



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

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TRANSCRIPT SUMMARY

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INTERVIEW NO: H2H2017.39
INTERVIEWEE NAME/S: Timothy Butler
YEAR OF BIRTH: 1950
INTERVIEWER/S: Marion Dawson
DATE OF INTERVIEW: 10 July 2017
LOCATION: Heysham
SUMMARISER: Michael Ian Redman

Track 1	
0 – 0:34	Timothy Butler (TB) introduces himself. Locally known as Tim. Date of birth 13 July 1950. Place of birth 6 Railway Place, Glasson Dock. House was previously the Customs House, Glasson Dock.
0:34 – 1:50	Parent's occupations – Mum and Grandmother housewives, but both actively involved in the family fishing business. Grandfather was a fisherman and sea captain. Father was a fisherman and then electrician, but he still worked in the village. Family have been fishermen or boat builders. Glasson had two main forms of work, fishing and the shipyard.
1:50 – 2:20	TB explains ship building trades – shipwright, fitters and turners, boiler makers, painters, riggers, sail makers. Along with fishing and a few farmers the main trades in Glasson Dock.
2:20 – 3:10	Fishing family orientated. Main types of inshore fishing on the Lune were summer salmon drift netting and through the winter shrimp trawling.
3:05 – 3:55	Coming home from school TB had to pick shrimps, before a meal. All family involved. Tim relates that they all got paid "a few pennies a pint." Good memories.
3:55 – 5:00	Income from fishing didn't sustain the trade. Still some fishing in "a much minor way." In 1950s and 60s it was hive of industry. Also Morecambe Bay and Fleetwood. Fleetwood supplied baskets and oilskins. Morecambe Bay had a massive shrimp processing industry. Baxter family in Morecambe.
5:00 – 5:58	Main fish was salmon, the season, 1 April to 31 August. TB describes the Lune as a "Spring run river". Salmon fishing was economic before artificial breeding became popular.

5:58 – 6:35	Salmon caught was described as “big salmon” due to size of nets. Grilse ¹ passed upstream. In April main salmon run, June time there was a small run of sea trout, salmon again in July and August. TB fished with boats designed for salmon fishing.
6:35 -7:52	Slightly bigger boats for shrimp fishing. When TB was young the salmon fishing was done by sail. If there was no wind, oar power was used. Late 60s, early 70s the fishermen started putting engines in. TB says, it was like the introduction of the Massey Ferguson tractor for farming. Discussions amongst the fishermen that the noise would frighten away the salmon.
7:52 – 8:20	Two men needed to catch salmon in a sailing boat. Introduction of an engine meant you could fish on your own.
8:20 – 9:10	After 31 August shrimp trawling with rigid shrimp beam, 16 -18 foot long. Dragged along sea bed using a very fine mesh net. Then riddled to size them putting the small ones back. Shrimps boiled in seawater, in the boat. Shrimps brought home and tipped onto the kitchen table, where the real work began.
9:10 – 10:10	Interviewer asks about the “real work.” TB explains brown shrimps are small. 300 to 400 shrimps per pound. They counted them once and weighed them. TB says it was quite a technique to get fast at picking shrimps ² .
10:10 – 11:32	Salmon fishing in the tidal estuary. Start point slightly down from Sunderland Point at Bay Haven buoy (ph). Shoot net across the flow and drift down to Plover Scar ³ lighthouse. Once the fisherman reach there, the next boat would do the same. All sorts of techniques done to improve the catch by extending the fishing time.
11:32 – 12:08	Butler family involved in arranging co-operation between the families to share the income from the fish. Later that company was dissolved and everyone went on their own.
12:08 – 13:44	When TB was young all salmon sold locally to wholesalers. Later TB and brother sold direct to Billingsgate Market ⁴ in London. As Fleetwood declined a train went to London then later a freezer truck. The salmon was packed in ice and sent down to a couple of dealers. Better price than locally. Farmed fish, mainly from Scotland reduced the price.
13:44 – 14:20	Co-operative started – Tb says it was there as a youngster, Smith, Gardner’s and Butler families involved. Earlier there were more families.
14:20 – 14:55	TB explains how the industry declined due to financial pressures.
14:55 – 15:54	The fishing catch varied, fluctuating considerably. Family has catch records going back to the early 1900s. TB explains the catches aren’t on a declining line.
15:54 – 16:58	On the east coast in the 70s, 400 fishing licenses which were all got rid of. On the River Lune there were 12 drift net licenses, 3 seine net licenses and 54 haaf nets ⁵ . Today 7 drift net licenses, no seine and 12 haaf net licenses.
16:58 – 21:38	Definition of drift netting – traditional boat only 2 or 3 wooden ones left. TB has one built in 1910. Boats 17-20 foot long, sail and oar, whammel boat. 320 yards of drift net. Top cord floats and cord on the bottom with lead weights. Description of how to fish in the Lune. Started fishing by sailing to Bay Haven Buoy, some from the Snatchems ⁶ . Net cast 6 or 8 times in the course of a tide. Two tides, both tides fished. 5 days a week. Tide is 20 minutes to an hour.
21:38 – 22:10	TB still goes out fishing now, but very rarely. Season is shorter now 1 June to 31 August.
22:10 – 23:40	At one point artificially grown salmon were put into the Lune, and it was successful for a while. In 1966 there was a complete glut. “If you put your hat in the water, you pulled a salmon out.” Tb feels that disease created. Breeding fish was for angling on the river.
23:40 – 24:36	TB tells that fisherman are worried about damage to the salmon on the Lune from

¹ Grilse – Salmon that have only spent one winter at sea. - <http://www.atlanticsalmontrust.org/salmon-and-sea-trout-facts/>

² Picking shrimps is the manual process by which the meat is removed from the shell.

³ Plover Scar Lighthouse - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plover_Scar_Lighthouse

⁴ Billingsgate Market – London - <http://www.billingsgatefishmarket.org/>

⁵ Haaf or heave net – see <https://www.visitcumbria.com/haaf-netting-in-cumbria/> and <http://haafnettersfishing.co.uk/>

⁶ Snatchems – Now called the Golden Ball.

	abstraction of water to the River Wyre.
24:36 – 26:35	Interviewer asks about main reasons for the salmon decline. TB – pollution from industry in Lancaster, pumping of foul sewage into the Lune from the 40s and 50s.
26:35 – 27:42	River now a lot cleaner than when TB was a kid. Massive problem about who owns the salmon. Salmon are fished in Greenland when the fish are at sea.
27:42 – 30:35	Farmer can only farm his land, Fisherman all farm the same area. Difficult for fishermen not to overfish. Once TB fished 22 tides and never caught a salmon.
30:35 – 32:17	Fisherman can't control what affects the fish stocks. They fish when fish are there and can't fish when times are lean. TB talks about the decline in salmon fishing.
32:17 – 35:00	TB fished intermittently. TB's brother went to be a cabinet maker at Waring and Gillows. He stopped at 19/20 and went into fishing. TB was an electrical engineer at Hawker Siddeley which closed when he was 20/21. He went fishing. Also has worked in the construction industry. The fishing declined and TB went into the construction industry.
35:00 – 35:50	TB had a trade, but as self-employed, fishing was a back-up. Grandmother's side worked at the local shipyard. TB still does enjoy boat building. He has done a lot of ship repairs. TB's whammel boat was built by himself 7 or 8 years ago.
35:50 – 36:48	TB explains why he wanted to fish when his family didn't want him to. TB enjoyed the lifestyle, outside, looked after his own equipment.
36:48 – 38:19	Glasson Dock is "the oldest tidal dock in the country". 220 odd years old. The village has a canal, had a railway and a sea dock. In the freshwater basin there was a boat yard. Sometimes the family would work there. TB's brother didn't want to fish, but he ended up being a fisherman as well.
38:19 – 39:45	TB asked how old he was when he first went out. TB says his grandfather says they used to tie him to the "mast thoft" ⁷ Remembers fishing for crabs over the side. He was tied to the thoft to stop him falling over the side. Fishing as soon as he could walk. Whammel boat given to TB by Grandfather when he was in secondary school.
39:45 – 41:49	Secondary school teacher who did woodwork became pal and taught TB to make spring boards for the gym, Scenery and other work for the school. The boat "Agnes" needed repair. Named after TB's great grandmother. Teacher Ken Baines helped him carve the name in the stern board.
41:49 – 41:55	TB feels a bit like the Last of the Mohicans – there's not many of us left now.
41:55 – 43:52	Interviewer asks about other work that TB may have been interested in. TB really fancies boat building. "Boat building was part of the scene". Grandfather couldn't knock a nail in straight. He was good painter. (Joking) Father was craftsman. Grandfather had the nickname, "waff", got this name from musseling. His arm, used to waff when fishing for mussels.
43:52 – 45:00	Grandfather was William Butler. One of 11. Elder brother James, a fisherman, he went up to Scotland. He used to come down on the train to fish. Another brother drowned in the Navy in the first world war ⁸ . John Butler was a boat builder who worked at the local shipyard. "An awful lot of girls in the family".
45:00 - 47:55	TB was 24 when grandfather passed away. TB was close to him. He was hard working man's man. (laughs) Liked to drink. Been in the navy, had been on mine sweepers. He had a friend who was a doctor who had a yacht, built from wood in Scotland, a motorboat. They used to go to the TT races, Isle of Man. Waff would go to the Isle of Man for a week. TB tells us that grandfather sent grandma a telegram and after they went up to Scotland and they went on all summer and didn't come back until September. He had a difficult reunion with Grandma.
47:55 – 50:00	Father was a great family man. Totally different to Grandfather. You learned by watching him. TB allowed to go off in the boat when 12 or 13. TB got a boat at 9 years old. Occasionally used this boat to go whammeling ⁹ on very high tides.
50:00 – 53:35	Seine netting is also called draw netting. The other form of netting is haaf netting with 18 foot piece of wood and three legs between 3 or 4 foot long. Middle leg or

⁷ Thoft – a rower's bench.

⁸ Robert Butler - Died aged 16 in 1916.

⁹ Whammeling – Local term for drift netting on the River Lune.

	"staff" has a 2 foot above the horizontal pole. Net hung from this. Pithering(ph) by holding one end. Fisherman use a priest ¹⁰ sometimes a beer bottle or a piece of carved wood. Fish threaded onto a string. Very competitive. There used to be 54 guys doing this when TB fished, now there's 12. They used to catch a lot of sea trout.
53:35 – 57:32	Use of different methods. – TB – whammeling traditionally when tide going out, when tide comes in there would be flood shot as the tide turns. Draw netting was shorter window for fishing. There was one main area where the draw net was used. Bazil Point. 5 hours after ebb the wall appears and draw boats worked from Bazil to Sunderland Point. Channel would be about 50 yards wide. The old heavy nets, there would be four men with the net and one in a boat. Good description of this technique on the Lune. Three boats did that, now none.
57:32	End of track 1
Track2	
0 – 0:45	Interviewer and TB are watching a YouTube video of Trevor Owen whammeling. TB remarks that he's catching flatfish, but he wants to catch salmon. Flatfish may be plaice or flukes.
0:45 – 1:18	Helen TB's partner is mentioned as a fisherman.
1:18 – 2:20	TB mentions his brother. He drowned fishing, so many years ago.
2:20 – 2:57	Discussion of larch and oak being used in building traditional whammel boats. Now fibreglass.
2:57 – 4:02	Discussion of shrimping in the "back end" ¹¹ . Length of shrimping season depends on the temperature of the water. When there are frosts, the shrimps go into deeper water where they can't be fished. TB can only remember once fishing for shrimps into the New Year. After the frosts shrimping began again in the spring.
4:02 – 11:00	Fishing for shrimps was done using a beam trawl. There is a limitation on the length of the beam, 30 foot. TB explains the construction of the net. Nets use oak bobbins which lie on the sand. The foot rope is a chain. The shrimps jump over the foot rope into the net. Steel sledge. The net has a head rope with floats. The net has "wings" at the top, and a tail end. Other fish are allowed to swim out of the net through pockets. The boats are called a brawlie.(ph)
11:00 – 11:12	When shrimping, "you never ever came back with nothing". There was always something to bring home.
11:12 – 12:25	Tb describes dealing with shrimps after they've been fished. Boiled in salt water and then picked. Shrimps are translucent when live and brown when cooked. On board boilers were coal fired. Now LPG.
12:25 – 13:19	Most families that salmon fished also did shrimp fishing. 1960s, 1970s and before that. It was hard work and not many sons want to follow their fathers into fishing.
13:19 – 13:35	Fishing was a vocation, a way of living. 1970s and 80s a declining industry.
13:35 – 16:30	Grandmother was "the matriarch of the shrimp fishing season". Mum and Grandmother would arrange women out of the village to do the picking. The family had 15 pickers at one point. The pickers would turn up with a plastic bucket that would be filled with rough shrimps. The pickers would get about 4 -4 1/2 pounds of picked shrimp in a bucket. The men folks who went out fishing at night would be in bed. Daily routine varied with the tide times. Usually two tides a day, but the tide times vary and the height of the tide varies. Generally you didn't do two tides a day, when shrimping.
16:30 – 17:10	Explanation of the difference between fishing on the Lune and at Morecambe. The boats are bigger in Morecambe. Generally fish in the mornings.
17:10 – 17:39	Morecambe Bay prawnier, or nobby built at Crossfield's, Arnside. 20 people fishing from nobbies when TB a teenager.
17:39 – 18:45	Women took over the shrimps after the catch. "They did a very good job of it". Description of a working day for a working fisherman. Ladies managed the fridges for salmon and shrimps.
18:45 – 19:25	Fish used to be sold to Morecambe Trawlers (a co-op). TB says that his Grandma had a huge bag and she took the shrimps and fish to Morecambe on the bus.

¹⁰ Priest – Fisherman's tool for killing fish.

¹¹ Back end – of the year – September onwards.

	Shrimps wrapped up in muslin. This was before fridges were used to preserve the fish. It took two buses to get to Lancaster.
19:25 – 20:18	Tb tells us that and “Awful amount of stuff was sold from home.” People came from Blackpool and Morecambe. Hoteliers. Pubs in the area would have shrimps and salmon. No potting of shrimps occurred at Glasson Dock, it all went to Morecambe Trawlers and there’s a company that still does it, Baxters at Morecambe.
20:18 – 21:00	Flookburgh shrimp potting also occurs at Flookburgh ¹² . Picking from home not practicable at home. Two shops in Morecambe that pick and pot shrimps.
21:00 – 22:20	Grandmother’s name Maud Elizabeth Butler. Affectionately known as “Lim”. She was a Richardson before being married to TB’s grandad. Richardson family worked at the ship yard in Glasson Dock. Moby Dick was one of the boats. Built to carry aggregate and iron ore from Ulverston to Liverpool, a small coaster. Nicholson’s ship yard.
22:20 – 23:35	Men would come back from fishing and possibly to bed and the pickers worked on. Morecambe trawlers employed women to pick shrimps. Long tables of shrimps, with women picking them. At one point they had a shrimp picking machine. At Glasson Dock there 15 pickers.
23:35 – 24:26	TB when married moved to Sunderland Point, but unable to buy house so moved to Overton. Most houses at Sunderland Point were owned by the Gilchrist Estate. TB employed Overton women to pick. Organised by TB’s wife.
24:26 – 29:05	When the weather is freezing, and there is no salmon and no shrimps, the next fishing, which stopped early in the 60s, was fishing for mussels on the Lune. Various methods to fish mussels, one was picking individually with a small two pronged fork, metal with wooden handle, made locally. Mussels had barnacles on them. When handling the mussels, thumbs protected by part of a bicycle inner tube. Fishing took place 2 or 3 hours on the ebb tide. Fork was called a “finger craam”. Various rakes could be used. Description of tools used. Size of the fork depends on the size of the mussels. Then riddled in the boat. This occurred in the late 50s and early 60s.
29:05 – 31:15	Due to pollution mussels weren’t fit for human consumption. They were put into clean water for a time, a week or so, but sometimes longer. Mussels also used as bait. The majority were sold onto the east coast for long lining. Taken in sacks to Whitby and other places. Trains in the 50s, then wagons. Description of long lining. Very selective form of fishing.
31:15 – 33:05	TB was told that ladies on the east coast opened mussels and collected the fish. Great lining outside the 12 mile limit or smaller boats for long lining. Whammel fishing was by hand, and on the east coast fishermen had mechanical gear.
33:05 – 34:20	Mussel boats were lined with sacrificial wood and the fisherman walked on the mussels to scrape off the barnacles. Mussel shells were strong.
34:20 – 35:40	TB’s brother bought a “brawley” (ph) boat off the River Thames Southend-on-Sea. Shrimped and “stor” netting (ph). At Southend they sold whitebait and cockles and mussels. Every area had fishing families.
35:40 – 37:50	Dangers of fishing. On the Lune – flow water came down the river. Nicholson’s built lifeboats. They came up with a whammel tank boat that had tanks on-board to stop them sinking. They didn’t catch on. TB relates a story from his grandfather that 10 men drowned when the buoyancy tanks were left open.
37:50 – 41:24	More dangerous when fishing on your own. TB says he was pulled overboard when he was on his own. His grandfather has been over the side in the dark, when shrimping. TB recalls a story about his grandfather going over the side. TB says fishing is dangerous. The weather can be unpredictable. Discussion of PPE ¹³ . TB has never used a lifejacket. TB fell overboard and his net caught on the rudder on the boat. He was 200 feet from the boat and had to get back in the boat and avoid the propeller.
41:24 – 43:18	Interviewer asks if it’s true that fishermen can’t swim. TB says no. Historically encouraged not to learn to swim. So as to not prolong the drowning at sea if the fisherman went overboard. Accidents happen in storms, so it can be better to drown quickly rather than linger.

¹² <http://www.morecambebayshrimps.com/>

¹³ PPE – Personal protective equipment – such as lifejackets

43:18 – 44:35	TB's brother was 27 when he died. Very sad, he left two children and widow, Susan. He was probably one of the last full-time fishermen. Fishermen started leaving fishing to do other things and earn a living.
44:35 – 49:13	Fishing for whitebait - Whitebait and sprat fishing is called stor fishing. Discussion of boats used and reason for the fishing. Brawlie boats. Anchored and used square shaped nets. TB says, "We've had 100 stone in ten minutes". A winter month fishing process, November, December, January and February. In the Lune there were three months when you couldn't make anything. Also has caught flatfish, but couldn't sell them. Young's bought the whitebait. TB thinks they were a pair of brothers from Hull. Fish had to be in frozen 1lb packs.
49:13 – 49:50	Blebs described. Jellyfish within the whitebait. Tb says, "We had to pick those out to leave the whitebait clean".
49:50 – 50:32	At Sunderland Point, some fishermen use small stor nets anchored on the beach to catch whitebait. The nets let the incoming tide flow over them and out-going the net opens.
50:32 – 52:38	TB asked if fishing will carry on in this area. TB thinks there will always be someone who wants to fish. No restrictions on shrimp fishing. Restrictions have been on salmon, bass and cockles, but fishing continues with restrictions. Some fishermen can't stop fishing.
52:38 – 57:30	Conclusion and stories – TB – all sorts of stories, many before his time. TB feels there are some not for recording on this project. Years ago times were hard so the church used to pay for the license out of the collection box and paid back throughout the season. Glasson has a tidal dock with sea gates, and the dock needs to be cleaned of silt from time to time. Paid by Lancaster Port Commissioners to clean the dock. Man with only one good arm went haafing because the Commissioner wouldn't pay the man. "Poaching basically". He could only row with one oar. He would walk passed the Harbour Master's house with a string of fish and the men would give him a round of applause. Commissioners didn't do anything about this illegal fishing.
57:30 – 57:42	Poaching went on at Skerton, and around there, people who weren't fishermen. Very rarely did the fishermen poach.
57:42 – 53:46	Another story from TB's grandfather. – Someone in the family was getting married out of season. TB's grandfather and 3 or 4 others went out, but caught 20 instead of one. They went round the village and left a fish on the front doorsteps. It was a community.
58:46	End of track 2.
Track 3	
0 – 0:45	Discussion of the local weather. Introduction of discussion on farming.
0:45 – 2:12	TB talks about farming around Glasson Dock. Family didn't farm, TB was the only Butler that did. The family were either fishermen or boat builders. TB has a little farm. The relatives in Flookburgh do farm, small holding and market gardening. Fishermen in Glasson didn't farm, just oversized allotments, growing vegetables. No livestock.
2:12 – 3:23	TB plans to build more boats. TB enjoys working on traditional boats. He has repaired traditional fishing boats over the years. The first one when he was 13.
3:23 – 5:00	Some people on TB's grandmother's side (of the family) built boats. In the village, there was a ship building business. All grandmothers' brothers worked in the yard. Tb says that the buildings are still there. They would build ocean going boats as well as local fishing boats. There were two other local boat builders who built fishing boats in Overton. Gardner's and Woodhouse. They built whammel boats.
5:00 – 6:26	Glasson Yard originally built wooden sailing ships. A famous boat Moby Dick ¹⁴ was one of them. They were sailing cargo ships. When steel replaced wood, they built steel boats. Nicholson and Marsh was its first name. The building is still there, but full of grain. Now owned by Glasson Grain. The dock is still a commercial enterprise.
6:26 – 9:00	Whammel boats are built to order. When fishing profitable, they built a whammel boat almost every year. Usually named after a mother or daughter, a female in the family. Built for a pound a foot. TB's boat was built in 1910. It was £19.00. The boat

¹⁴ Moby Dick – see <http://www.shipspotting.com/gallery/photo.php?lid=178344>

	now needs repairing. Only three other wooden sailing whammel boats still left. Cousin Jack Butler's boat went to a museum in Preston. Smith family at Sunderland Point own two. There may be one in Lancaster Museum. They are long lasting high quality boats.
9:00 – 10:52	Every boat was different. The boats were made by first a half model to scale and altered the shape until the fisherman was happy with the design. Three timber boats were built over on the east coast, as a sailing vessel. TB says that the river is now sanded up and whammel boats are too deep.
10:52 – 11:50	Brother went to Sandside near Whitby, on the east coast to get a double ended boat built. The chap built cobles ¹⁵ . Now retired. Two more were built which are still about 40 years ago. Now GRP, fibreglass.
11:50 – 13:28	TB believes that the river has silted up due to water being taken for industry on the Wyre. The Lune starts in Tebay. In flood the river scoured away the silt. TB thinks the flow doesn't scour the river out as it once did.
13:28 – 14:45	TB describes a "fresh out" when freshwater floods down the river. Tb says that "sometimes there was three tides and you couldn't walk out to your boat". TB finds the change in the river flow troubling.
14:45 – 17:55	The fishing in the Lune changes over time. Now people can't make a living. Tb tells us that people still fish because they have a passion for it. Discussion of the changes in fishing practises. TB's grandfather did go fishing as a profession, and fished in other parts of the world. He had a spell one bad winter fishing from Fleetwood, then a premier port for cod fishing off Iceland. He used to go 4 weeks at a time up to Iceland. He would go as a deck hand. They also went to Scotland as they had relatives living in Scotland Telegrams would be exchanged with TB's Uncle Jim about the availability of salmon. Uncle Jim would come down on the train. He was from Kippford, on the Solway.
17:55 – 20:05	Grandfather got a skipper's ticket, TB thinks from the war, as he was on mine-sweepers. Being on a ship is the next best thing to fishing. There was no unemployment benefits. Now people can claim unemployment benefit. TB says that "you had to do what you have to do". Prior to the war years, they used to catch seabirds in nets, for food. 1930s. Nets were only allowed at night. TB doesn't fancy "seagull on toast". (joking)
20:05 – 21:25	Further discussion about when times were tough. TB – It was everywhere. Fishing can be compared to farming. Everything was done physically, by hand. Both family orientated businesses.
21:25 – 24:10	Women folk got involved with helping to put nets onto cords. Equivalent to hay making. In springtime when the sun was shining they would make or repair the nets for the next season. Salmon fishing is done with a sheeted net. The top cord has floats and the bottom cord has leads on it and they have to be made. "Steething"(ph) The women would fill the needles with the string, a laborious job. Nets were in 100 yard length stretched outside. Done on Sundays as the shipyard was shut. They used a capstan and a steel stakes driven into the ground. The net would be strung out and the cords attached. In Fleetwood the women knitted the nets, for a company. In Glasson the males knitted the nets.
24:10 – 27:05	Return to discussing "steething on". Attaching the nets to the cords. The net is described as sort of a diamond shape rather than a square. Every 10 metres it would be tied in with a steething string. TB draws a diagram of how the nets are made. They would make pockets in the net to catch the salmon.
27:05 – 30:30	Nets would be dyed in different colours. TB says the salmon can see colours. The river is loaded with sand and the old nets are a sandy colour. Most modern man-made nets are green or blue. Older nets were made from flaxen, natural materials. Cords and rope would be made locally in Lancaster at the rope works. Ropes would be made for the mills and other industries. Cords would be sisal, which had hairs on them. We would use a fire to burn off the loose bits, then the nets would be tarred to make them last longer. The sun would rot the older nets. Modern nets last 10 years.
30:30 – 32:08	Discussion about the reduction of salmon numbers in the river. Pollution, water volumes. Fish don't return because the locals fish them in Greenland. There was pollution in the rivers in the 70s, 80s and 90s. Pollution is a lot less now.

¹⁵ Coble - <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coble>

32:08 - 35:25	Interviewer asks if it was a close knit community in Glasston. The Butlers in Glasston are related to the Flookburgh Butlers. TB says his great grandfather (or may be great great) came from Flookburgh. TB did some on-line searches, his grandfather was 74 when he died. TB says he'd be about 114 now. He was born on Second Terrace at Sunderland Point which was where the Butlers first moved away from Flookburgh. In the next census they were in Glasston Dock. 11 siblings. Jim the eldest. Some girls Doreena (ph), Bob who drowned in Scapa Flow during the first world war. He died during a lifeboat drill.
35:25 – 38:38	TB believes the Butler family originally came from Ireland. The family moved to get work. People today have social security. Discussion of this. Ship workers used to go to Barrow and Furness to Vickers for work when work was short in Glasston Dock and vice-versa. People would be laid off so they went elsewhere for work.
38:38 – 42:03	Discussion of the social life in Glasston. Little Glasston Dock had three pubs. It had a dance hall. At weekends in summer the charabancs would come from Morecambe and Blackpool to the Caribou ¹⁶ . There was a railway and the canal bringing people into the village. People were stranded by their jobs. The Caribou was converted to flats about 10 years ago. The Victoria closed recently. The Dalton Arms is still open.
42:03 – 44:54	TB remarks that fishermen were drinkers. All the men did the same. Housewife was a job, a full-time occupation in those days. Fisherman was a hard job. Women were involved in the organisation of fishing and processing of the fish. In Morecambe the men never did any picking. In Glasston, in the Butler family, all the men picked. The children picked after they came home from school.
44:54 – 49:30	Morecambe formed the Morecambe Trawlers Fishing Association. They paid people to pick. Explanation of fishing in Morecambe. They fished with bigger boats in Morecambe. TB explains that they are still fishing in Flookburgh, but they do it with tractors. Now only one boat fishing in Morecambe. In Glasston picking was done in the home, there were 15 at one point. TB used to take shrimps into Lancaster to be picked. Shrimps need to be processed quickly to preserve them, straight after the tide even in the evenings. TB's grandmother's generation didn't get paid for being housewives so many women were happy to get paid for picking. The enthusiasm was there.
49:30 – 51:00	Mothers picked shrimps so their daughters would as well. Quite a lot of them would save the money for Christmas. TB thinks that his Grandmother used to run a Christmas Club. 1 st September you start shrimping into December. This was a way of saving money for Christmas.
51:00 – 52:16	Next part of the cycle was mussel picking. That changed due to pollution in the river. They were sold onto the east coast as bait for long lining. The next thing for winter was whitebait fishing in Morecambe Bay and the river...
52:16 – 58:40	Discussion of competition between Morecambe Bay fishermen and Glasston Dock. TB says healthy competition. No secrets between fishermen as they all fish the same fish. Whammel boats were two men. Someone put an engine in a boat and others did the same. You could fish on your own with an engine. This was progress. There was never any animosity in Morecambe Bay because it is a large place. It is more crowded in the Lune, and more competition.
58:40 – 1:02:04	Moving your nets above another fisherman was called "corking". You would take the fish from the other fisherman. One instance in the dark four of the fishermen put nets above the others. The fishermen would all be moving at different speeds because of the varying currents across the river. Discussion of fishing when the fish were running. When the tide stops it's called "the den". The fish move a lot so you need to get your net out. "There was a few words that night".
1:02:04 – 1:04:04	Nobody would leave anybody with a broken engine. There was camaraderie, you wouldn't leave someone stuck. Once TB's brother left him as TB fell asleep fishing. TB was fishing at night after working during the day at Hawker Siddeley. One morning TB's brother left him and he says "my nets got wrapped round the lighthouse".
1:04:40 – 1:09:00	Another instance when shrimping in the winter. A story from TB's father and grandfather. A boat from Overton Jim Braid and his son were shrimp fishing and the boat touched the bottom and the boat was sunk. TB's grandfather and father got the

¹⁶ Caribou turned into luxury flats in 2002.

	gear. A second boat was lent to them. In another incident the coal fired shrimp boiler set fire to the boat. The boat burnt down to the waterline. The boat was saved. Fishermen help each other out when in difficulty.
1:09:00 – 1:12:45	Interviewer asks about TB's brother, who drowned in a fishing-related accident. TB not able to talk about this. Brother was called Peter. TB talks about fishermen not being able to swim. He was not supposed to be a fisherman, but he lost his job at Waring and Gillows, Lancaster as a cabinet maker. He won first prize in Lancashire for the best apprentice piece. He then jumped in a boat and went fishing. He went to fish with his grandfather. TB did the same 5 years later, and TB went fishing with his dad. They quickly realised you couldn't make much money.
1:12:45 – 1:13:00	TB got into the construction industry when fishing became uneconomical.
1:13:00 – 1:14:12	TB talks about things that he's done over the years, some that he should have done and things that he shouldn't have done. Of salmon fishing, "People that love it, they just won't give in, d'you see? They just won't give in." Brother was good fisherman. Youngest full-time fisherman at the time.
1:14:12 – 1:16:15	Brother went over to the east coast for a new boat because he couldn't get one here. Others bought similar boats. He bought a big boat for white baiting and shrimping, a brawlie(ph) from Southend-on-Sea. He could fish on the Lune at high water because he had a bigger boat. Brother was called Peter. His son David loves fishing. His wife's family were also fishermen.
1:16:15 – 1:16:46	Interviewer makes notes of names and those associated with fishing.
1:16:46 – 1:18:35	TB has talked about men going to pubs. TB explains that the women didn't go to pubs. "Oh, crickey, no!" Women would go to his grandmother's and get the baize card table out and play cards and dominoes. There was a strong mother's union. Both his mother and both grandmothers were involved. Women were involved in the church. TB sang in the choir and rang the bell. Rose Queen. No flower arranging or cheese and wine.
1:18:35 – 1:21:50	There was amateur dramatics. There were shows in the local Memorial Hall. Mother, Agnes, was a good singer. Maiden name Casson. Her family were sawyers. They came from up into the Lake District. Her grandad was called Tim. TB was named after him. He had fingers missing. The firm he worked for got a contract to make boxes. They set up a new factory on the canal called the box company.
1:21:50 - 1:24:25	TB says that his mother was a strong singer. Discussion of times when she sang. Choir and stage. TB thinks she had sung in the Albert Hall. The village doctor's sister was a piano player. TB's mother would sing for her friends in the nursing home she was in just before she died.
1:24:25 - 1:26:12	Discussion about the lack of conversation in the young and differences between the generations.
1:26:12 – 1:28:30	TB remembers the first TV in the village. The Headmaster's wife had a small TV. Discussion of the first TV in the Butler household. TB says they were only allowed to watch it for an hour.
1:28:30 – 1:30:32	Mrs Loxsam (ph) and her daughter were shrimp pickers. They used to turn up at TB's grandmother's back door for a bucket load of shrimps. The pickers would then get paid by weight. The same with TB's mother, she also arranged the picking and payments. Women used to pick shrimps because there wasn't anything else to do.
1:30:32 – 1:34:40	Education. TB thinks school was fantastic. Junior school at the Dock and senior school Ripley St. Thomas's, Lancaster. Boys only when TB went. Prefect at 12 years. He built their first canoe and it rolled over in the canal. Good with his hands. He was given things to do at school. TB had repaired his own boat, nicknamed "Flatty". Mr Baines the woodwork teacher helped him repair gym equipment and scenery for plays, stairs and steps and all sorts of things. They then built a canoe from wood and canvas.
1:34:40 – 1:37:09	TB tells of when older you understand the people are different. There were lots of lads who didn't want to learn. Married when 17 1/2 so he didn't go to university. TB went to night-school. City and Guilds or technical. TB's qualification was a BTech. Discussion of son's education, who also had a BTech, but he went on to get a Civil Engineering degree.

1:37:09 – 1:39:30	Discussion about this Oral History project. TB feels that it's important to record memories. He should have asked grandparents and parents about their ways of life. TB's mother was Canadian, she was born there, came over more or less as a baby. TB doesn't know his relatives in Canada.
1:39:30 – 1:40:10	Interviewer suggests that is a positive note to end on. TB says there would be more if he was asked the right questions. (joking)
1:40:10 – 1:43:43	TB had a really good relationship with his Grandad. His Grandad was TB's best friend. Also with his grandmas. Tb says that his mum's mum was small, so was called little gran. She was an avid knitter. She would get TB to stand so she could make a ball of wool. "She'd knit for anybody. If you sat looking at a sheep, long enough, in a field, she'd be knitting it a jumper". Tb's father's mother was "big granny". House absolutely spotless. Children would help beating the carpets, dragging them out and beat them to death to get all the dust out. The children used to help on days mangling on wash day. Grandfather owned two houses on a row of four. TB's Auntie Ethel came through the wall with her poker one day. TB also updated his auntie and later grandma's house so she could live down stairs.
1:43:43 – 1:45:48	As for religion, as school kids they all went to church as it was a church school. Prayers in the morning. All children were confirmed. TB is a Christian, but not very active. Both grandmothers were active in the church, and also TB's mother. A few farmers were involved with the church as they might cut the grass and look after the grave yard. Fishermen didn't often go to church regularly because of the work commitments.
1:45:48 – 1:47:35	Politics – TB can't remember it being discussed at home. All of the same beliefs. "They all worked for themselves". Europe – The country made a decision and TB feels they should be "getting on with it". He says, what went on in the Houses of Parliament didn't directly affect what happened at home.
1:47:35 – 1:49:02	Family Traditions – In Glasston everyone, including children, picked and got paid, but there was no choice in the matter.
1:49:02 – 1:50:28	Ambitions - TB is in construction and fishing, but if not those professions, he would have gone into the navy, or boat building.
1:50:28 – 1:52:03	Achievements – TB thinks he could probably have done more with his business, but he feels quite happy in most things he does. He has hung onto traditions, in fishing and construction. He would like to see his business carry on. He has been self-employed since just before 20. TB feels he is unemployable.
1:52:03 – 2:00:02	TB worked at Morecambe Electrical Equipment Company, owned by brother and sister, their father was a boffin. In the second world war, he invented degaussing mechanism for ships and aircraft ¹⁷ . TB explains apprenticing at the company. After three years the apprentices were all finished except the best ones. TB met his wife there. Women made the electronic components. 400 people worked there. They supplied Unilever and ICI. Hawker Siddeley bought the company. TB was in the commercial department pricing jobs. His project was for Angus Fire Armour, sprinkler system control equipment. They moved the factory equipment down to Loughborough. Factory in Morecambe closed, and TB left the company. Decided to work for himself after that experience. 1969/1970.
2:00:02 – 2:04:56	TB asked if he would always stay in this area. TB says he can look across the river to where he was born. If he moved he would move up to Scotland as his son is up there and loves it. TB has a lot of history here. It's a nice part of the world. Discussion about the present requirement for the young to move for work. TB moved from Glasston Dock to Overton and family felt it was moving away. It was difficult to get a house in Glasston.
2:04:56 – 2:09:15	Interviewer asks if TB thought that people were narrow minded. Discussion of sexuality of people when he was young. TB feels family values were stronger. He never missed a Sunday to see parents or grandparents. There's no fishing community now to bind people together.
2:09:15 – 2:14:00	TB agrees that people like a higher standard of living now-a-days. Farming and fishing are the poor relatives. These trades are a way of life. TB enjoyed working for

¹⁷ Degaussing see - <http://navymuseum.co.nz/degaussing-ships/> and <https://medium.com/war-is-boring/how-britain-beat-germanys-wwii-magnetic-sea-mines-bfec5558704c>

	people, but it was taken away from him. TB didn't collect unemployment benefit. The Labour Exchange visited people after the factory closed. TB went fishing and didn't collect his money. TB feels that he was lucky. If you wanted to progress, fishing didn't make enough money. TB describes life as a progression, TB wanted a motorbike and cars.
2:14:00 - 2:15:12	TB talks about grants for working inshore fishermen to get new boats or equipment. The White Fish Authority ¹⁸ .
2:15:12	Track 3 finishes.
Track 4	
0:00 – 1:09	Continuation of explanation of grants "... for having new boats built." Better and bigger to do the job. TB explains you could get 100% grant – you didn't have to pay anything. All boats were hand made. The government would give you 40% and you had to pay the rest by HP type thing over 3 or 4 year period.
1:09	End of track 4.

Notes:

Timothy (Tim) Butler from Glasson Dock

- 1 Salmon fishing in 1960 by drift nets. The nets allowed grilse salmon to pass through nets and go upstream to spawn.
- 2 Tim's brother worked at Waring and Gillow as a cabinet maker.
- 3 Tim's great uncle died in the Navy in the First World War in 1916. Robert Butler son of Robert and Agnes Butler (This information ties up with the boat "Agnes" named after TB's Great Grandmother). Born 6 Thurnham Terrace, Glasson Dock. Third son younger brother Jack served with 5th Battalion King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment.
<http://www.lancasterwarmemorials.org.uk/memorials/glassondock.htm>
- 4 Margaret Owen YouTube haaf netting on the Lune
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWP7IWG8WBY>
- 5 <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/gallery/2017/nov/10/viking-fishing-river-lune-haaf-netting-in-pictures>
- 6 Trevor Owen whammeling <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X7NOPnJ60uY>
- 7 Track 2 – 35:40 - tank whammel see - <https://thelunepilot.com/articles/open-working-boats-of-the-north-west/>
- 8 Moby Dick -

Photographer: Lee Brown [[View profile](#)]

Title: MOBY DICK

Added: Feb 01, 2006

Captured:

IMO: Unavailable

Hits: 4,565

Photo

Category: Traditional rig sailing ships from 120'(36.6m) LOA

Description:

Please excuse the quality of this shot as I took it with my dad's old Brownie 127 before I knew how to take decent pics. It shows the 1887 built schooner MOBY DICK at Morecambe in 1969 before she was sadly destroyed by fire in 1972. Built at Glasson Dock as the Ryelands she was employed mainly in the China clay trade before being acquired by the film industry in 1950. She starred as the Hispaniola in Treasure Island and then as the Pequod in Moby Dick.

¹⁸ White Fish Authority – for example - <http://www.yorkshirefilmarchive.com/film/white-fish-authority>