large quantities, for jams, jellies, pies and puddings. On the eve of Mayday, we would go to get Blughtans (Kingcups or Marsh Marigolds) to have in the house on the first day of May to bring good luck. They grew in very wet inaccessible places, and the old men, especially the fishermen, could be seen heading up the road to their own particular spot for finding them. For many years until quite recently, John Kelly the butcher, always had a bunch of Blughtans on display in his shop window on the first day of May. Sadly his shop is now closed.

Also for the first of May, nearly everybody made sure that they had a Crosh Keirn hanging up behind the front door, so we would go out to find a Keirn (Mountain Ash) tree, to make the little crosses from two twigs tied together with sheep's wool, gathered from bits stuck on to the gorse, or a barbed wire fence. Girls would make pin-cushions stuffed with sheep's wool, which contains lanolin and prevented the pins and needles from going rusty.

Small farms are no longer viable, and nearly all those on the outskirts of Peel have been sold for building, or turned to other uses.

The earliest housing estate was built at Boilley Spittal father called it "the Sound". Then Heathfield Drive, Queens Drive, Ballaterson Road and North View. Further South was Glenfaba Park and now Ballatessan Meadows, on part of Ballaterson Farm. Later on houses were built to the North, on the headlands and the Ramsey Road, and the latest and largest development is on Ballawattleworth land between the Ramsey and Poortown Roads.

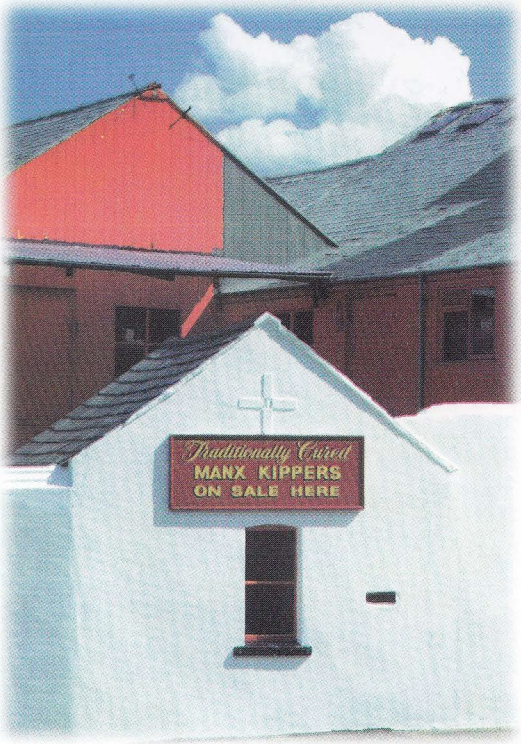
Major changes have taken place in the harbour area, dominated by the "Power Tower", and the Manx Heritage House of Mannanan, built on the site of the old Railway Station, is very popular, and in 2005, the new footbridge over the harbour, with the water retention scheme was opened.

An old warehouse has been turned into flats, and other buildings adapted to modern needs. Now at the beginning of 2006, we hear that Mr Leece the Blacksmith is retiring, and the business will close down. There are no more rowing boats for hire, but surf boards are popular. The old court house and meeting room of the Plymouth Brethren is now the well-used Leece Museum.

But the harbour is still a busy place. The modern boats fishing for Scallops, Queenies, Crabs, Lobsters, Prawns and Whelks, and some white fish, are chunky, bright, and very seaworthy, but I think they lack the elegance of the old herring boats, two or three of which are still going today, adapted for a different use. There are also a lot more pleasure craft berthed in the harbour.

But I often close my eyes and visualise the bustling harbour full of herring boats, as it was when I was a child. The quay, shore road and promenade are now colonised by cars and commercial vehicles, but the seagulls still cruise around, ready as ever to snatch a bit of food, and they are particularly partial to ice –cream cones and the "Tommy Noddies"* are there as usual standing on the groyne stretching their wings. Storms still rage, furiously drenching the Castle, Breakwater and promenade, with an avalanche of salt sea-water, leaving behind a covering of seaweed. Bracken has swamped most of the heather on the hill, but patches of the low-growing Manx gorse still brighten an Autumn Day. The sea-pinks and bladder-campion still bloom round the Castle, the crystal sea shimmers in the sunlight, and the sunsets are as beautiful as ever.

* *Cormorants and Shags*



Mother and Father's Golden Wedding

Aunt Kitty *Aunt Alice* *Aunt Margery*

Quine & Cubbon Printers, Port St. Mary, Isle of Man.