



**MORECAMBE BAY PARTNERSHIP  
HEADLANDS TO HEADSPACE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT  
2015-2018**

Cumbria County Council, The Factory,  
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**TRANSCRIPT SUMMARY**

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INTERVIEW NO: H2H2016.27  
 INTERVIEWEE NAME/S: John Thomas Wilson  
 YEAR OF BIRTH: 1945  
 INTERVIEWER/S: Jenn Mattinson  
 DATE OF INTERVIEW: 10/10/16  
 LOCATION: Flookburgh  
 SUMMARISER: Sue Bradshaw

<b>Track 1</b>	
00.00 – 01.28	Interviewee name, DOB, family names of parents and grandparents and occupations
01.28 – 02.25	Family fishing history in Flookburgh
02.25 – 03.35	Names and occupations of children
03.35 – 04.35	Fishing families left in Flookburgh at present time
04.35 – 07.45	Growing up in Flookburgh as a child. “Are yer goin' t't sand?”. Going cockling with grandfather with horse and cart at night, tide coming in, horse running off.
07.45 – 08.35	Locals “goin' on tramp” to Yorkshire for haymaking when times were poor
08.35 – 09.50	Rationing. Seasons for different types of fishing. Different types of net.
09.50 – 10.30	Possible job alternatives to fishing on leaving school
10.30 – 11.35	Women in family doing filleting and shrimp picking
11.35 – 14.50	Use of horses and carts in fishing, being replaced with tractors in the harsh winter of 1963. The horses owned by the family. Shrimping with the horse and cart.
14.50 – 16.15	Tractors made process of fishing quicker than using a horse and cart.
16.15 – 16.55	Use of horses in cockling.
16.55 – 18.20	Areas used when fishing. Channels. Going to Solway in Scotland and as far down as the Mersey for cockling using quad bikes or boats.
18.20 – 19.50	Musseling with quad bikes on mussel scars at Barrow.
19.50 – 21.45	Shrimping area – distance out from shore. Whitebait fishing – changing fashion in tastes.
21.45 – 24.17	Fishing cooperatives – Flookburgh Fishermen and Young's. Shrimps and whitebait sold to Young's. Furness Fish. Selling from front door.
<b>Track 2</b>	
00.00 – 03.50	Brief descriptions of fluke and plaice fishing with nets. Fishing for cockles, mussels

	and shrimps. Technique for cockling with a “jumbo” board, setting nets for fluking, technique for shrimping. Musseling with quad bikes. Story about jumbo board being invented in Flookburgh in grandfather's time for cockling – tale about a tin bath. Riddling for shrimps to get rid of small ones.
03.50 – 06.20	Use of nets. Making nets. Shrimp netting knitted by men in the winter.
06.20 – 08.50	Seasons – cockling in winter, shrimping and netting in spring up until November. Good years and bad years. Gets samples for Defra (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) for testing for radioactivity. Levels now lower than they were.
08.50 – 10.20	Closure and opening of cockle beds. Anyone used to be able to cockle, now need licence.
10.20 – 13.10	Discussion about effect of leaving EU on fishermen. Other factors affecting fishing industry – eating fish is less popular. Discussion about how much a good shrimp picker gets paid. Can make a living from fishing.
13.10 – 15.35	General discussion about memories of fishing. Lack of refrigeration – methods used to keep fish fresh – use of cold water. Scalding shrimps.
15.35 – 16.35	White baiting. Use of boat for cockling at Lytham. Now only have an inflatable and a couple of rowing boats.
16.35 – 18.45	Memories of other fishing families, people worked together. Rivalries over channels.
18.45 – 20.00	Nicknames. Grandfather was Tom “Catty” Wilson because he could see in the dark. Billy “Pongo” Butler, Harold “Tarro” Butler and Jack “Meffat” Butler.
20.00 – 21.45	Flookburgh Silver Band. Grandfather was founder member. Family members that played in it. Practising for contests – went all over. Went to perform in circus ring at Blackpool Tower – story about elephant rubbing up against him.
21.45 – 23.00	Other social pastimes of fishermen in the village – football, going for a drink in the pub, singing in the church choir.
23.00 – 24.50	When times were hard – mention of turnips, haymaking, bits of farm work. Eating lots of fish, but not that bad in his lifetime.
24.50 – 26.50	Skills needed by fishermen - “determination and a bit o' luck”. Can swim, but swimming would not be much use if the tide came in. Story about tide coming in on tractor doing 20 mph.
26.50 – 28.05	Story about close call. Pipe buried under sand from when the bay was surveyed for a barrage. Rope on tractor broke, had to get off to sort it out, nearly went on top of him.
28.05 – 31.31	Discussion about health, has it been affected by life spent as fisherman? Not caused any problems. Clothing is better now, e.g. thermal socks instead of woollen. Used to wear “Ganzers” (Ganseys). Story about man whose nickname was Ganzer because he always wore one. Corruption of word “Guernsey”. Now they wear any sort of jumper. Still wear thigh boots. Used to wear oil skins, but now made of plastic.
<b>Track 3</b>	
00.00 – 01.20	Story about a fisherman with nets set near Ulverston viaduct. He “took badly” so asked an out-of-work friend to go out and check his nets. It was a foggy day so he told him to walk along next to railway line to the viaduct. On the way he fell over a bit of wood, got up and carried on walking and arrived back at start point. He had turned round when he fell over and walked the wrong way.
01.20 – 01.55	Story about a man who kept horses in “peat house” - a coal house made into stables. Had painted whitewash around the door and couldn't get horse through as it shied away from white doorway. Asked him what he did and he said “Turned it round and backed it in”.
01.55 – 02.50	Story grandfather told about man who had “gone crackers”. Man's brother and cousin told by local doctor to take him to the asylum at Lancaster. Went on train and marched him up to asylum one on each side. Knocked on door, man who answered said “what do you want” and man said “Here y'ar, I fetched these two silly buggers” and ran off! They searched Lancaster and couldn't find him so went home and he was back there.
02.50 – 04.10	Local phrases. Greetings such as “Ow ist'er doin'?” and “Ist all reet?”. Local word “Tarrafar” meaning ginnel or a way through. Corruption of word thoroughfare.
04.10 – 06.20	Discussion about how fishing has changed. Cockle train ran from Cark station on Saturday mornings to Lancashire towns or could put cockles on any train with a goods van by paying the “cockle rate”. Now cockles get picked up by lorries.

06.20 – 08.40	Discussion about prices obtained. £10/lb for peeled shrimps – competition with cheaper machine-peeled imports. Get £1000 per ton for good cockles, £400 per ton for mussels.
08.40 – 10.20	Used to do salmon fishing. No salmon now so gave up licence. Used lave nets – method described. Description of difference with a have net.
10.20 – 11.30	Use of boilers for shrimps, difference between Morecambe (boiler on boats) and Flookburgh (boil on land in boiler house). Need to boil shrimps before they die or can't peel them.
11.30 – 12.00	Discussion about recipe for potted shrimps – pot some of own shrimps.
12.00 – 13.35	Discussion about fishing family heritage and future, and shrimp picking at present time.
13.35 – 15.15	Hopes for future – thinks cockling will carry on as simpler process than shrimping. Likes variety of being fisherman but likes shrimping best. Once caught 4 hundredweight of shrimps.
15.15 – 16.28	Description of being out in the bay. Being a fisherman is “bred in yer”. “An old man talkin' a load o' rubbish”.