

## SAND FISHING FOR FLUKES.

by ROBERT PARKINSON and ROSE RABBITT.

With his retirement in August 1972, Mr Thomas Parkinson of Cockerham completed two hundred years of fishing history within his own family. This is his story and it is intended to illustrate just one aspect of his trade -- sand or fluke netting for fish.

Sand or fluke netting is a method of fishing for flat fish which has been practiced in the Morecambe Bay area for many generations and probably dates back to before the time of the monks at Cockersand Abbey. There is no closed season and a fisherman may fish all year round, however, usually the weather dictates that he confines his fishing to the period from April to October.

Originally the fishermen made their own nets, this would be one of their tasks in the long winter evenings when fishing was poor. Cotton string was used, this was knitted into a diamond shaped one and three quarter inch mesh in forty yard lengths to a depth of two feet six inches to three feet. The legal maximum length of a complete net when set, being three hundred yards. The depth of mesh ranging from three feet at the centre to two feet six inches at the sides. The centre, deeper portion of the finished net would comprise of say two forty yard lengths, the two lengths on either side of the centre would be shallower, and the outside lengths tapering off to two feet six inches at each end. Cord would then be threaded through the top