The Royal Dockyard Worker in Edwardian England: Culture, Leisure and Empire

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Abstract

This thesis is a detailed study of the influence of imperialism on the English working-class male during the period of ‘high imperialism’. Recent debate on the impact of imperialism on the British working class has split academics between those who argue in favour of an imperial dominant ideology and those who question its impact. The thesis will address this disparity and make an original contribution to the historiography of British imperialism by examining discourses of ‘top down’ imperialism alongside working-class responses to evaluate their impact and highlight examples of cultural agency.

By using a detailed study of the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard worker the thesis highlights the importance of local experiences in mediating the imperial narrative. The impact of workplace relations in the community, the civic elites, the provincial press and commercial leisure are explored to provide a nuanced understanding of how these processes worked in practice. Portsmouth’s Royal Dockyard worker provides an interesting case study as the town’s economic prosperity rested with the presence of the Admiralty in the town. The Royal Dockyard workers were the largest industrial group in the town and possessed a unique perspective as employees of the state. They were instrumental in the building and maintenance of the British Fleet, which continued to gain increasing interest during the Edwardian period due to the escalation of the Naval Arms Race with Germany and the other world powers. Their lack of trade union activity in comparison to northern and midland industrialised towns and the reliance on the strength of the Royal Navy to provide them with employment has led to assumptions that Royal Dockyard workers were deferential and subservient to the Admiralty and economically pre-disposed to “naval imperialism.”

This study will offer a unique perspective on the study of imperialism by illustrating, not just how the working classes were subjected to imperialism from ‘above’, but how they were able to use concepts of empire to their own advantage. Rather than being subservient, deferential and economically predisposed to being ‘imperialists’ the thesis will argue that the workforce of the Royal Dockyard were active in their approaches to British imperial thought.
Acknowledgements

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## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declaration</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Maps</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Pictures</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1 Introduction</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2 Portsmouth, the Civic Elite and the Dockyard Worker</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3 Social Structures and Residential Patterns</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4 The Local Press</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5 Mass Leisure and Entertainment</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6 Dockyard Outings and Excursions</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 7 Clubs and Societies of the Royal Dockyard Worker</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Declaration

Whilst registered as a candidate for the above degree, I have not been registered for any other research award. The results and conclusions embodied in this thesis are the work of the named candidate and have not been submitted for any other academic award.

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List of Figures

Figure 1. Portsmouth Dockyard Workers’ Places of Birth, 1911, Portsea 246
Figure 2. Portsmouth Dockyard Workers’ Places of Birth, 1911, North End 247
Figure 3. Portsmouth Dockyard Workers’ Places of Birth, 1911, East Southsea 248

List of Maps

Map 1. Map of Portsea Island showing the sample areas of Portsea, East Southsea and North End, c.1910 82
Map 2. Portsea with sample area circled c.1909 239
Map 3. Sample roads highlighted, Portsea c.1909 239
Map 4. Detail of slum area, Portsea, c.1909 240
Map 5. North End, c.1898 241
Map 6. North End, c.1911 241
Map 7. North End sample area c.1898 242
Map 8. North End with sample roads highlighted on 1909 map 242
Map 9. North End sample area highlighted on 1930s urban formation 243
Map 10. East Southsea with sample area highlighted, c.1909 244
Map 11. East Southsea, c.1898 244
Map 12. East Southsea, c.1909 244
List of Pictures

Picture 1. Portsmouth's Welcome to the French Fleet Sports Day, August 10th 1905

Picture 2. Japanese Visit. Decorated Car Passing Through Fratton Road, July 1907

Picture 3. Postcard, 1908. Laburnum Road, North End

Picture 4. New Theatre Royal Programme, 1889

Picture 5. New Theatre Royal Programme, 1894

Picture 6. New Theatre Royal Programme, 1907

Picture 7. ‘Torpedoed’, Screen Shot from Alfred West’s Film Catalogue

Picture 8. ‘Loading Bananas for England, Jamaica’, Screen Shot from Alfred West’s Film Catalogue

Picture 9. ‘Plait the Maypole’, Screen Shot from Alfred West’s Film Catalogue

Picture 10. ‘A Record Gate’, Fratton Park 1st September 1906. Stephen Cribb

Picture 11. At Rookesbury Park. MED Drawing Office album, c.1905

Picture 12. Electrical Engineers Outing, 1913

Picture 13. Members of the MED Department at Jesmond Dene, 1903

Picture 14. Excursion Bill Advertising a Trip to Portsmouth v. Grimsby, January 1902

Picture 15. Dockyard Excursion Committee Bill Offering Trips to London, the Stanley Cycle Show, the National Show and Horsham, November 1902

Picture 16. Dockyard Excursion Committee Bill Offering Cheap Admission to the Anglo-American Exhibition, August 1914

Picture 17. Guide to the Empire India Exhibition, 1895

Picture 18. Guide to the Military Exhibition, 1901
Picture 19. The Dockyard Excursion Committee, c.1900 184

Picture 20. Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council with Labour Town Councillors 198

Picture 21. A. G. Gourd, GLU. “‘Gourdie’ likes a ‘grievance.’ If he hasn’t something to worry about, he isn’t happy.” 203

Picture 22. Jack Williams, Secretary of A Branch, Portsmouth ASS, a “… dour, imperturbable son of Cambria ... A man who seldom speaks, and only when necessary.” 203

Picture 23. EEM Apprentices Annual Outing, c.1913 212

Picture 24. EEM EFAA, 1907-1908 213

Picture 25. A Dockyard Volunteer, c.1850 229

List of Tables

Table 1. Typical Working Class Houses in Portsmouth 76

Table 2. The Edwardian Provincial Press in Portsmouth 102

Table 3. Dockyard Workers Living in Portsea Slum Area 245

Table 4. Theatres and Music Halls in Portsmouth 252

Table 5. Dockyard Trades’ Weekly Rates of Pay, 1905 253

Table 6. Sample of Long-Distance Excursions and Prices 253

Table 7. Passengers Carried and Cash Paid, 1912. London, Brighton and South Coast Rail 254

Table 8. Passengers Carried and Cash Paid, 1912. London and South West Rail 255
Chapter 1. Introduction

This thesis will explore the impact of imperialism on the leisure time of the Royal Dockyard worker in Edwardian England. Portsmouth’s Royal Dockyard worker provides an interesting case study as the town’s economic prosperity rested with the presence of the Admiralty in the town. The Royal Dockyard workers were the largest industrial group in the town and possessed a unique perspective as employees of the state. They were instrumental in the building and maintenance of the Royal Navy’s fleet, which gained increasing interest during the Edwardian period due to the escalation of the Naval Arms Race with Germany and other world powers. Moreover, their lack of trade union activity in comparison to northern and midland industrialised towns and the reliance on the strength of the Royal Navy to provide them with employment have led to assumptions that Royal Dockyard workers were deferential and subservient to the Admiralty and economically pre-disposed to “naval imperialism.” ¹ The thesis seeks to look beyond the realm of work to investigate how concepts of the Royal Dockyard workers’ place in the British Empire pervaded their everyday lives.

Current debates on the effects of empire on British culture and society have split academics. The late Victorian and Edwardian period is seen by many as the era of ‘high’ imperialism but so far historians disagree how important empire was and how to interpret its meanings and significance. The debate was re-ignited in 2004 when Bernard Porter challenged established theories of historians and cultural theorists such as John M. MacKenzie and Edward W. Said on the pervasiveness and impact of imperialism on the British public. ² Porter’s assertions catalysed a swing back in the favour of a more subject-centred analysis of imperial influence and highlighted the split between those who believe in the existence of an imperial hegemony and those who wished to assert the

agency of the British public and in some cases absolve the working classes from what J. A. Hobson coined “jingoism.”

Porter argued that the impact and influence on the British public was negligible and had previously been exaggerated and oversimplified. Key to Porter’s argument was that Said, MacKenzie and their followers had sought an imperial discourse to the exclusion of any other ideological or discursive meanings and he questioned the methodological approaches they had adopted and its ability to evaluate the effects of imperialism on the British public. He used an archaeological analogy to describe how imperialism must be contextualised in relation to the lives of the British public and argued that the concept of imperialism was not static and was constantly being re-visited and redefined over time which would expose a “variety of imperialisms.” Andrew S. Thompson took up this mantle to argue against a monolithic imperial approach. He questioned the effectiveness of looking at popular culture in isolation and instead proposed a multi-layered approach which acknowledged the presence of other subjectivities on the interpretation of the imperial message. He hoped that through also looking at the formative relationships within the workplace and the home a sense of agency could be restored to the working people.

Thus there has persisted a call for a more nuanced approach to perspectives on the British Empire, which take into account different temporal, personal and collective subjectivities. This thesis therefore seeks to highlight the importance of studying the relationship between culture, leisure and empire at a level hitherto under-explored. It will make an original contribution to the historiography of British imperialism by examining discourses of ‘top down’ imperialism alongside working-class responses to evaluate their

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3 Defined by Hobson as “A course patriotism, fed by the wildest rumours and the most violent appeals to hate and the animal lust of blood...” J. A. Hobson, *The Psychology of Jingoism*, (London: Grant Richards, 1901); p.8.
5 Porter has called the followers of their subsequent schools of thought “Saidists” and “MacKenzie-ites.” Porter, *Absent-minded*; p.viii and p.ix.
8 Thompson, *Empire Strikes*; p.240.
impact and highlight examples of cultural agency. It will adopt a more holistic approach to the investigation of imperialism by incorporating perspectives from the study of working-class popular culture and leisure outside of the discourse of “imperialism” to augment the research. Using the Royal Dockyard worker as a case study this approach will incorporate a nuanced understanding of cultural exchange and support it with evidence using a wide range of local source material. The research has been enhanced by the use of a wide variety of local historical archives which have hitherto been unexplored. Exclusive access to the uncatalogued collection of the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Historical Trust and use of their database of Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Employment Records has provided more personalised insights into this group of workers. These sources have been augmented by local press reports and collections from the Portsmouth History Centre, the National Archives Admiralty Papers and the 1901 and 1911 Censuses, which have provided contextual information and evidence of working-class engagement.

The study is situated between the aftermath of the Boer War and the build up to the First World War which has been characterised as a time when challenges from other countries and rising concerns about the state of the nation prompted British fears of degeneration and decline on the world stage.9 Indeed Porter argued that by the twentieth century the empire had come under serious challenge and there was “a more wholehearted domestic commitment” to imperial propaganda by its “keenest champions.”10 At a local level, the fears of the nation were encapsulated in Portsmouth’s naval presence as the Naval Arms Race ushered in an era of Dreadnought battleships, each class larger and more technologically advanced than the last. The increased productivity of the Royal Dockyard and new technologies brought an influx of workmen, which impacted the town physically and culturally. As employees of the state who built the machines of imperial defence and war it has been assumed that the Royal Dockyard workers were predisposed to an economically determined imperial bias. Their lack of trade union activity in comparison to northern and midland industrialised towns and the reliance on the strength of the Royal Navy to provide them with employment has led to assumptions that Royal Dockyard

10 Porter, Absent-minded; p.18.
workers were deferential and subservient to the Admiralty and economically pre-disposed to a form of “naval imperialism.”

Furthermore, studies into working-class culture have tended to focus on the metropole or large industrial towns in the north of England, engendering the notion that the south of England was less culturally vibrant and lacked an organised working class. Recent studies have acknowledged the importance of localised factors in the creation of identity and dissemination of imperial thought. This thesis’ focus on a group of industrialised working-class subjects in their leisure time through a localised lens will bring attention to concepts of class, status, gender and place over a sustained amount of time in order to further understand the role and relationship of imperialism in the everyday lives of British subjects.

Rather than being subservient, deferential and economically predisposed to being ‘imperialists’ the thesis will argue that Royal Dockyard workers were active in their approaches to British imperial thought. This process was not static and changed over time and circumstance and will illustrate examples of how top-down expectations of imperial behaviour could be dismissed or used to augment arguments which furthered working-class rights and freedoms. This study offers a unique perspective on the study of imperialism by illustrating not just how the working classes were subjected to imperialism from ‘above’, but how they were able to use concepts of empire to their own advantage.

**Historiography**

**The meaning of empire and imperialism in the Edwardian period**

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First, the concept of empire and ‘imperialism’ for ordinary people in late Victorian and Edwardian England must be explored. Approaches to the issue of how the British public engaged with empire on an ideological level continues to split academics. The Boer War (1899-1902) has been viewed by many as the high water mark of British imperial sentiment. It was J. A. Hobson’s Liberal outrage at the outpouring of jubilation on Mafeking Night, 18th May 1900, which has been the catalyst for many studies into the precise manifestation of imperialism in the British public. He posited the notion that jingoism was a form of “course patriotism” communicated through the press, the platform and the pulpit which influenced large sections of the middle and labouring classes. Hobson’s analysis was questioned by socialist historian Henry Pelling, who took issue with the assumption of working class complicity with the excesses of jingoism. Pelling’s study stemmed from the 1960s social history movement, which placed focus on the working classes. Using Trades Union sources and voting and army enlistment patterns, Pelling argued crucially that there was no evidence of a direct continuous support for the cause of imperialism among any sections of the working class. This was augmented by Richard Price, who supported the argument that the working classes were largely indifferent to the imperial message. Price furthered Pelling’s study and was keen to articulate working class “subcultures” rather than a history of the Labour movement and used data from working men’s clubs, trades councils and army volunteer records for their non-sectarian and non-Labour movement ties and their capacity for reaching a large number of working-class men. He criticised contemporary critics such as Hobson for drawing conclusions based on false premises and personal bias and supported Pelling’s hypothesis that it was the middle classes who were the jingoes. He instead attributed working class involvement in the celebrations to “harmless saturnalia.” However, both Pelling and Price’s methodologies, which hinged on analysing data from working-class movements, were not necessarily representative of working men as a whole. Price

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18 Price, *An Imperial War*; p.47.
acknowledged that his source material was somewhat limited by the laws governing Public Records Office access to official documents at the time. Moreover, Price’s reliance on Working Mens’ Club records was criticised for its focus on “respectable” working-class movements which subsequently overlooked other, more representative examples, of the working-class.

Michael Blanch, however, argued that the part played by the working people was fundamentally misunderstood and the Boer War heralded the appearance of an “innate and inchoate nationalism” in the working classes. Though he asserted that there was not a joined up and coherent theory of imperialism within this group, the lack of intellectual roots within working-class ideas of nationalism enabled a superficially contradictory state of reasoning within the working class subject. However, while Blanch highlighted the broader relationships between working-class culture and empire, the focus of his argument on the manifestation of imperialism in Victorian culture overlooked other facets of working class life. This analysis has undervalued the intellectual engagement that the working classes had with imperialism and their ability to discern for themselves and condemned their behaviour as that of ignorance. This thesis aims to instil agency into the practices of working-class reasoning, thereby fleshing out a model for looking at working-class imperial sentiment as something more considered than previously argued.

Stephen M. Miller’s recent study of the Boer War has argued that patriotism was the reason for the upsurge in enlistment for the Volunteer Forces during the outbreak of the Boer War. Using personal diaries from the Boer War Miller suggested that volunteers joined for psychological fulfilment through ambition and the love of adventure, which he asserted was inherently linked to patriotism. However, as sources, diaries present problems of personal bias and diary writing among the working classes often set the

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20 Price, An Imperial War; p.135.
25 Miller, Volunteers on the Veldt; p.75.
autobiographist apart and made them atypical to their fellow workers who had neither the time nor the inclination to dedicate to such documentation. Therefore, while Miller’s analysis provides useful insight into the reasoning of those citizens who volunteered and flips the perspective of domestic imperialism from the home front to the battlefield, it is perhaps not representative. Moreover, its focus on such a specific imperial moment, as with the former studies listed, is not able to articulate the notion of imperialism as a sustained and fluctuating force which changed over time. This has been the criticism of another study by Steven Attridge based around the popular representation of the soldier during the Boer War, which although highlighted the power of war as a mobilising force, divorced it from a more coherent study within the context of British history.26

The notion of jingoism as a manifestation of imperialism does not accurately pinpoint the nature of a sustained attitude towards the British Empire. Therefore, it is clear that a study of working-class attitudes toward empire must look beyond the problematic of focusing on one key event towards a study of lived experiences in the period contextualising the Boer War. Although the thesis is titled “Edwardian England”, it will take into account continuities and discontinuities of the “long nineteenth century” and its pervasion into the First World War.27 J. M. MacKenzie has cited the climax of British imperial identity at the time of the Boer War and argued that it continued to have “considerable profile” until beyond the Second World War.28 Indeed, Price has argued that the role of the working-class male became increasingly important during the late nineteenth century as imperial threat and mass politics changed their position from one of deference to one of assertive citizenship; to be a British citizen meant also to be an imperial citizen. Thus, Price argued, empire was injected into the British culture in a more profound way than ever before.29 Similarly Thompson has asserted that the increased

contact of the empire with the “mother country” compelled a more resonant impact of the empire on British society.  

However, although historians of Empire are broadly agreed on the cultural significance of the latter part of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, their views on what imperialism was and how it worked in practice have been widely different. The 1990s ‘linguistic turn’ marked a deviation from the study of ‘class’ to the study of ‘culture’. Said has played a pivotal role in divorcing the idea of empire from class to transpose it on a wider framework of western thought and cultural formation. It diverged from the idea of jingoism that Pelling and Price examined to view a more insidious and deep-rooted imperial discourse in culture. Within this scope Said evaluated how Western cultures gained hegemony over the peripheries of empire by looking at the ways in which they impacted on one another using the canonical novels of the nineteenth century as illustrations of the cultural exchange. In this vein, the impact of the empire on everyday life has recently been addressed by Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose. They asserted that empire was so much a part of everyday life it was taken for granted. Indeed, it was part of a socialised national identity which informed other contemporary discourses such as ideas of race, gender, religion and consumption. Most recently Catherine Hall has reasserted that the culture of Britain was “permeated with empire.” Using an analysis of Thackeray’s Vanity Fair, Hall demonstrated how concepts of empire and identity were constructed in a discursive process of language and meaning. However the gap in understanding comes from the admission that “we cannot know precisely what generations of readers have taken from the book.” Indeed, critics of the linguistic turn have tended to dismiss the idea of imperialism as an explanation for hegemonic control.

Price has labelled Said’s theory of Orientalism a useful, but partial, tool for seeing the

30 Thompson, Empire Strikes; p.5.
32 The notion of the counterpoint. Said, Culture and Imperialism; pp.59-60.
33 Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, ‘Introduction: Being At Home with the Empire’ in Catherine Hall and Sonya Rose (eds.) At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World, (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp.1-31; p30.
35 Hall, ‘Culture and Identity’; p.215.
world, but not an absolute truth.\textsuperscript{36} MacKenzie was also critical of Said’s approach and argued that the creation of a master narrative of imperial western power was “Whiggism in reverse.”\textsuperscript{37} He also blamed Said and his followers of “Occidentalising the west” and presenting the European power in broad stereotypes.\textsuperscript{38} For both Said and MacKenzie the ideology of empire was a legitimising force.

However, whereas Said articulated the subtle and discrete subconscious understandings of empire embedded in the literary canon of the nineteenth century, MacKenzie argued that it was its pervasiveness of popular culture that really influenced the British public. Moreover, MacKenzie asserted that this was evidence of an “imperial core ideology.”\textsuperscript{39} He cited the late-Victorian period as the point when national, royal and military concerns intertwined with a cult of personality and Social Darwinist racial ideas to create a new imperialist patriotism.\textsuperscript{40} Indeed, Marxist historians such as Eric Hobsbawm have argued that imperial pageantry made “good ideological cement”.\textsuperscript{41}

MacKenzie’s ‘new imperialism’ canon has been broadly successful in highlighting the influence of imperialism from many forms of popular leisure.\textsuperscript{42} However, Porter and others have argued that in relation to its reception by the British public, the effects have been discovered and described, but not evaluated.\textsuperscript{43} Similarly, Thompson argued that the “popular imperialism thesis” was methodologically unsound and has not provided enough evidence for how Britons viewed their empire. Howe also acknowledged flaws in the

\textsuperscript{36} Price, ‘One Big Thing’; p.618.
\textsuperscript{38} MacKenzie, \textit{Orientalism}; p.5.
\textsuperscript{40} Mackenzie, \textit{Propaganda and Empire}; p.2.
\textsuperscript{41} Eric Hobsbawm, \textit{The Age of Empire, 1874-1914}, (Weidenfield and Nicholas, 1987); p.70.
\textsuperscript{43} To paraphrase Porter. Porter, \textit{Absent-minded Imperialists}; p.ix. “What it does not do is situate it within a larger framework of British society to show how it influenced ordinary lives.” Price, ‘One Big Thing’; p.617. Simon J. Potter has also concurred with a more nuanced methodology “to avoid the assumption that evidence relating to one particular culture or identity applies equally to the wider picture ...” Simon J. Potter, ‘Empire, Cultures and Identities in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Britain’, \textit{History Compass}, 2007, pp.51-71; pp.53-54.
reception of imperial propaganda. He argued that it was not merely passively accepted by audiences, but acknowledged that little is known about how such processes worked.  

Porter asserted that the British public enjoyed imperialism for “unimperialistic reasons such as “for the sugar ... not the pill”. August has also acknowledged the gap in understanding of the working classes. He stated that although working-class men, women and children celebrated monarchy and empire, the extent of their patriotism and enthusiasm for empire remains unclear. He asserted that the patchy and short-lived jingoistic outbursts had little influence on British politics or working class attitudes and that “Participation in celebrations of empire did not necessarily indicate commitment to the imperial enterprise.”

However, although Porter challenged the previous assumptions of the study of culture and empire, Price has highlighted that Porter’s criticism of new imperial history “left him with no energy of how he might envisage the linkages”; a point with which Porter has subsequently acknowledged. Hall has also criticised Porter for his emphasis on empirical evidence over an interpretive method of analysis arguing that it overlooked the unconscious, consensual understandings – the common sense – of the period. She proposed that it might be useful to examine local communities to determine how attitudes changed over time. Thompson has called for the study of British imperialism to be resituated within the realm of multiple identities. He asserted that British identities in relation to empire were negotiated through shifting specificities such as a person’s locality, family background, the workplace, leisure pursuits, gender, age and race which shift over time and can also be held simultaneously. However, he has also argued that there has been too much attention on leisure at the expense of other spheres of experience and proposed to move away from class and leisure in order to move the debate forward. These criticisms are crucial to taking the theory towards a more nuanced...

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45 Porter, Absent-minded; p 208.
48 Hall, ‘Culture and Identity’; p.200.
49 Hall, ‘Culture and Identity’; p.205.
50 Thompson, Empire Strikes; pp.240-241.
understanding of imperialism and culture. It is clear that a gap needs to be bridged between implicit cultural understanding and empirical evidence. It has become increasingly acknowledged that the meanings of empire and imperialism changed over time according to different subjective experiences and personal biases. This thesis argues, however, that class was an integral part of the identity process and one that has been dismissed by the linguistic turn to culture and can help to show how attitudes changed over time. Leisure, on the other hand, had been overstated due to misunderstandings in the role that ordinary people took in the process. It is of critical importance that this is re-evaluated.

Class, gender, empire and identity

The idea of multiple identities within everyday life therefore, is increasingly important in highlighting agency and subjectivity. Andrew August has argued that simplistic notions of identity and social determination should be abandoned and emphasis shifted to understanding the context of language and narratives and how “social actors” comprehended their lives through them. Peter Bailey has asserted that this had particular resonance in the field of leisure which, rather than being a homogenous whole, was from the late nineteenth century “more atomized” with the consumer giving specific life and meaning to what they chose to take part in. He conceptualised a “pluralist culture ... within shifting situational thresholds of inclusion and exclusion, identity and status.” Indeed historians of leisure have had more success in articulating identity away from empire. To embrace this field would, rather than obscure the issue of imperialism, lend itself to the multiple identity argument as it could demonstrate how these gaps in joined up imperial thought occurred and enable more agency. Richard Holt has argued that sport and the community was a very important vessel for the production of meaning and identity. Furthermore, support of the local football club invested a sense of “symbolic citizenship” which anchored individuals in a sense of place (locally and

51 August, The British; p.4.
nationally) and gendered behaviour. Brad Beaven has also argued that, although imposed with legislation and codified rules, the emergent commercial leisure of the late nineteenth century enabled working-class men to impose their own level of meaning. Indeed, Jeffrey Hill has stated that sport was an important contemporary vehicle for understanding complex social relations and status with men and women alike being judged on the games they played. Matthew Taylor has also asserted that football, during the early twentieth century, was viewed contemporarily as a gendered activity, which was evidenced in the threat from female participation and the disdain it provoked among footballing bodies and the media. It has become much clearer that, in response to the monolithic imperial model, a more nuanced investigation of life at a more personal level needs to occur. The notion of class and gender, therefore, are particularly pertinent fields of study.

Porter’s focus on class as a mediator of imperial experience is an important facet of this thesis. He argued that the working classes had “an entirely distinct perception of empire from the upper classes, arising from their peculiar material interests.” Recent years have witnessed a return to the idea of ‘class’ as a way of explaining approaches to identity and subjectivity. David Cannadine sought to move away from Marxist concepts of class and class struggle, arguing that Marx’s structure was too simplistic, too collective and led to subsequent misunderstandings by scholars about the nature of class conflict and the absence of the predicted proletarian revolution. Instead Cannadine argued that class should be viewed theoretically as a particular social construct in the way that it was regarded by contemporaries, but also in practice as a “product of deliberate, self-conscious articulation” which enabled people to make sense of their social worlds.

August has argued that a strong sense of class identity was forged through distinct forms

55 Holt, Sport and the British; p.172 and particularly Chapter Four ‘Empire and Nation’, pp.203-279.
57 Jeffrey Hill. Sport, Leisure and Culture in Twentieth Century Britain, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002); p.11.
59 Porter, Absent-Minded; p.xiv.
61 Cannadine, Class; p.6 and p.17.
62 Cannadine, Class; p.23.
of working-class culture based in the streets, commercial leisure and associations which was negotiated alongside other forms of identity based on geography, gender and race. August’s has most recently been augmented by Ben Jones’ study on mid-twentieth century Brighton which has highlighted the continuities and evolution of the working class. Jones noted that in mid-twentieth century England concepts of class were important but also “contingent, fluid and sometimes ambivalent.” These new understandings have enabled a movement away from the ‘false consciousness’ argument which have blighted the working classes and are able to highlight much more agency in their everyday lives. Therefore, rather than the working classes being duped, the choices they made illustrated an active attempt to situate themselves in society. Thompson argued that historians need to “take more seriously the possibility that working people embraced the empire on their own terms.” To this end, it could become an explanation of why working people did not particularly support any political party and were much more occupied with “the pervasive politics of everyday life.”

Many case studies have been influenced by the ‘Labour Aristocrat’ argument proffered by Geoffrey Crossick in relation to government workers in Kentish London. However, new understandings about class render the idea of false consciousness a moot point and carry the debate about the working classes away from a concept of ruling class hegemony. Furthermore, to conceive of a Labour aristocracy in the Dockyard workforce privileges the skilled, relatively affluent, artisan over other members. Arguably notions of working-class independence, respectability and thrift were still highly important and could co-exist with other forms of working-class consciousness. Similarly, although the theoretical aspects of Marxism are now being questioned, the contemporary debate on socialism and the

63 August, The British; p.159.
65 Jones, The Working Class; p.27.
66 Thompson, Empire Strikes; p.43.
69 Cannadine, Class; p.6; August, The British; p.147.
70 August, The British; p.147.
Labour movement was very much in development. During the Edwardian period all the major parties began to show fault lines in their manifestos. Gorman has argued that one would be hard pressed to find in late-Victorian or Edwardian Britain any audible voice calling for the dismantling of Empire. 71 Indeed, the presence of empire in popular politics would have also fragmented the workforce. Thus, while the ideas of politics, stratification and distinction remained important, their significance is in how they acted as a marker for showing how notions of class and empire were mutated and reconstructed through a plethora of subjective experiences which required individual or collective responses. These new understandings are crucial to the debate surrounding the Royal Dockyard worker who, as we shall see, has been characterised by economically predetermined criteria.

There is however, the danger of overstating class, as the criticism of Cannadine’s work on Ornamentalism has highlighted. Cannadine’s argument that the British saw the empire through constructs of class and status has gained much criticism about its oversimplification and disregard for racism and gender. 72 The notion of gender is also crucial to understanding how identities intersected with empire. A useful approach has been outlined by Philippa Levine who has argued that while gender was one of the central ways in which people made sense of their world, to use it too generally would prove inaccurate. She argued instead that gender was subject to changes over time and place and it should be acknowledged as an analytical tool which did not stand alone or above other factors such as class, race or work. 73 However, much of this work has been created to address the gap in representations of women and female subjugation within the metropole and peripheries. Where the male has been focused on, it is often within the scope of how the colonisers (white males) subjugated white women and the colonised within frameworks of gendered understanding. 74 Thompson addressed the issue of

71 Gorman, Imperial Citizenship; p.2.
gender in regards to women and children; however, arguably the deficit of studies for the working class male has meant that there is much still to address on this level by looking at the role of the (subordinate) working class male in imperial society and how that has manifested itself. Recently Angela Woollacott and J. A. Mangan have both assessed the impact of empire on notions of masculinity behind militarism, adventure and war, but this is a well-trodden course using examples of popular literature (including juvenile fiction), sport, art and iconography. When sport and the empire are usually addressed it is through the perspective of the metropole influencing the periphery into its practice of gendered, codified competitions. Patrick F. McDevitt has outlined the scope for seeing sport as an empowering force for all races and classes of the empire’s indigenous population, calling the false consciousness and social control arguments “specious.” This argument is again hedged in a way to articulate the counterpoint and the clashes occurring between the metropole and empire, which was only fractionally present at a local domestic level. However it is a useful study which moved gender away from a monolithic discourse, arguing instead that sport produced a multitude of masculinities.

As previously identified, the dominance of the ‘linguistic turn’ in the last thirty years has only told us so much. Rather than being an absolute truth, the idea of empire must be seen as a contested and constructed social concept. The study of culture, leisure and empire in the lives of the Edwardian Royal Dockyard worker, therefore, aims to situate the subjects within a framework of competing and concurrent discourses over time in order to highlight points where empire and leisure fused or were rejected or re-appropriated in the social lives of ‘ordinary’ people. The core aim of this thesis, therefore, is to argue that rather than the working classes’ response to empire and imperialism

75 Thompson, Empire Strikes; pp.96-123.
78 Patrick F. McDevitt, May the Best Man Win: Sport, Masculinity and Nationalism in Great Britain and the Empire 1880-1935, (Houndmills: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004); p.4.
79 McDevitt, May the Best Man; p.10.
being a matter of ‘ignorance’ or ‘unintelligence’, it was a more fluid, uneven and practical process which highlighted the appliance of imperial thought to everyday life. This will resituate the construction of British identities as a more intimate process of personal and collective construction at a local and individual level.

**Place, economy and empire**

However, as the historiography states, this needs bearing out in demonstrable working-class cultural production. Recent historiographical critiques have highlighted the importance of evidence-based research. Therefore a study must exhibit the “physical manifestations of cultural production.” This is problematic with working-class sources, and memoirs or diaries often make those who wrote them unrepresentative of their class. Equally election results only represent a partial picture of the enfranchised working-class, and cannot distinguish from other classes of voters. Thompson proposed the investigation of ‘product consumerism’; however, this is too general a model for the study of Royal Dockyard workers and difficult to prove on such a level. One of the remedies has been a turn to the study of local and regional areas to see how national and imperial discourses are negotiated. A study at a local level is also able to search out the rich archival material held in the vaults of local history collections. Much of this material is generated by the citizens of the town and can support an enhanced contextual analysis of how ‘the people’ viewed empire. Helen B. McCartney and MacKenzie have both cited the importance of using the local press as a historical source. Indeed MacKenzie has asserted that they “carried important versions of the empire.” Most recently Beaven has highlighted evidence of a strong local civic patriotism in Portsmouth which was nurtured in the popular provincial newspapers through their fusion of imperial and local issues.

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80 Price, ‘One Big’; p.627.  
81 Porter, Absent-Minded; p.214.  
82 Porter, Absent-Minded; p.216.  
83 Thompson, Empire Strikes; p.45.  
84 McCartney, Citizen Soldiers; pp.104-105.  
86 Beaven, Visions of Empire; p.89.
There has been increased focus on the importance of the local sphere in the lives of the working-classes. Porter suggested that the working classes were split on many levels including regionally, which has had a bearing on being able to find a coherent working-class response to imperialism.87 Similarly Thompson has acknowledged that “regional distinctiveness was just as likely to be underlined as undermined by empire” and its empire could be a form of “self-affirmation” in the face of cultural and political changes.88 Indeed, in a study on citizen soldiers in the First World War McCartney stressed that localism was a “key feature” of pre-1914 society.89 Pierre Purseigle has also demonstrated the importance of conveying meaning and understanding through the “appropriation of the national narrative through local cultural codes.”90 Jones’s study of Brighton has also enabled a shift away from traditional spheres of working-class formation centring on heavy industry and manufacturing such as London and ‘the North’ to focus on other areas away from the large industrial cities of the north or inner London.91 The study also highlighted the variance of experience based on different temporal and geographic locales.92 These recent trends enable new, more nuanced studies to make an impact on the debate as a whole by acknowledging the importance of local themes and sources on the wider picture.

Concepts of identity and belonging have often converged with those of locality and citizenship. It is therefore an important element of how to understand the construction and subjectiveness of imperial identities. The notion of imperial citizenship was explored by Daniel Gorman and Keith McClelland and Sonya O Rose respectively.93 Gorman’s study into the development of ideas of imperial citizenship between 1895 and 1920 acknowledged the need to re-frame the idea of identity and belonging within the context of shifting contemporary perceptions on “Britishness” and the place and role of the

87 Porter, Absent-Minded; p.xiv.
88 Thompson, The Empire Strikes; p.198 and p.200.
89 McCartney, Citizen Soldiers; p.57.
90 Purseigle, ‘Beyond and Below’; pp. 95-124.
93 Daniel Gorman, Imperial Citizenship, Empire and the Question of Belonging, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006) and Keith McClelland and Sonya O. Rose, ‘Citizenship and Empire, 1867-1928’ in Hall and Rose (eds.) At Home with the Empire, pp.275-297.
Similarly, McClelland and Rose concentrate on the way in which the extension of the franchise impacted the ideas of imperial citizenship in British politics, which is interesting for this thesis when extended to a municipal model. The notion of the ‘industrial city’ was used as a parallel by disillusioned social commentators such as J. A. Hobson and Charles F. G. Masterman to explain the physical and emotional degeneration of the British population. Brad Beaven and John Griffiths have noted that during the period of 1900 to 1918 the optimism of the civic project, which was associated with civic spirit and engagement, was replaced by a period of pessimism where “fears over slum cities were fused with imperial uncertainty.” However, although these studies highlight the importance and pertinence of the concepts of imperialism and citizenship as a means of establishing social and cultural stability, the focus is on the debates surrounding the intellectual discourse of imperialism as conceived of by “a small number of privileged white men” and does not extend to the examination of a lived imperial citizenship in action. It also raises an interesting issue: If the elites and politicians of the day were able to adapt their attitudes towards empire and imperialism, then surely there is scope to explore the capacity for adaptation in the working classes? How citizens experienced empire in situ will be an important element of the discussion and will underline the subjective nature of the imperial experience.

Mackenzie had already begun working towards concepts of empire within a sense of national identity in the four countries of Great Britain. He asserted that the imperial experience was shaped and conceptualised differently by each of the British nations and that “Neither the history of Empire nor the history of the British Isles can be entirely

94 Gorman, Imperial Citizenship; p.2.
understood without some comprehension of these vital ethnic distinctions.”

This thesis therefore, will take into account the strong distinction between ‘Englishness’ and ‘Britishness’ in its analysis. Furthermore, his work on the city of Glasgow has also exposed the importance of the civic elites and civic identity within towns and cities. Indeed, Felix Driver and David Gilbert have argued that imperial culture was not a homogenous or unitary discourse and was experienced differently according to city, time and place.

This idea has been built on by a number of other academics, notably Paul Maloney, who assessed Glasgow music halls which, he argued, dramatised Scotland’s imperial ethos and “contributed to the Scottish public’s wholehearted embrace of the imperial ethos.”

This is an interesting notion, especially juxtaposed next to his question of why, although the city of Glasgow was so economically bound with the empire, there were not any songs about the economic benefits of it. Perhaps the escapism of music hall did not mix with and the drudgery of work and intangible notions of international economies as fruitful avenues for entertainment? However, the concept is interesting, especially when viewed in conjunction with Portsmouth whose fortune was based on a more celebrated aspect of the empire – the military.

In case studies of Portsmouth there have been serious gaps in the study of empire. Local histories mainly trade on the pageantry and nostalgia of empire and the Royal Navy as a backdrop without assessing its implications. Moreover, the strong focus on ships, naval policy and the town’s status as a Royal Dockyard have tended to eclipse the social history aspect of the Royal Dockyard worker which has meant that historians have “been inclined to adopt a deterministic note on the politics of Dockyard towns and Dockyardmen who were ‘written off’ as deferential, even subservient and distinctly non-militant”.

Indeed both MacKenzie and Porter have argued that a city’s relationship to empire could be

102 Paul Maloney, Scotland and the Music Hall 1850-1914, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003); p.171.
103 Maloney, Scotland and the Music; p.171.
determined through their material relationship to it.\textsuperscript{105} Certainly, the historiography on the nature of Portsmouth as a naval and Dockyard town points to compelling economic and political reasons for why the Dockyard worker, may be construed as pro-imperialist. Ray Riley cited the jingoism of the naval arms race as a pivotal point in the development of Portsmouth Royal Dockyard’s role in Edwardian naval shipbuilding.\textsuperscript{106} Similarly Hugh Mason asserted that the power the navy and the Dockyard wielded over the local area in the first half of the twentieth century meant that the town was “thus tied closely to the role which the United Kingdom played as a world power.”\textsuperscript{107} However, there is little evidence of how these concepts shaped the lives and attitudes of the population.

Politically, however, fault lines have appeared in this analysis. G. J. Ashworth argued that a trend of voting contrary to the government of the day was unsubstantiated in the case of Portsmouth. He believed that it could not be demonstrated that local issues generated a swing against what was occurring in politics nationally and argued that the electorate tended to vote along national trends, but with “consistently more emphasis”.\textsuperscript{108} However, Sarah Quail noted that as an electorate Portsmouth citizens were generally conservative owing to their naval bias; leading the electorate to favour a strong defence policy and the jobs that it would secure.\textsuperscript{109} Similarly Robert Cook argued that it was local issues in the politics of the town which influenced voting patterns and that the Dockyard workers’ vote fluctuated with them being more likely to vote against the government “either from fears that naval policy would lead to dockyard depression, or simply as a vote against one’s employers in the hope of improvement under another administration.”\textsuperscript{110} These views suggest that the Dockyard vote was more volatile than these local histories have broadly asserted. Mavis Waters argued that in the late nineteenth century the established men of

\textsuperscript{105} Mackenzie, ‘Second City of Empire’; p.216 and Bernard Porter, ‘Further Thoughts on Imperial Absent-Mindedness.’; p.102.
\textsuperscript{106} R. C. Riley, The Industries of Portsmouth in the Nineteenth Century, (Portsmouth: Portsmouth City Council, 1976); p 3.
\textsuperscript{108} G. J. Ashworth, Portsmouth’s Political Patterns 1885-1945, The Portsmouth Papers, (Portsmouth City Council: Portsmouth, 1976); p.10.
Chatham Dockyard were generally politically conservative, whereas the unskilled labourers of the same Dockyard, through the nature of their unstable employment and more direct ties to the local area, were more likely to challenge their pay and conditions through political alliances with the town’s elite and sympathetic Liberal parliamentary candidates.¹¹¹ These assertions are highly interesting and deserve a more sustained analysis within the context of the lives of the Royal Dockyard workers and their environment, which this thesis aims to achieve.

The idea of the town and its municipal leaders as an influential force in shaping local identities has recently been explored by Andy Croll and Simon Gunn.¹¹² Croll has argued that the discourse on becoming an “urban citizen” produced a self-censoring, unifying experience which could at times transcend class distinctions.¹¹³ Both also identify the civic space as somewhere to articulate a sense of patriotism framed within particular local meanings, which was especially resonant in forms of civic celebration and pageantry.¹¹⁴ Enhancing this link, Beaven’s recent comparative study of three cities - Portsmouth, Leeds and Coventry - has highlighted the complex relationships provincial towns had with the metropole and the idea of empire. This study is particularly pertinent as it compared Portsmouth to Leeds and Coventry over a sustained period of time featuring events from the Edwardian period such as the Boer War and features chapters on the evolution of mass entertainment, the civic elites and the influence of the local press.¹¹⁵ He showed that different towns responded to empire in different ways depending on their municipal infrastructure and their direct experiences with the empire. Indeed, the civic elites in Portsmouth particularly tried to align the town with a sense of imperial grandeur based on its military ties, albeit on their terms.¹¹⁶ Crucially, this link was only significant when

¹¹⁴ Croll used the example of choral singing in Merthyr. Croll, Civilizing; pp.104-136. Gunn has looked more generally at civic pageantry and funerals of the elite. Gunn, Public Culture; pp.163-186.
¹¹⁵ Beaven, Visions of Empire see especially ‘Civic Ceremony and the Citizen Solider during the Boer War, 1899-1902’; pp.70-91 and ‘Mass Entertainment, popular Culture and Imperial Societies, 1870-1939’; pp.179-207.
¹¹⁶ Beaven, Visions of Empire; p.24.
“imperial issues were fused with the local.” Beaven contended that it was through a strong local patriotism mediated through the civic elites and local press, rather than a monolithic national patriotism, which engaged citizens with the imperial message. This is a refreshing departure from Roger Thomas’ assessment of Portsmouth as a town whose civic identity was geared towards notions of “service” and “public deference.”

Ken Lunn and Roger Thomas argued that Portsmouth was particularly predisposed towards a ‘naval imperialism’ through the city’s links with the navy, influencing local life and the economy. They cited the inculcation of naval imperialism through the repetition of naval ‘traditions’ such as ship launches and other naval spectacles. Thomas has similarly argued that the pageantry of the Royal Navy in Edwardian times fostered a local patriotism through the city’s links with the construction of the ships. This was especially poignant to the dockyard workers themselves as “a celebratory day, a time to see the object of their labour launched.” Through an analysis of contemporary photographs of the launch Thomas asserted that the Dockyard workers’ “spontaneous involvement” in the ceremony illustrated their “adherence to a deeper, layered, dockyard ideology associated with craft work, labour and the nation.” The neglect of the Royal Navy as a vehicle for imperial propaganda has recently been highlighted by Jan Rüger. Rüger has identified a ‘cult of the navy’ in the three decades before the First World War and argued that the public pageantry of the Royal Navy was designed to inculcate the public and argued that the nexus of local, national and imperial contexts provided “an important stage for the politics of national identity in the United Kingdom and its Empire.” Exploring the influence of the workplace, Neil Casey argued that the Royal Dockyard Schools were instruments of hegemonic power designed to induce desired behavioural practices in the dockyard apprentice and argued that they formed notions of

117 Beaven, Visions of Empire; p.65.
118 Beaven, Visions of Empire; pp.36-37 and p.89.
120 Lunn and Thomas, ‘Naval Imperialism’; pp.145-146.
122 Thomas, ‘Empire, Naval Pageantry and Public Spectacles’; p.208.
123 Thomas, ‘Empire, Naval Pageantry and Public Spectacles’, p.212.
social obligation and “duty to play their part in upholding the British Empire.” These assertions will be explored and tested against evidence drawn from the case study which will seek to distinguish between these top-down, monolithic imperialist readings and the reception of those at a more personal level.

Local studies on leisure in Portsmouth have tended to focus on listing the range of facilities available for enthusiasts and pleasure-seekers without assessing the wider reasons behind their formation beyond economics, ‘leisure for leisure’s sake’, or deterministic factors such as the high number of working class and naval men in the area. There is a dearth of work undertaken on the specific leisure and culture of Portsmouth’s Royal Dockyard worker. Work and leisure are mainly presented as separate spheres of study and are usually placed within a framework of ‘recreation from work’ or as a tool of social cohesion, which resonated with an idea of a “culture of consolation” and a “de facto recognition of the existing order.” Thomas argued similarly that “cultural life veered towards the populism of the music hall, the cinema and the pub.” The subsequent leisure historiography of the Royal Dockyard worker was pre-determined due to their links with their means of production and the town’s relationship to the navy. Many Royal Dockyard workers participated in the broad leisure patterns that have been attributed to the “working class”, however, the social identity of the Royal Dockyard worker in previous studies has never been fully deconstructed. Studies on industrial relations have demonstrated that they were not a homogenous group of people. The term “Royal Dockyard worker” is in itself problematic due to the specific structure of

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128 Thomas, Dreadnought Construction; p.12.
129 Peter Galliver, The Portsmouth Dockyard Workforce 1880-1914, MPhil Thesis, University of Southampton, 1986; pp.1-9; Thomas, Dreadnought Construction; p.3-6, 55-56 and 81-346; Lunn and Day, History of Work; p.xii.
Dockyard employment which did not guarantee work for a large portion of its workforce. The hierarchical nature of establishment and the hiring system ensured an element of competition whilst trade and sectional rivalries galvanised patterns of stratification in the workplace. Indeed, there is much scope for articulating a simultaneously vibrant collective and stratified local culture. Waters’ study of Chatham Dockyard workers noted the linkage between the leisure activities of the unskilled labourers and their chances of advancement within the yard. 130 Hugh Cunningham argued the existence of an artisan culture, which lasted until the First World War, using shipbuilding as an example he asserted that “the male camaraderie of those who had served an apprenticeship continued in work and carried over into leisure.” 131 Lunn and Day also noted that “The reinforcement of these work divisions was apparent within the wider community, through residential patterns, social and cultural hierarchies and models of consumption and leisure.” 132 That these studies hint towards other social relationships being at play is a strong indicator of the necessity of further study into the dynamics of work and recreation, and also a closer examination of the impact of the Dockyard’s unique hierarchies replicated outside the workplace. Indeed, still little is known about the unskilled or casually employed. 133

Conclusion

Imperial propaganda was certainly present, and prevalent, during the Edwardian period. However, concepts of empire and imperialism came to mean different things at different times. Its influence was contingent, fluid and based on other subjectivities. Rather than ‘absolving’ the working classes of imperialism, especially ones who had such a pivotal role in creating the machines of imperial war and maintenance, overall the thesis will argue that working-class relationships with empire and imperialism were much more complex than previously believed. A study of the Royal Dockyard worker will show that attitudes towards the empire were less rigid social constructs which varied over time, subjectivity

and bias. The Royal Dockyard workers were not a homogenous group, but they were conditioned by their mutual surroundings. It will be shown that, far from being a negligible influence in their lives, the workmen of the Dockyard were active agents in constructing their identities, which could mean that at times their attitude towards empire seemed simultaneously celebratory, practical, critical and ambivalent.

Empire was celebrated and used and confounded based on a multitude of reasons at different points in time. The way it was used was not always for the “sake of the empire” and it was susceptible to being manipulated by the Royal Dockyard workers to ensure their agendas and to extend their rights to freedoms in society and leisure. As such, their role as constructors of the Royal Navy’s ships made them important ‘imperial citizens’, which thus became an important bargaining tool. Susan Barton has argued that the relationship between the quest for working-class leisure privileges and its importance as an element of labour history in industrial society must be further analysed.\(^\text{134}\) The complex nature of Admiralty employment and the growth of work undertaken in private yards meant that the Royal Dockyard workers were in constant competition. Moreover, the Admiralty’s sanction of the eight-hour day in 1894 meant that Royal Dockyard workers were under scrutiny on how they used their leisure time. Indeed, their use of free time and disposable income became a potent symbol of their legitimacy to claims in the struggle for better pay and conditions. The increased trade union unrest in the Royal Dockyard during the Edwardian period suggests that a large factor in the construction of identities within the realm of leisure was a projection of the artisanal values of respectability, independence and collective security, which were used as signifiers to legitimise their citizenship and protect their positions as industrial workers. The role of gender and gendered expectations is also an important element of the thesis. However, the issue of female Dockyard labour has consciously not been addressed.\(^\text{135}\) The place of leisure and empire in the worlds of women Dockyard workers pre-1914 would require a more thorough consideration than could be given in this thesis as their subjectivity and interaction with the British Empire would have differed greatly. Women were employed

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\(^{135}\) Women worked in the colour loft, and they were all widows of sailors and Dockyardmen.
in the Colour Loft making flags for the ships and signals, and were all widows of sailors or Dockyardmen. However, they were not visible in the sources consulted in this study as a distinct group, possibly because they were paid a very low wage and many would have had families to look after in addition to this work, leaving them little leisure time.

The following chapters will explore the nexus between male working-class leisure, cultures of work and locality, and engagement with the British Empire in a number of ways. The subsequent two chapters contextualise Portsmouth and the Royal Dockyard worker socially and politically. Chapter Two argues that Portsmouth’s civic elites created a civic identity based on the town’s ties with the British Empire. The Royal Dockyard workers were crucial to the town’s imperial mission as their work brought prosperity and prestige and their position was legitimised and consolidated in the civic realm by the inclusion of workingmens’ groups and trades associations in the civic pageantry of the town. The chapter will highlight how the discourses of imperialism and duty in the town normalised and reinforced the notion of the Royal Dockyard worker as an imperial citizen. This extension of the idea of the imperial citizen enabled some members of the Royal Dockyard workforce to play a more active role in the local community and promote their own agendas in the municipal government of the town. To gain an insight into the complex hierarchies of the Royal Dockyard workforce, Chapter Three explores residential patterns and social structure. It will be argued that Portsmouth’s urban environment was changed both physically and geographically by the Royal Dockyard workforce, which transposed from the Dockyard onto the streets. The chapter will underline the importance of viewing the Royal Dockyard worker as part of a stratified working-class community rather than part of a homogenised working class. Moreover, although discourses of urban degeneration and imperial decline existed in the town, the Royal Dockyard worker was primarily interested in negotiating the lived experience of social hierarchy, status and stratification.

Chapters Four and Five examine the ‘top down’ influences of the local press and commercial leisure, which have been traditionally accused of being the prime conduits of popular imperialism. Chapter Four examines the influence of the provincial press where it will be asserted that under the tenets of ‘New Journalism’ the readership were influential
in shaping the content of the newspapers. This is evidenced in the coverage of Portsmouth’s Borough elections for Members of Parliament from 1900 to 1910. The escalation of the Naval Arms Race with Germany made the debate on defence and Naval Estimates the key imperial issue, however, within the Liberal press their desire to serve their readership created a schism between Unionist and Socialist aspects of the Liberal Party. It will be argued that some Royal Dockyard workers were actually against a “strong navy” argument and were less naval imperialist than has been previously argued. In addition the focus on local news and events within the newspapers helped to cultivate an image of the Royal Dockyard worker as a key imperial citizen and normalise and legitimise claims to increased leisure freedoms and labour rights. Chapter Five, will focus on the influence of commercial entertainment such as theatre, music hall and early cinema and professional football. They argue that, rather than a monolithic imperial ideology, the commercial entertainment of the town was more nuanced and based on concepts of local patriotism and work-based identities, which brought the Royal Dockyard workforce into a dialogue with concepts of the British Empire.

Chapters Six and Seven will explore how trade identities and imperial citizenship worked in practice. Chapter Six will examine the ways in which Dockyard outings reinforced collective security and trade identity based on concepts of respectability. It will also explore the Royal Dockyard worker’s place in the debate on working-class tourism to show an entrepreneurial and independent attitude towards the creation of their own leisure patterns. The chapter will argue that through their assertion of being respectable and loyal imperial citizens Royal Dockyard workers sought to protect themselves in times of industrial unrest and increased competition and create greater freedoms in their leisure time. Finally, Chapter Seven focuses on Royal Dockyard workers’ membership to clubs and societies. It explores the identity-making and underlines the importance of making and maintaining connections in the industrial era. The chapter will argue that rather than a consistent concept, the notion of empire was often used as a tool to legitimise claims to leisure and recreational privileges rather than as signifiers of the presence of imperialism or patriotism itself.
Chapter 2. Portsmouth, the Civic Elites and the Dockyard

Portsmouth and its citizens were not unfamiliar with many aspects of the British Empire. As Britain’s principal Royal Dockyard Portsmouth’s citizens built, maintained and staffed many of the Royal Navy’s ships; ships which in turn patrolled the seas enforcing the Pax Britannica and maintaining the metropole’s bonds with the sinews of its empire. In Portsmouth the civic merged with the imperial on a regular basis. Indeed, Portsmouth’s status as home of the Royal Navy meant that entertaining became something of a patriotic duty as Portsmouth increasingly became the epicentre of British naval culture in the Edwardian era. The heightened threat of a naval arms race and the new design and state-of-the-art technology of HMS *Dreadnought* piqued public interest and pride in British naval shipbuilding. Moreover, by the late Victorian period Portsmouth had become a site for potent and powerful displays of “naval theatre”, such as ship launches and fleet reviews, which served as a nexus for “the projection of local, regional, national and imperial loyalties.”

However, charting institutional changes within the Admiralty and their attitudes towards public display does not go far enough to address the impact that these events had on the local authorities and what this meant for the those living in the town and those who built the ships.

Previous studies on Portsmouth’s relationship to the Royal Navy have argued that the town was highly imperialist, which has led to broad conclusions about the townspeople. However, more recent historiography has challenged assumptions based

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136 Recently Jan Rüger argued that the Royal Navy had changed its attitude towards its ceremony and became much more inclusive and displayed an increased professionalism from the 1880s onwards. Between 1880 and 1914, he asserted, Spithead was “formalized as a ritual arena for the display of the monarch’s ‘ocean throne’.” Jan Rüger, *The Great Naval Game. Britain and Germany in the Age of Empire*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); p.19 and p.35.

137 The role of the empire in concepts of local identity has become increasingly recognised. For example, J. M. MacKenzie argued that in pursing the title of “Second City of Empire,” Glasgow’s elite were negotiating a distinct municipal identity which bridged relationships and divides across its local community. J. M. MacKenzie. ‘The Second City of Empire’: Glasgow – Imperial Municipality’, in Felix Driver and David Gilbert (eds.). *Imperial Cities. Landscape, Display and Identities*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp.215-237; p.232.

138 Ken Lunn and Roger Thomas have argued that Portsmouth was a site of fervent ‘naval imperialism’, which was articulated through the physical presence of the Royal Navy and reinforced by strong and repeated ideological discourses running through local parliamentary debates and naval pageantry. They asserted that such spectacles as ship launches were “intended to – and probably did – invoke a fusion of
on the strength and the position of the civic elite, which in turn has created questions over the relationship that the local authorities had with the imperial project. This chapter, therefore, will step away from the concept of the town as being servile to the wishes of the Admiralty and the focus on Royal Naval pageantry as a disseminator of imperial propaganda. Instead it will concentrate on the local relationships in the town between authority, concepts of citizenship and the Royal Dockyard worker. It will argue that the Edwardian era heralded greater ties with the Royal Dockyard workforce within the civic realm. As the Royal Dockyard worker made up such a large portion of the town’s population the civic elite were keen to incorporate them into the municipal life of the town. This was manifested both in the town’s civic pageantry and local politics. This chapter aims to explore the relationship that the Royal Dockyard workers had with their locality in order to contextualise and further understand their lived environment and its relationship to the British Empire. This will be achieved in three stages. The chapter will first chart the formulation of the town’s idea of ‘imperial duty’ and its role in the imperial project before exploring its manifestation within civic ceremonies and its incorporation of working-class organisations. The final section of the chapter will explore how concepts of ‘imperial citizenship’ enabled working class men, such as those of the Royal Dockyard workforce, to engage more critically with the local dialogue between town and empire as they strove to represent themselves in municipal matters.

Patriotic emotions and to reveal a fervour for what was called the British way of life.” Lunn and Thomas, 'Naval Imperialism'; p.145. Roger Thomas has also asserted that during the Edwardian period the Town Council “was keen to act as an informal agency for the city’s civic patriotism was invested in its relationship with the Army and Navy.” Roger Thomas, Dreadnought Construction, Portsmouth Dockyard Workers and the Local State c.1905-1914, MPhil Thesis, University of Portsmouth, 1995; p.51. Vivienne Fulda argued that the elite’s need to unite and control the town’s expanding citizenry was a dominant reason for the promotion of civic pride. She has argued that at times citizenship appeared to conflict with the work of the state and even with national patriotism. Vivienne Fulda, Space, Civic Pride, Citizenship and Identity in 1890s Portsmouth, PhD Thesis (unpublished), University of Portsmouth, 2006; p.29 and p.4. Indeed Andy Croll has highlighted that the civic ideal had to be constantly maintained and defended by the civic elite of the town as it was constantly being challenged by its citizenry. Andy Croll, Civilizing the Urban. Popular Culture and Public Space in Merthyr, c.1880-1914, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000); p.52. Brad Beaven has argued that although the civic elite adopted the glories of the town’s imperial heritage, it did not do so at the expense of the town’s civic identity and independence and the fusion of the imperial mission to the civic ideal served to strengthen and legitimise their position. Furthermore, he asserted that the identity of the working class male was entrenched in their attachment to concepts of local patriotism and thus they only really became concerned about issues of empire when it was directly fused with local concerns. Brad Beaven, Visions of Empire. Patriotism, Popular Culture and the City: 1870-1939, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012); p.24, p.27 and p.70.
To define the civic elites the thesis will adopt Richard H. Trainor’s parameters consisting of individuals from any class or stratum who held leadership posts in the major institutions of the town. This definition is useful as it enables an examination of ‘influence’ rather than class.\(^{140}\) Indeed, as the largest industrial group in the town the Royal Dockyard worker had dominated the associational life of Portsmouth’s working class since the mid-Victorian era.\(^{141}\) By the Edwardian period some of these men had begun to hold positions on the local governing boards of the Town Council.\(^{142}\) This practice must therefore be seen as a process of incorporation on the part of the civic elites in order to maintain overall power and authority.\(^{143}\) The Royal Dockyard workers, especially the skilled artisans of the Dockyard, sought to elevate their status and show their credentials as respectable citizens on the local stage. Their inclusion by the local civic elite was both a means of gaining consensus and stability within the local population and a resounding acknowledgement that Royal Dockyard workers were a powerful and influential group within the town. The incorporation of working-class organisations enabled its citizens to be regarded as important to the town’s imperial mission and a code of conduct for “imperial citizenship” was created. Indeed, the notions of belonging and citizenship were especially potent after the nineteenth century as urban elites became invested in a Hegelian concept of ‘social citizenship’, which fostered a participatory attitude within the citizenry in both social and civic duties.\(^{144}\)

However, this concept of imperial citizenship worked in both a subjective and subversive way, as although it denoted deference and subordination (to the town, monarch and nation state) it also could be capitalised upon to create opportunities for working-class men to use to their advantage. The chapter will further argue that this process also enabled members of the Royal Dockyard workforce to carve out a more active role in the local community and extend their rights and privileges within the town. Some Dockyard


\(^{141}\) John Field, Portsmouth Dockyard and its Workers, 1815-1875, The Portsmouth Papers, (Portsmouth: Portsmouth City Council, 1994); p.16.

\(^{142}\) Fulda, Space, Civic Pride; p.46.

\(^{143}\) Trainor, Black Country Elites; p.259.

workmen were keen to insert themselves into the civic life of the town during this time as workplace disputes and uncertainty fostered a growing trade union movement punctuated with working-class Liberal and Labour politics. This is evidenced by their increasing visibility in the town through public ceremonies and political meetings, but also through candidature to governing bodies within the town such as the School Board, the Board of Guardians and the Town Council. Although these areas are not traditionally seen as “leisure”, they are important facets of what Royal Dockyard workers did outside of working hours and the fact that they chose to spend their leisure hours engaged in these activities displays how important these considerations were to many of them.

This analysis underlines the assertion that the influence and reception of imperial discourses were contingent and fluctuated over time. It will also demonstrate the plurality of identities that the working class male could simultaneously hold which at times may have seemed outwardly incongruous to a consistent attitude towards imperialism. Royal Dockyard workers were not a homogenous mass and, although treated to the same ‘top-down’ influences, they were conflicted by such considerations as duty to the state, job security and the extension of individual and collective rights and freedoms. New understandings of the nature of working-class politics have enabled a more nuanced reading of the Royal Dockyard worker and his politics.145 This approach suggests that the working class sought security through different agencies and mediums from the friendly society and Co-operative movements, trade unionism and the local and national state. Such plurality has thus produced confusion by local historians over the exact nature of Dockyard politics and the way the men sought concessions and influence from their superiors.146 Indeed, the inherent problem in the case of Portsmouth Dockyard workers

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145 Andrew August has argued that despite a strong sense of working-class identity the working classes did not automatically support any particular political party, concluding that party politics had very little impact in everyday life. Andrew August, The British Working Class, 1832-1940, (Harlow: Pearson, 2007); p.159. Jeffrey Hill has underlined the importance of ‘Lib-Labism’ in local politics, citing Michael Savage’s assertion that the plurality of working-class action meant that there was no “natural” way in which the interests of the working class were manifested in politics. Jeffrey Hill, ‘Lib-Labism, Socialism and Labour in Burnley, c.1890-1918’, Northern History, 35, 1, 1999, pp.185-204; p.187. Cited Michael Savage, The Dynamics of Working Class Politics: The Labour Movement in Preston, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); p.20.

146 Most recently Jamie Scott has reasserted the importance of Labourism and argued that “traditionalist trade unionism and Lib-Labism were more dynamic and sophisticated intellectual propositions than usually
was that “bread and butter” politics was inextricably linked to imperial politics; relying as they did on a strong Royal Navy and playing a part in the defence of the realm. What this chapter will highlight is that celebration of empire and deference were not necessarily a signal of the servitude of the Royal Dockyard worker, but rather a part of the expanding vocabulary of identity and citizenship which anchored them to their surroundings and ensured survival in the modern industrial world.

The Civic Elites and Imperial Citizenship

It has been argued that Portsmouth was pre-disposed to a kind of naval imperialism based on the town’s ties with the Royal Navy which was particularly potent during naval ceremonies such as ship launches.\(^\text{147}\) Moreover, Thomas asserted that the “spontaneous involvement” of Royal Dockyard workers in the drama of such ship launches signified a deeper adherence with an ideology associated with craft work, labour and the nation.\(^\text{148}\) However, a report from the Daily Mail after the launch of HMS Dreadnought showed that some Royal Dockyard workers were unsure of the British Empire’s relevance to themselves:

> It was interesting to observe the enthusiasm among the members of the Senior Service, from Admiral to Dockyard 'matey', for this last embodiment of Britain's sea power. The cheers given by the bluejackets and mateys when the ship was gliding away was obviously sincere and heartfelt beyond ordinary cheering. Two mateys watching the launch fell into a political discussion embracing Portsmouth politics, the vagaries of Admiralty officials, and the sins of all governments. The argument grew hot before the


\(^{\text{148}}\) Thomas, ‘Empire, Naval Pageantry and Public Spectacles’; p.206.
end. 'What's the good of Empire to me,' said one. 'You and me wouldn't be here without it,' said his companion, 'and it's them things what makes Empire,' pointing to the grey ship above him, the work of many hands like this, the product of British brains and material, and as he truly said one of the rivets of Empire. 149

Although the Daily Mail argued that this was an example of awareness of empire, the reported conversation also highlighted the conflicting opinions of the Dockyard workforce amid one of the most potent forms of naval imperialist display. Moreover, the report calls into question the Royal Dockyard worker’s wholehearted adherence to the imperial mission. It is thus useful to investigate how concepts of empire were adopted outside the realm of naval pageantry to assess how Royal Dockyard workers fitted into the discourse of British imperialism.

The concept of citizenship in Britain had gained considerable momentum by late-Victorian era due to rising pessimism over international competition and domestic social unrest. 150 Indeed, the period of 1900 to 1918 has been identified as a time when civic ideals were superseded by the perception of imperial national crisis and thus the idea of citizenship was imbued with imperatives of discipline and duty. 151 These fears of national degeneration and decline were also experienced at a local level. It will be asserted that in Portsmouth a concept of “imperial citizenship” was fostered which saw the local elites conceiving of the townspeople as representatives of the “first Naval Port of the Empire.” 152 Portsmouth’s elites sought to incorporate the lower classes through the use of civic imperial celebrations and public policy which aligned their values and societies with the values of the civic elite. Their increased outreach to working-class organisations such as the friendly societies and trades associations of the town formalised the link between the condition of citizenship and concepts of working class rituals and values such

149 PEN, February 12th 1906, p.4. Reproduced from an article published in the Daily Mail.
150 Daniel Gorman, Imperial Citizenship. Empire and the Question of Belonging, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006); p.2.
as respectability, independence and thrift. These concepts proved vital for the new era of
economic pessimism and imperial decline and their emphasis on ‘civic unity’ ensured
overall adherence to the hierarchical status quo.\textsuperscript{153} Indeed, like the civic elites of Croll’s
Merthyr Tydfil, which attempted to unify its citizens through the town’s reputation for
musicality, Portsmouth’s civic pride was driven by the assertion of its devotion and
service to empire.\textsuperscript{154}

By the early 1900s the ideal of ‘civic duty’ had given way to a concept of ‘imperial
citizenship’ which had become imbued with notions of national duty and discipline.\textsuperscript{155} At
a local level this was beginning to be recognised by the country’s civic elites, many of
whom were keen to incorporate the working classes into their municipal project through
the creation of a strong local patriotism. The unique circumstances prevalent in
Portsmouth made the projection of the civic ideal particularly tricky. The dominance of
the Royal Dockyard, while being a great boon for Portsmouth in some ways, also meant
that the town lacked the wealthy industrialists of their northern counterparts, and
possessed little large-scale wealth.\textsuperscript{156} The State, as the major employer and landowner in
the town, had very little interest in the town’s affairs and it was “left to ‘seek its own
salvation’.”\textsuperscript{157} Indeed even by 1894 the \textit{Portsmouth Evening News} commented on how
the town’s links to the Royal Navy hampered many municipal schemes and criticised the
deferece they had to pay when they would have to go “on bended knee to obtain official
sanction” if municipal schemes affected government property.\textsuperscript{158}

During the period of 1900 to 1914 Portsmouth’s Town Council was dominated by small
business owners, brewers and others from the drinks trade and professionals with a

\textsuperscript{153} Trainor, \textit{Black Country Elites}; p.357.
\textsuperscript{154} Croll, \textit{Civilizing the Urban}; p.106 and p.120.
\textsuperscript{155} Beaven and Griffiths, ‘Creating the Exemplary Citizen’; p.210-211.
\textsuperscript{156} Field, ‘Wealth, Styles of Life and Social Tone Amongst Portsmouth’s Middle Class, 1800-75’, in R. J.
Morris (ed.), \textit{Class, Power and Social Structure in British Nineteenth-Century Towns}, (Leicester: Leicester
\textsuperscript{157} Field, ‘Wealth, Styles of Life’; pp.75-77.
\textsuperscript{158} PEN, 14th November 1894.
A smattering of military or ex-military personnel or working-class representation. Indeed, the presence of the Royal Dockyard divorced the town’s ruling elites from the centre of power. Due to the presence of this large industrial workforce in the Royal Dockyard, who had regular and comparatively high incomes, it was difficult for the largely middle-class civic elite to exercise their power in the market place, especially since they did not directly employ them. This problem was compounded during the late Victorian and Edwardian period when Portsmouth witnessed further population growth due largely to the expansion of the Royal Dockyard. By the 1890s the skilled tradesmen of the Dockyard were perceived as a threat to the civic elite. The increased population presented the civic elite with further challenges and the promotion of civic culture and local pride had the double aim of countering the Admiralty and War Office’s perceived threat to the town’s independence and, incorporating the rising artisan class in an effort to stem their ability to create an independent culture of their own divorced from the aims of the civic elite. Therefore, ideologically, as well as economically, Portsmouth’s civic elite struggled since the early days of municipalisation to create a dominant and convincing hold over all the citizens of the borough.

During the Edwardian period the civic elite can be seen to take a more ostentatious role in the projection of the town’s civic identity, which can be seen within a broader trend toward the inclusion of the working classes to gain consensus and maintain authority. This was particularly resonant after the extension of the franchise under the 1884 Reform Act; as it was many of these men who would also have a vote in who represented them both nationally and municipally. Trainor has argued that civic unity was best achieved

161 In 1891 the population of Portsmouth was recorded as 159,981, this jumped 18.1 per cent to 188,928 by the beginning of the Edwardian period. By 1911 the population leapt by almost a quarter to 231,165. It was the largest town on the south coast with a population in 1911 eclipsing Brighton, its nearest rival, by almost 100,000 people. *Census 1911 Preliminary Report*, http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/text/chap_page.jsp?t_id=SRC_P&c_id=2&cpid=EW1911PRE&show=ALL, accessed 1/2/2012.
162 Fulda, *Space, Civic Pride*; p.114 and p.120.
through the “less contentious acts of municipal activity.”¹⁶⁴ Indeed, one of the most effective tools of inclusion was the civic celebration which formalised links between the civic elite and the citizenry through an ostentatious display of civic pride.

Civic Ceremony

By the Edwardian period concept and role of ‘civic pride’ had become embroiled within wider notions of imperial duty.¹⁶⁵ Indeed, Portsmouth’s role as a Royal Dockyard ensured that the town was aware of imperial issues as they played a part in and hosted many events of national significance such as naval reviews, ship launches and royal visits; all of which carried both overt and more covert references to wider imperial narratives.¹⁶⁶ Traditionally the town and its civic leaders had been barred or hampered by the Admiralty in taking a significant role in naval ceremony and hospitality, however, during the period these events became increasingly open and extended to the Corporation.¹⁶⁷ Increasingly the public duties of the Mayor merged with the ceremonial requirements of the Royal Navy and were perfect opportunities to showcase Portsmouth on the world stage.¹⁶⁸ The civic elite sought to capitalise on this increased role they were allowed to play, which in turn legitimised their position and brought prestige to the town and its citizens on a regional, national and world stage.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁴ Trainor, Black Country Elites; p.282.
¹⁶⁵ Croll has defined civic pride as a “strong attachment to one’s home town or city, commitment to affecting improvements at a local level, and a strong rivalry with neighbouring settlements.” This notion, he argued was well-developed by the latter part of the nineteenth century. Croll, Civilising the Urban; pp.36-37. Brad Beaven has extended this notion and argued that by the late nineteenth century the concept of civic pride was often conceived of within a broader framework of devotion to empire. Beaven, Visions of Empire; p.14.
¹⁶⁸ There were nine dreadnought ship launches in Portsmouth between 1906 and 1915, and between 1902 and 1914 the town played host to seven reviews of the British fleet. From 1900 to July 1914, the town hosted two Coronation celebrations (1902 and 1911) and welcomed numerous visitors from various navies of the world; most notably France (1905), Germany (1907), Japan (1907), Russia (1907). The civic elite also hosted special envoys and heads of state and saw off and welcomed the return of members of the Royal family from tours of the colonies. William G. Gates, City of Portsmouth. Records of the Corporation 1835-1927, (Portsmouth: Charpentier, 1928); pp.202-257.
¹⁶⁹ Jon Stobart has called attention to the wider projection of civic culture as part of the process of the construction and dissemination of place identities. Jon Stobart, ‘Building an Urban Identity. Cultural Space
The period of 1880 to 1914 marked a highpoint for the projection of civic culture in smaller industrial and market towns. Occasions for lavish ceremonial display represented the urban population to itself in a collective act of identification and celebration and offered an opportunity for the symbolic display of leadership and authority through a choreographed spectacle. Indeed, Portsmouth has been noted for its “seamless” amalgamation of the civic ideal with the late Victorian public pageantry of military and imperial strength by the town’s elite. Certainly by the 1890s the civic elites and Portsmouth employers actively encouraged greater public involvement by granting school and work holidays during special events such as fleet reviews. The lavish opening of Portsmouth’s new town hall in 1890 was such an opportunity. Working-class organisations and trade unions formed an integral part of the procession which was intended to show the civic unity and strength of the town before the public and the honoured guest HRH Prince Edward and Princess Alexandra, who officially opened the building. Indeed, during the procession from Southsea Common to the town hall the floats of Dockyardmen engaging in their respective trades prompted one observer to exclaim that it was like the “Dockyard brought home to their own doors.” The fusion of the civic ideal with narratives of monarchy and empire were consolidated further during Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee in 1897 where a large component of the town’s celebrations was the demonstration of the local friendly societies through the town which consisted of around 2,000 participants.

By the coronation of King Edward VII the rich visual culture of the “cult of royalty” which manifested itself in the monarchical celebrations of the age was adopted and enabled the

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171 Gunn, The Public Culture; p.163.
172 Beaven, Visions of Empire; p.24.
174 PEN, 9th August 1890.
175 Gates, City of Portsmouth; p.192.
The conflation of imperial, national, military, royalist and civic symbolism. The town’s elite were keen to ensure that it was ready to “represent the Nation.” However, the process of civic representation in the town produced a bitter row between the councillors and aldermen who chose William T. Dupree for mayor in the coronation year, and many members of the public who preferred Alderman Thomas Scott Foster for his experience and out of respect for his previous civic service. The dispute prompted mass meetings at Landport and Southsea where “many hundreds of intelligent ratepayers assembled at the call of a few workingmen,” some of which were Dockyardmen. The Portsmouth Evening News argued that this demonstrated how bitterly the ratepayers resented the town council’s “contemptuous disregard of public opinion”. The incident culminated in a demonstration of support of Scott Foster of an estimated ten thousand people who assembled outside his home. Although Dupree ultimately became mayor, this incident demonstrated the engagement of the public in matters of civic prestige. However, critically, the public were not arguing about the fact that Portsmouth should celebrate, but rather, who should represent them in the celebrations. Thus on a civic level, the public at large was fairly agreed that it was right that Portsmouth should take a part in events where the civic, the monarchy and the empire converged.

By 1902 there was notably more opportunity for the town to showcase its civic might and local pride than any previous occasion. The celebrations in Portsmouth were deliberately cultivated to show off the town’s civic pride and align it with wider notions of monarchy and the empire which was separate to and distinct from the Royal Navy. The keystone of the local celebrations was a parade including the town’s leading friendly societies which culminated in a large gathering outside the Town Hall and symbolically merged the civic elite with representatives from working-class friendly societies and the town’s Volunteer Army battalions and the local clergy. The reception of the citizen-soldiers, the friendly

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177 *PEN*, 30th March 1901.
178 *PEN*, 5th November 1901 and *PEN*, 9th November 1901.
180 *PEN*, 5th November 1901.
181 *PEN*, 7th November 1901.
182 The sudden illness of King Edward VII stunted the town’s celebrations and left some confusion, but most of the events went ahead as planned. *PEN*, 25th June 1902 and 26th June 1902.
societies and the general public by the civic elites on the steps of the Town Hall enforced
the power of the civic elite and stratified levels of inclusion in the ceremony.\textsuperscript{183} This was a
significant indicator of the way in which the civic elite sought to incorporate the
respectable artisan class into the town’s civic ethos whilst also bolstering the civic elite’s
claims to legitimacy and enforcing social hierarchies.\textsuperscript{184} The\textit{ Portsmouth Evening News}
described the scene as “striking” noting how the whole made up a harmonious mass in
the “contrast between the red and blue uniforms of the soldiery, the sombre tints of
civilian dress, and the green of the trees …”\textsuperscript{185} The coronation in 1902 also brought out a
desire for the citizens of the town to demonstrate their patriotism in their own residential
areas. Local committees were formed to decorate important thoroughfares such as in
Kingston Road, North End and Victoria Road South and decorations were to be provided
based on subscriptions from the local residents.\textsuperscript{186}

The success of Portsmouth’s coronation parade bore the template of many civic
ceremonies to come, most notably the coronation of King George V less than a decade
later. The role of the town in such occasions seemed accepted and indeed it was
expressed in the\textit{ Portsmouth Times} that “As the premier naval port of the Empire, it is
only right and fitting that Portsmouth should loom largely in the forthcoming Coronation
festivities.”\textsuperscript{187} The willingness of workingmen’s groups of the town to become involved in
such events demonstrated that many were broadly receptive to the notion of civic pride
and their town’s place and importance on the imperial stage. The inclusion of the friendly
societies in the pageantry of large civic events highlights that the civic elites conceived of
imperial citizenship as being part of a male responsibility to the town. Furthermore, it was
qualified by membership to organisations which held notions of respectability,
independence and thrift at their heart. It communicated to working-class men that they
could be included in the citizenry of the town if they projected these values. That the civic
elite were keen to secure the involvement of the friendly societies is evidenced in the way

\textsuperscript{183} Gunn, \textit{The Public Culture}; p.173.
\textsuperscript{184} Fulda, \textit{Space, Civic Pride}; p.165.
\textsuperscript{185} \textit{PEN}, 26th June 1902.
\textsuperscript{186} James Aylwin, councillor for Buckland, living in Kingston Road presided over a meeting to decorate
Kingston Road, whilst Charles Dye, Councillor for North End, hosted a meeting for the North End Decoration
Committee at his house in London Road. \textit{PEN}, 3rd June 1902.
\textsuperscript{187} \textit{PT}, 13th May 1911.
that they courted them before the event. Mayor Dupree chaired the Portsmouth Foresters’ jubilee anniversary in the coronation year. During his speech he pandered to them noting how he “relied on the support of the Friendly Societies in carrying out the Coronation celebrations.” The qualifications for who could be involved in the parade was also widened to encourage more support when the mayor ruled that societies who did not qualify to register under the Friendly Societies Act would also be permitted to join in the procession.

Conversely, the relationship also enabled workingmen the scope to assert their positions as citizens and make a place for their organisations and culture within the town. Mutual security through the Friendly Societies was one of the ways in which the Royal Dockyard worker could secure themselves in the modern industrial world and discourses on imperial citizenship in the town enabled some members of the working class to gain more consideration and elevated the status within a local setting. Working-class inclusion was consolidated through civic ritual, yet rather than merely serving the Corporation, these events advanced the proud, independent values of the sections of the working class and paraded to the community that they were respectable, and respected, citizens. By the Edwardian period state legislation and the increasing call for state intervention on issues such as pensions and benefits threatened the basis of the friendly society movement. From the 1880s many organisations had adopted the tactic of persuading from without in order to create favourable public opinion. The Portsmouth friendly societies were instrumental in ensuring that they were included in the festivities. In 1902 a meeting with the mayor and members of the Corporation was held in the Town Hall to discuss their involvement in Portsmouth’s celebrations of the coronation of King Edward VII and it was decided that every friendly society should elect a member to form a sub-committee to help the Mayor with arrangements. It was important to the friendly societies that they conducted themselves in the model of good citizenship and, in the spirit of civic duty and

188 PEN, 15th April 1902.
189 PEN, 22nd April 1902. These included the Good Templars, the Buffaloes and Costermongers’ Union.
191 PEN, 2nd April 1902.
co-operation, it was also agreed that the “festivities must be carried out in a perfect spirit of harmony and they must have no friction whatever.”

![Picture 1. Portsmouth's Welcome to the French Fleet Sports Day, August 10th 1905](image1.jpg)

The pivotal role of Portsmouth in celebrations of local and imperial significance was further enabled through the Edwardian period by the relaxation of the Admiralty’s attitude towards public participation. By the coronation of King Edward VII Portsmouth had moulded itself a niche of imperial celebration. The celebration of the Entente Cordiale was marked by the visit of the Northern Squadron of the French Fleet in August 1905 (see Picture 1). The Fleet was reviewed by the King and the next day marked a series of festivities.

![Picture 2. Japanese Visit. Decorated Car Passing Through Fratton Road, July 1907](image2.jpg)

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192 **PEN**, 2nd April 1902.
of civic entertainments, including a fête at North End Recreation Ground; an area which housed many of the Dockyard’s more affluent workers.\(^{194}\) The French sailors were conveyed to the event via highlight decorated Corporation trams, which enabled the townspeople to share in the festivities along the route. The town also helped to strengthen alliances with the Japanese in a similar fashion during 1907, highlighting the important role Portsmouth played in fostering international goodwill throughout the Edwardian period (see Picture 2). As a result the town was often conceived of by its promoters as “The first Naval Port of the Empire.”\(^{195}\)

However, imperial service was not always accepted easily by some. In 1913 Labour town councillor and former Dockyard Shipwright, John MacTavish accused the mayor and many of the Corporation of “guzzling”, “junketing” and causing unnecessary expense to the ratepayer over the invitation of the President of France, Monsieur Poincaré, to Portsmouth. MacTavish accused Mayor Corke of actively encouraging the President to visit Britain via Portsmouth rather than via Dover as the Government had invited him.\(^{196}\) In cultivating Portsmouth’s profile as an imperial town the civic elite can be seen to have sought out opportunities to ensure it remained relevant in contemporary international and national events. However, the interjection of socialist ideas and Labour politics presented the town’s elite with a dissenting voice. Another way the working classes sought to protect themselves was to become part of the governing elite. The chapter will now turn to the politics of working-class representation in Portsmouth.

**Representing the Workers**

As the civic elites prepared to mould Portsmouth into its new civic model with the opening of a new town hall a mass demonstration of Dockyard Labourers brought attention to their dissatisfaction with their pay and conditions.\(^{197}\) The demonstration was inspired by the London Dockers Strike in 1889 and was labelled by the *Portsmouth*

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194 See Chapter Three.
196 *PT*, 17\(^{th}\) May 1913.
197 *PEN*, 27\(^{th}\) January 1890.
**Evening News** as a means for the Dockyard Labourer’s Union to stimulate “their own zeal” and arouse a “public expression of sympathy.”¹⁹⁸ The meeting was attended by workingmen from the Liberal Union, such as W. J. Willis and S. Boss, both Dockyard artisans, and Alderman John Baker, a Liberal and one of the founders of Portsmouth Corporation. Baker’s address to the crowd sympathised with their aims and aligned their cause with notions of good citizenship and the imperial mission:

As a citizen he should say that it was the duty of every good citizen to see that the administration of not only the Dockyard, but of every Government establishment, was humanised. Who were in a position of putting a high ideal to the great companies and great capitalists of the Empire like the great Imperial Government?

The meeting highlighted the willingness of members of the local government to get involved with trades disputes and the willingness of Dockyard workers to appeal to their civic and parliamentary representatives to help them settle the grievances of the working man. It also illustrated how civic leaders were beginning to conceive of socialist politics in relation to imperial issues. This was particularly resonant in Portsmouth as the civic elite were the guardians of the Government’s civic servants and thus their actions had an impact on ‘national efficiency.’ As shall be seen, while the development of Labour politics was fragmentary and stunted by the Royal Dockyard workers’ ties to the Royal Navy or the preference of Liberal representation, its growth was due to the desire of more adequate representation in workplace disputes.¹⁹⁹ As such the Royal Dockyard worker displayed a somewhat ambivalent attitude to Labour politics, adopting measures that aided them materially, with only the most committed supporting disarmament and the break-up of the British Empire.

At a social level, Field argued that during the mid-nineteenth century the established skilled tradesmen of the Dockyard were not really concerned with socialist issues due to

¹⁹⁹ Galliver, ‘Trade Unionism’; p.121
their stable employment and thrifty habits. He stated that “Dockyardmen could afford to take a lofty view of poor relief politics; their pension would provide for old age while friendly society benefits covered sickness or injury.” However, by the late-nineteenth century that outlook had certainly begun to change as dissatisfaction over pay and conditions prompted working men to insert themselves more frequently into the civic life of the town. It formed part of the action which manifested itself in their insertion in civic pageantry of the town that promoted working men as respectable citizens and thus gave them a profile within the local area to project their agendas. There was a strong Working Man’s Liberal Union (WMLU) and at a meeting in January 1890 the members of the organisation proposed that in the preceding year they would “overthrow Toryism in Portsmouth, and never rest until they saw the men of their choice safe in parliament.” Indeed at opening of their new hall the following year Thomas Bramsdon, as chairman of the Liberal Union Company, declared the WMLU “the most powerful organisation of its kind in the town.” During the 1890s the skilled artisans of the Dockyard became candidates for election on the School Board and the Board of Governors representing the friendly societies, the Liberal Party or the Trades and Labour Council. By the Edwardian period many Dockyard workers were members of trades associations or trade unions, and some of the most vociferous men in workingmen’s advocacy were men of the Royal Dockyard. Organisations such as the Co-operative Association, the WMLU, Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council, and the Independent Labour Party were prominent in the political and social life of the town. The presence of workingmen’s advocacy raises questions over the idea of a clear labour aristocracy and stands as examples of collective

200 Field, Portsmouth Dockyard; p.18
201 PEN, 8th January 1890. WMLU was founded in 1885.
202 PEN, 6th February 1891. Bramston was later to become a Liberal parliamentary candidate for Portsmouth.
203 At the School Board elections in 1894 Harry Hall, as a prominent member of the Oddfellows, was nominated on behalf of the Friendly Societies and W. J. Willis for the Trades and Labour Council. HT, 22nd December 1894; S. Boss, C. W. Vine, Thomas Kersey and R. Gould were all put forward as Liberal candidates on the School Board or Board of Guardians. Peter Galliver, Portsmouth Dockyard and its Workers 1880-1914, MPhil Thesis (unpublished), University of Southampton, 1986; p.69 and p.283. E. H. Eason, a Draughtsman in the Dockyard, was elected as a Relieving Officer by the Portsea Board of Guardians in October 1899. However, the report did not mention any affiliation. PEN, 12th October 1899.
204 See Chapter Seven.
attempts at raising the quality of life for all workers over an insular self-interested attitude.\textsuperscript{205}

The Edwardian era also ushered in change as the continued rise of Labour politics influenced the town’s organised working class. Many workingmen’s organisations became split between the established parties and new Labour representation and civic elites struggled to maintain authority and contain the influence of the working man.\textsuperscript{206} As part of a wider process of the “inevitable” inclusion of the working class in local politics, the civic elites became more willing to incorporate their views as important members of the community.\textsuperscript{207} Moreover, fears of national decline and imperial threat brought increased immediacy to civic problems. The desire of the civic elite to foster civic unity under the auspices of imperial citizenship ushered in a more involved dialogue between the working classes and the civic elite and changed the agenda of local government. The parallels between socialist politics and remedies for the British imperial malaise prompted the civic elite to take action on issues which directly affected the lives of the working classes and the abject poor. The representatives of working-class organisations were keen to involve themselves with public policy which would aid their own objectives. Many Dockyard trades associations were affiliated with the Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council and it was through this body that the main debates around workingmen’s politics revolved. The membership of Dockyard workers to the Trades and Labour Council and the Council’s subsequent work towards workingmen’s politics shows how many members of the Dockyard workforce conceived of themselves as part of a wider Labour movement at this time. However, it was often on condition. The Trades and Labour Council had very patchy initial success at the beginning of the twentieth century and in 1903 the President, Alfred Baxter, lamented the failure of the Council to gain any seats on local government boards that year.\textsuperscript{208} Their failure to gain election to the Town Council also rankled as they “had to meet the bitter humiliation of seeing a large number of Trades Unionists eagerly fighting

\textsuperscript{205} Crossick argued that after the 1890s the fruition of an independent labour movement began to change the attitudes of the labour aristocracy, resulting in a change of their political consciousness. Geoffrey Crossick, \textit{An Artisan Elite in Victorian Society. Kentish London 1840-1880}. (London: Croom Helm, 1978); p.247.

\textsuperscript{206} Gates, \textit{City of Portsmouth}; pp.182-183; PEN, 26th May 1903.

\textsuperscript{207} Trainor, \textit{Black Country Elites}; p.258.

\textsuperscript{208} PEN, 18th February 1903.
against their own nominee.”

Results such as these have led many to assert that the Portsmouth’s Dockyardmen had a conservative bias. Indeed, the process of civic incorporation through the medium of civic ceremony would have aided this conservatism. However, although the absence of real class antagonism in Portsmouth may be an important factor in the lack of general social unrest, this does not explain the unrest and increased involvement of trade unions later in the period. Thomas blamed the apparent lack of working-class militancy on the structures of the Dockyard itself, highlighting how working patterns such as ‘shoaling’ served to “inhibit the growth of trade unionism and to allow the foremen to rearrange any potentially disruptive squad collectivities.”

Peter Galliver cited Sir James Matthews, former shipwright in Portsmouth Royal Dockyard during the Edwardian era, who argued that Dockyard workers were mainly dominated by their need for security “which meant for most, establishment with a pension at sixty, owning your own terraced house and being mildly obedient towards authority as well as scared when the Naval Estimates were under consideration.” This would have led to a lack of radicalism and a bias towards the party who would secure Dockyard jobs. The presence of socialist politics was discernible in the Dockyard community in Edwardian Britain nonetheless. Indeed, Galliver argued that what was surprising about the fortunes of the Labour Party, both as parliamentary and as municipal representatives in Portsmouth, was not that it fared so badly, but that it did as well is it had. However, the focus on the failure of Labour politics does not take into account the agency of the Royal Dockyard worker in discerning their choices. As a result of the strictures of Admiralty employment, which carried an expectation of loyalty, and the civic concept of imperial citizenship, the style and nature of the Labour movement manifested itself differently in Portsmouth in comparison with other northern industrial towns whose links to empire were less obvious.

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209 PEN, 18th February 1903.
211 The process of ‘laying off’ and then re-employing shipwrights to work on the next job. The men would be picked; established men first, then hired men; by a chargehand to work as part of a gang of 20 to 24 shipwrights. Thomas, Dreadnought Construction; p.288-289.
212 Galliver, The Portsmouth Dockyard Workforce; p.278.
The late-Victorian Labour movement has recently been described as a “network of competing ideologies.” Indeed, the inherent problem within the Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council was that working men elected the Trades Council to look after their trades interests, but they also had their own personal interests to consider. The position of a number of Dockyardman might more accurately be described as “Labourism” with focus on sectionalism and upholding the rights of trade unions. Certainly the rise of unrest within the Dockyard workforce, sections of which came close to striking in 1913 over pay and the rising cost of living, would point to this view. Certainly, although trade union membership rose, the ideological position of the Dockyard workers did not; this is evidenced in the unwillingness of the work force to strike. The early position of more active members of the Trades Council may, however, be termed as “Lib-Labism” with a bias towards Independent Labour Party (ILP) politics, which favoured parliamentary gains over radicalism. By 1907 the Trades and Labour Council were paying subscriptions to the National Labour Party and the Local Labour Party. The local Labour question was first brought up in 1894 when the Trades and Labour Council adopted two Labour candidates to run for election in the town’s St James’s and St Matthew’s Wards. The Liberal candidates tried to strike a deal over representation, but the Trades and Labour Council refused and both Labour candidates were subsequently defeated. Similarly, Liberal working men wished to be represented on a parliamentary level by their trusted Liberal representatives, whereas an emerging groupLabour supporters believed that the working people should run for office themselves. This was highlighted in 1903 when the affiliated unions of Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council adopted a Labour candidate, Mr W. Sanders from Battersea over Liberal candidate, “their old friend and helper,” Sir John Baker much to the consternation of

215 Letter to the Portsmouth Evening News from G. W. Biles. PEN, 20th February 1903.  
217 Unrest was largely prompted by the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE) and the Government Labourer’s Union (GLU).  
218 Galliver, 'Trade Unionism'; p.119. Mr R. G. Harris, President of the Trades and Labour Council told a meeting in the town hall that “They did not want to initiate a strike, but to express their determination to have an alteration in the conditions of their work.” PEN, 18th March 1913.  
some of the members. Members such as James H. McGuigan and Edwin Trodd, who were both Shipwrights and vociferous supporters of Lib-Lab representation and Single Tax reform, accused the Trades and Labour Council of being “dominated by the ILP”, which was in turn vehemently denied by the Council’s secretary.

A further complication to securing Labour representatives on the town council was the nature of Portsmouth’s municipal government itself. During the 1895 to 1914 period the Town Council had a Conservative majority which held 50 per cent more councillors than any other party. Party politics, however, played a relatively minor role and was less well developed, especially before 1914 with the absence of party programmes and city-wide election manifestos. Each ward had three councillors and would often be represented by more than one party, and it was also not uncommon for members of the same party to oppose one another in an election. Moreover, the business of municipal government often deflected ideas of partisan politics in favour of actions being “for the good of the town”. Often councillors would be elected on the strength of their personality and the good they had already done for the town rather than on their individual politics and it was not uncommon for some of the most popular ‘personalities’ to hold their seat without contest. The issue of class was also apparent on local government boards and passionate workingmen faced criticism regarding their conduct and intellectual reasoning. Before storming out of a meeting of the Portsea Guardians Shipwright S. Boss complained during a row that he had been “sneered at in times past as only a man who worked in the Dockyard.” Similarly, the town’s first Labour councillor,

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220 PEN, 26th May 1903.
221 PEN, 22nd May 1903; PEN, 15th May 1903. MacGuigan spoke about Single Tax reform, or Georgism, on numerous occasions, which favoured taxing land values over developments on the land. He argued that “the present system took money out of the earnings of labour and gave them to those who laboured not, but the taxation of land would take no man’s earnings.” PEN, 6th July 1899.
222 G. J. Ashworth, Portsmouth’s Political Patterns 1885-1945, The Portsmouth Papers, (Portsmouth City Council: Portsmouth, 1976); p.16.
223 Ashworth, Portsmouth’s Political Patterns; p.17.
224 Trainor, Black Country Elites; p.261; Ashworth, Portsmouth’s Political Patterns; p.17. This is illustrated in Portsmouth aptly after the Board of Guardians election in 1899, where working-class candidates were nominated for the election, Town Councillor Thomas Brewis pleaded for the representatives to leave politics out of the business. He argued that the level of “cross voting” showed that the public objected to “cliqueism” and that they were there to consider the ratepayers and of the poor and downtrodden. HT, 1st April 1899.
225 Ashworth, Portsmouth’s Political Patterns; p.13.
226 PEN, 31st August 1899.
Shipwright John MacTavish’s radical approach to municipal politics and his infamously confrontational style and irascible personality, prompted the other members of the council chambers to simply get up and walk out when he tried to carry a motion. 227 During one such battle an altercation erupted between Councillor MacTavish and Alderman Scott Foster over the decision taken by the Education Board not to provide meals for school children over the Christmas holidays. MacTavish accused the Education Committee of being "Bumbles at heart" while Foster claimed that MacTavish did not want explanations and was only there to kick up his rows and to make personal attacks. 228

After the failure of the local Labour movement to gain a seat in the town council in the municipal elections of 1903, the Trades and Labour Council pledged, using ILP terms, to be “one of the recognised forces in municipal contests” and expressed the desire of educating the electorate “in the belief that much may be gained in sending working men to assist in the administration of public affairs.” 229 This was particularly apparent that year when they actively sought the adoption of “municipal socialism” and engaged William Sanders, a Labour representative for Battersea and Secretary of the Fabian Society, to give a series of lectures. 230 Trades and Labour Council was pleased that a number of town councillors were going to be attending their “effort to enlist the sympathies of members of the Town Council.” 231 In particular, the lecture “The Working Man and the Home He Needs” inspired action on the part of the Trades and Labour Council. Sanders argued that as an imperial nation the fate of the empire relied on the "brains and physical and mental stamina of the peoples of the United Kingdom" and believed that it was the environment rather than hereditary issues that held the answer. He pointed particularly at urbanisation and overcrowding in London and gave examples of infant mortality in some of the large industrial cities. 232 This move brought men prominent in the local labour movement into a

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228 Pen, 25th January 1913.
229 PEN, 18th February 1903.
231 PEN, 18th February 1903. Sanders later ran as Portsmouth’s Labour candidate.
232 PEN, 17th February 1903.
closer dialogue with issues of empire, racial degeneration and national efficiency. Indeed, following the Boer War the outlook of the civic elites turned to Portsmouth’s role as an imperial city and its municipal developments mirror wider national patterns preoccupied with stemming the spread of racial and imperial degeneracy. The issue of housing of the working class was also a prominent Labour issue, and as such the Trades and Labour Council wanted to be part of the decision-making for Portsmouth’s workmen’s housing and the regeneration of slum areas. Trades and Labour Council were central figures in pursuing the adoption of Part Three of the 1890 Housing of the Working Classes Act, which encouraged local councils to undertake housing improvement schemes. Their agenda was to clear slum areas and encourage the Town Council to buy the Great Salterns estate to the east of Portsea Island for the erection of workman’s dwellings. The Town Council had undertaken a costly regeneration scheme in Portsea some years previously and were not keen to engage in this development. The Fabian Society particularly capitalised on this fear and figures such as George Bernard Shaw and Beatrice and Sidney Webb used the imperial idea to advance their notion of a national standard of living. This may have also been favoured by the town’s Liberals who saw their parliamentary candidates Sir John Baker and Thomas Bramsdon run on principals of “Liberal Imperialism” during the Khaki elections.

A Housing Council was established in 1904 which involved representatives from Portsmouth’s clergy, friendly societies and Trades and Labour Council. The Housing Council was described in the Portsmouth Evening News as a body that meant business.

The Council at present consists of a small body of thoughtful, and it may be hoped, reasonable, men, of widely different political, social and religious opinions, united only in the desire for Housing Reform, and in the opinion

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233 PEN, 30th October 1900. This act was not compulsory and therefore the decision of the local government on whether or not they adopted it. John Burnett, A Social History of Housing 1815-1985, (London: Routledge, 1986 [Second Edition]), p.159.
234 PEN, 2nd January 1903.
235 Gates, City of Portsmouth; p.189.
236 Andrew Thompson, The Empire Strikes Back? The Impact of Imperialism on Britain From the Mid-Nineteenth Century. (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2005); pp.151-152.
237 See Chapter Four.
238 PEN, 13th February 1904; PEN, 16th February 1904.
that overcrowding has become a vital social question in most parts of England, including certain parts of the borough of Portsmouth.\textsuperscript{239}

However, the internal struggles within the Trades and Labour Council were apparent as many thought joining the Housing Council would detract them from pursuing the main object of creating Labour representation in the town. At a Trades and Labour Council meeting on the subject many were cautious about the insertion of party politics onto a cause for the greater good.\textsuperscript{240} However, President Alf Baxter assured the members that the Housing Council was an independent body with no party affiliations and argued that they should work together with a body that had the same objectives as them. He assured them that their representatives on the Housing Council would “kick against” party candidates being foisted upon the Labour cause and would oppose Labour candidates being forced on the Council.\textsuperscript{241} Philip Steer, a retired Engine Fitter from the Dockyard and representative of the Number Four Branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE), was a Trades and Labour Council delegate to the Housing Committee. He appealed to those present “not to be stubborn or pig-headed. Why should they stand isolated when others were willing to work with them on this matter merely because they were not strong enough to do the work themselves?”\textsuperscript{242}

The Housing Council served as a cross-interest lobbying group designed to put pressure on the Town Council. It was funded by individual or organisational subscription and mirrored the socialist politics it was borne from.\textsuperscript{243} Its aims mirrored other Trades Councils around the country at a time when the objective of the Trades Union Congress in Leeds that year was to push housing reform and submit resolutions pressing upon local authorities throughout the country the need for taking action to prevent the spread of slum areas and to ask for standards of lighting, ventilation and gardens for new houses. The Congress also wanted to lobby parliament to give local authorities power to purchase

\textsuperscript{239} PEN, 13\textsuperscript{th} February 1904.
\textsuperscript{240} PEN, 4\textsuperscript{th} December 1904.
\textsuperscript{241} PEN, 4\textsuperscript{th} December 1904.
\textsuperscript{242} PEN, 22\textsuperscript{nd} January 1904.
\textsuperscript{243} Subscription of 1s. for an individual and 5s. for an organisation agreed on during the meeting. PEN, 17\textsuperscript{th} February 1904.
unused estates of land.\textsuperscript{244} The \textit{Portsmouth Evening News} commented on the independent attitude of Portsmouth’s Housing Council in their efforts to affect municipal change:

That the members knew what they were fighting for is evidenced by the fact that members of our Town Council, who are quite apathetic to carrying out Part III, of the Housing Act, were not invited to attend meetings.\textsuperscript{245}

Indeed, due to the lack of public funds the result of this local pressure was not realised until 1910 when the Portsea area slum clearance scheme began in earnest with the demolition of some of the worst areas in Portsea.\textsuperscript{246} When Mayor Scott Foster opened Curzon Howe Road in 1912 the road’s very name signified the Corporation’s desire to align the development with the heritage of the Royal Navy; thus making concepts of citizenship and imperial duty synonymous.\textsuperscript{247} In the interests of imperial citizenship the Mayor hoped that the houses with their open spaces and greenery would “remind those who lived in them that there was such a place as the beautiful country.”\textsuperscript{248} So significant was the council-led regeneration of Portsea that William G. Gates wrote in his chronicles of Portsmouth’s history that it was one of the best municipal schemes undertaken by the Town Council during the last fifty years and changed the area from a “sink of iniquity” to a “little model working-class district.”\textsuperscript{249} These new houses were arguably out of the price range of the poorer members of society that had formerly lived there. The creation of this model housing, therefore, signified the focus of the Corporation on boosting the economy of the town and incorporating those who could make a contribution to their model of imperial citizenship over tackling wider questions of social reform.\textsuperscript{250}

\textsuperscript{244} \textit{PEN}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} September 1904.
\textsuperscript{245} \textit{PEN} 17\textsuperscript{th} February 1904.
\textsuperscript{246} See Chapter Three.
\textsuperscript{247} The name of the new development, Curzon Howe Road, was chosen to honour the recently deceased former Commander-in-Chief of Portsmouth, Admiral Curzon Howe. Gates, \textit{City of Portsmouth}; p.248.
\textsuperscript{248} \textit{PT}, October 26\textsuperscript{th} 1912.
\textsuperscript{249} Gates, \textit{City of Portsmouth}, p.239.
The plausibility of Labour representation was strengthened in the Edwardian era as the town was buoyed by Labour candidate Sanders polling third after the Liberal candidates Thomas Bramsdon and Sir John Baker in the General Election of 1906. Dockyard Shipwright John MacTavish was the first Labour candidate to be elected to the Town Council in 1908 and was subsequently re-elected in 1911. In November 1908 MacTavish was voted in by a majority of thirty for the town’s Buckland Ward.\(^{251}\) Despite the tight margin MacTavish had vociferous support with the large attendance cheering itself “hoarse” when the news was announced. Such was the jubilation that he was carried up the street on the shoulders of his supporters.\(^{252}\) At a meeting of the electors before the election MacTavish assured the audience that “he was not actuated by any personal ambition to become a Town Councillor, nor had he any axe to grind. He felt that Labour had the right to take part in the civic government of that town.”\(^{253}\) He ran on a heavily class-based argument, opposing elitism in municipal life and particularly cited the opening of the council-owned South Parade Pier.

... what he complained of was that the Mayor had not entertained the people. The whole affair was a gross piece of class snobbishness ... The Council should do more for the working classes of Portsmouth than it has done hitherto, even though that meant less for Southsea residents, tradesmen and investors. He was for a new policy of Portsmouth for Portsmouth people and especially the working classes.\(^{254}\)

MacTavish’s obituary in 1938 noted how he was subsequently elected a member of the South Parade Pier Committee and “his advocacy played an important part, not only in the establishment of the Pier by the Council, but also turning it from a “white elephant” into a profitable undertaking.”\(^{255}\) What MacTavish’s stance betrayed however, is that through inclusion in the town’s imperial civic events many of the town’s working-class citizens had

\(^{251}\) PEN, 3\(^{rd}\) November 1908. There were also ten spoiled ballots.
\(^{252}\) PEN, 3\(^{rd}\) November 1908.
\(^{253}\) PEN, 23\(^{rd}\) September 1908.
\(^{254}\) PEN, 23\(^{rd}\) September 1908.
\(^{255}\) HT, 25\(^{th}\) November 1938.
started to conceive of their place and importance within the town. Inclusion had started to become expected at every event.

Illness caused MacTavish to leave the Dockyard in 1911 and the Trades and Labour Council, eager not to lose his influence in the Portsmouth Labour movement and position on the Town Council funded his appointment as Labour Party Organiser via subscription from the affiliated trade unions. They argued that MacTavish worked “in the midsts of a somewhat hostile body of civic fathers” and worried that losing him would cause the almost absolute certainty of a severe slump and set back to our aspirations to secure direct and independent Labour Representation.” However, while this move shows the willingness of many trade unionists to pay for MacTavish’s continued representation, it also indicated that the position of Labour representation in the town was precarious and the Town Council was resistant to many of his demands. MacTavish was joined by two more Labour councillors in 1911 and 1912. The value of Labour representation was shown during the Dockyard trade union unrest in 1913. At a crowded meeting in the Town Hall MacTavish was vociferous in the defence of Dockyard workers and their demands for better wages due to the increased cost of living. He told his audience that:

... they must get on the nerves of the Admiralty, as the German bogeyman had done. They could find millions for new warships, but not thousands for the workers who built the ships.

However, the Dockyard workers were unwilling to strike and expressed the desire to instigate a better method of petitioning than they had available at present.

MacTavish’s position highlighted the inherent problem with Labour politics in

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257 Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council, 25th Annual; p.11.
259 For an in-depth analysis see Galliver, Portsmouth: pp.144-160.
260 PT, 22nd March 1913.
261 PEN, 18th March 1913.
Portsmouth. The largest and most unionised group of industrial workers was inextricably tied to the prosperity of the Royal Navy and it therefore would have been viewed as tantamount to treachery to strike. At a meeting organised by the Government Labourer’s Union MacTavish appealed in favour of trade unionism using similes of imperial defence. He contended that the trade unions “were as necessary for the protection of the interests of the working class as the British Navy is for the protection of the interests of the British Empire.”

He urged them to fight for the interest of the workers in the same way that the Royal Navy would fight if the interests of the Empire were attacked. The structure of the workforce, however, made an appeal on a universal level difficult. The nature of the Royal Dockyard’s employment pitted established workers against hired men, and its distinct sectional structure meant that workmen competed for pay and recognition against their Dockyard colleagues. Trade union representatives were regularly shut out of Admiralty procedures of petitioning and grievance resolution. Therefore, without a radical change to the structure of Admiralty employment there was little that the Labour movement could do. The unrest was quelled by the Admiralty’s concession of pay rises to sections of the workforce, which although under the rates demanded was “sufficient to blunt the enthusiasm for further action” and also re-enforced sectional and trade rivalries.

However, in Portsmouth it was the link between Labour pacifism and the imperial duty of its citizens which made socialist politics untenable on the outbreak of the First World War. Both MacTavish and fellow Labour Councillor John Pile, a railway porter, lost their seats in the November 1914 municipal elections due to their anti-war stance. MacTavish maintained in an article written in 1919 for the Worker’s Education Association journal, *The Highway*, that he and Pile lost their seats “for daring to protest against the coming of ‘Armageddon’.” The catalyst for such events occurred on August 4th 1914 when the local Labour Party held an anti-war rally on the steps of the Town Hall. Such was the hostility that early in the rally a crowd breached police security and stormed the platform.

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262 PEN, 31st May 1913.
265 HT, 21st March 1913.
on which MacTavish was standing and proceeded to drag it away. During the election campaign M. Edgar Hall, a Poor law Guardian, stated that he was fighting against MacTavish on “patriotic grounds.” Moreover, Hall wanted to make it clear that help in the campaign from his friends who were members of the Liberal and Unionist Parties were working for him in their capacity as friends and not because of their affiliation to any particular organisation, thus underlining the issue as one of patriotism and not of policy. The Portsmouth Evening News stated that during the election, appeals for support for all seats were fought on primarily domestic and local government issues, excepting Mr Hall’s case, which was on the grounds of “party politics”. Following the elections Labour failed to hold any of their seats; the third Labour councillor Captain Robert Muir Allen was unable to contest as he was absent on active service. The Portsmouth Evening News reported that the matter was regrettable “as it is not in the best interests of the town that the working classes should cease to be represented by men of their own standing.” What the 1914 municipal elections show, however, is that despite the radical politics and other municipal rows sparked, it was the ILP’s pacifist stance which was incongruous at that time with a town which contained an electorate largely composed of naval and military personnel and an industrialised workforce linked inextricably to the fate of the Royal Navy. Imperial citizenship was linked with serving the empire at a time of crisis. MacTavish and the ILP did not speak for the whole of the Dockyard workforce who, although conscious of their class and labour struggles were, when duty called, proud of their empire and willing to defend it.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the links between the civic elites and the concept of imperial citizenship. Using a more nuanced understanding of the position of a specific working-class industrial group, the chapter has argued that relationships with the imperial mission were more complex than a top-down process of inculcation. Certainly, the Royal
Dockyard workers’ relationship to empire in the municipal realm was mediated through many different experiences and was visible in outpourings of civic pride in times of imperial celebration or crisis. Indeed, the discourse of empire was used by the civic elite as a means by which to incorporate and ameliorate the public but, crucially, it was also employed by some Royal Dockyard workers as a tool to gain influence in the public sphere and extend privileges for themselves and their agendas. The Edwardian era saw Royal Dockyard workers insert themselves into the municipal politics of the town. Through friendly society and trade union representation the workforce was able to make itself more collectively secure and visible. The process of civic incorporation under the banner of imperial duty and the “failure” of the municipal Labour movement in Portsmouth did not mean that Royal Dockyard workers passively accepted doctrines of empire or servitude. Instead it showed that they were actively involved in the decision-making process and made those decisions based on the situation and who served them best at that time. The reaction to MacTavish and the ILP after the outbreak of the First World War exhibited the internal inconsistency between pushing for increased labour rights whilst working to secure the defence of the realm. Although the workmen of the Royal Dockyard were willing to challenge the Admiralty and fight for better pay and conditions, they were aware of their imperial duty and accepted it. The thesis will now turn to consider the conditions of their employment on the identity and experiences of the Royal Dockyard worker to further understand their relationship to concepts of imperialism in Edwardian England.
Chapter 3. Social Structures and Residential Patterns of the Royal Dockyard Worker in Portsmouth

The expansion of suburban areas of Portsmouth during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries was directly related to the growing need for living space for the town’s Royal Dockyard workers. Thus, much of the history of the urban development of Portsmouth is the history of working-class housing and living patterns. Close studies have taken place on the economic and social composition of the population in areas of Portsmouth in the mid-nineteenth century such as Southsea and Old Portsmouth; however, this has left a gap in the understanding of working-class areas of the district, especially studies later than the 1870s. Although the expansion of the Royal Dockyard is often cited in demographic studies for its impact on the population of the town, little work has been undertaken in application to the wider framework of national trends of work, urbanisation and its relationship to the British Empire. This chapter will explore the living patterns of the Royal Dockyard worker to show how structures of work, rank and hierarchy manifested themselves physically onto Portsmouth’s urban landscape. It shall argue that the Royal Dockyard worker was not a homogenous mass, and understanding the subjectivities of masculine workplace hierarchy and earning potential within a local setting is a key element in assessing the imperial experience of the British and English working classes.

The importance of the urban environment in the creation of an imperial mindset was argued contemporarily by Liberal social commentators such as J. A. Hobson and Charles F. G. Masterman who both viewed urban expansion as an unhealthy influence on the British public. Hobson attributed the specific conditions of overcrowding, urbanisation and labour relations to the creation of jingoism in the British population; equating the outpourings of imperial jubilation of Mafeking Night with a more consistent, deep-seated

and sinister British imperialism. Charles F. G. Masterman similarly saw urbanisation as a force which stunted social reform in the “Heart of the Empire.” Subsequent analysis of the nature of imperialism during the late-Victorian and Edwardian period, however, has tended to focus on either proving or disproving the notion of imperial propaganda through the vehicles of popular culture rather than its affect on social structures. J.M. MacKenzie has been particularly influential in arguing in the pervasiveness of a popular imperialism which featured at its core a renewed militarism, devotion to loyalty and worship of national heroes mixed with a “contemporary cult of personality” and racial ideas based on Social Darwinism. In this vein local case studies have argued that Royal Dockyard workers harboured a fundamental adherence with British imperial ideology due to their role in the construction of the country’s warships. Jan Rüger has recently argued that the Royal Navy was a force that has been so far overlooked by historians of popular imperialism. However, by focusing on imperial “flashpoints” such as Mafeking Night and the staging of large state-organised imperial events, the analysis is of limited value as it does not take into account the fluctuating circumstances of everyday life and the multiple identities and responsibilities of the individual. This chapter will take into account the assertion that historians need to take more seriously the possibility that working people embraced empire on their own terms, and not because they were told to do so by their masters.

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281 Andrew S. Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back? The Impact of Imperialism on Britain from the Mid-Nineteenth Century,* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2005); p.43.
The aim of this thesis has been to focus specifically on one industrial group in order to track the nuances of the relationship that the working classes had with the British Empire. Therefore their specific cultural contexts must be taken into account. Notions of local and national identities have become a theme in recent imperial historiography. However, while a sense of imperial “Englishness” may have been broadly important, it does not account for the large numbers of Dockyardmen who were from Wales, Scotland or Ireland. Brad Beaven has taken the local element further by focusing on the city as an important site for the negotiation of imperial discourse, and has underlined the ability of imperial culture to be multi-layered and manipulated to capitalise on the specific concerns of a locality. Recent studies of working-class cultures have also highlighted the importance of understanding local relationships and their revision over time and circumstance. Working-class cultures have been noted for their stratification and modes of distinction. These studies highlight the importance of focusing at a more detailed level of engagement with empire through structures of work and locality in order to understand the roots of that stratification. The discourse on class and working-class communities seemed to fall out of favour in the mid-1990s and until recently little debate been focused on the subject. However, a number of studies have sought to resituate class and locality in the centre of discourses on identity formation. Indeed, the complex and competing structures and relationships in working-class households and neighbourhoods

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283 Brad Beaven, Visions of Empire: Patriotism, Popular Culture and the City, 1870-1939, (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2012); p.208.
284 Mike Savage and Andrew Miles observed that at the outbreak of the First World War working-class culture was “still characterised by internal boundedness” and still contained very significant collectivities within it. Mike Savage and Andrew Miles, The Re-Making of the British Working-Class 1840-1940, (London and New York: Routledge, 1994); p.37. Joanna Bourke also supported this notion and argued further that working-class communities helped to produce social norms. Crucially, these norms were competitive and dynamic but were not so fixed as to constitute a “shared identity”. Joanna Bourke, Working-Class Cultures in Britain. Gender, Class and Ethnicity, (London and New York: Routledge, 1994); p.169.
285 Helen B. McCartney identified the role of local social structures and biases in creating identity and cohesion in Liverpool’s First World War citizen soldiers. Helen B. McCartney, Citizen Soldiers: the Liverpool Territorials in the First World War, (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); p.17. Recently Andrew August made links with the processes of working-class identity creation and the presence of close-knit class-distinct communities who shared experiences of manual labour, economic insecurity and leisure. Like Bourke he too conceived that the communal aspects of the working-class community also ensured that distinction and value judgments were identified and articulated in everyday social settings such as the street, the local shops or other shared facilities. August, The British; p.146 and p.105.
could also be viewed as a potent form of agency and resistance in the “politics of everyday life.”

The aim of this chapter, therefore, is to use it as a foundation to understand and delineate distinctions in the lived culture of the Royal Dockyard worker outside the Dockyard walls. This will first be achieved by outlining the specific workplace conditions of the Dockyard worker and exploring the affects this culture would have had on their lives in the outside world. The chapter will next chart the development of Portsmouth in relation to the Dockyard workforce and examine three sample areas of Portsmouth; Portsea, North End and East Southsea to illustrate the spatial and social patterns of the town’s largest body of industrial workers. This has been achieved by searching the **1901** and **1911 Censuses** of Portsmouth. Moreover, access to a database only recently transcribed from ledgers in the possession of the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Historical Trust of Portsmouth Royal Dockyard employment records has augmented the census findings to create a fuller picture of the residential patterns of the Dockyard workforce.

The picture that emerges within these communities shows that the living patterns of Portsmouth’s Royal Dockyard workers were prescribed by cultural norms negotiated by available housing stock and the competitive and sectional conditions of the Dockyard workforce. Rather than being a homogenous mass of jingoes, or a body of workmen economically predisposed to imperial partisanship through the conditions of their employment, the Royal Dockyard worker emerges as a culturally complex character where status, respectability and cultural capital are key to understanding their relationship to the nation and empire.

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287 The research has been particularly enhanced by the ability to search over comparative census databases using Ancestry.co.uk, which has greatly increased the ability to identify and track people over time.

288 *Portsmouth Dockyard Employment Database*, compiled from ledgers documenting the employment of staff in Portsmouth Royal Dockyard c.1850-1950. Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Historical Trust.

289 The theory of ‘cultural capital’ was first explored by Pierre Bourdieu to reconcile differences between ‘taste’ and ‘class’. Cultural capital represented a concept of non-economic power which could create ‘distinction’ and mark a person out as having social status and an innate, and thus legitimate, right to power and leadership. Thus the process of creating ‘distinction’ exhibited cultural capital in action. Simon Gunn, *History and Cultural Theory*, (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2006); pp.73-75; Gunn has also outlined how the experience of the city raised problems for the middle class, which was solved by establishing cultural conventions to distinguish hierarchies of ‘rank’ and ‘status’. Simon Gunn, *The Public Culture of the*
Workplace Structures and Society

First, however, it is helpful to outline the conditions which influenced Portsmouth’s social and economic situation. This was contemporarily identified in 1908 by a Board of Trade report into the cost of living of the working classes which noted that Portsmouth’s industrial and general life was “entirely conditioned by its relations with the navy” and that no large bodies of skilled labour existed outside the Dockyard and building trades.\textsuperscript{290} The structure of Admiralty employment created a fragmented and complex hierarchy, which bred loyalties and competition between trades, grades and skill level.\textsuperscript{291} The Admiralty’s three-tier system of artisan tradesmen, skilled labourers and unskilled ordinary labourers served as potent marks of distinction in structures of hierarchy, skill level and pay scale.\textsuperscript{292} Skilled men who had served an apprenticeship possessed an element of pride which was bound up with their reputation of being elite workers which was fostered in the Dockyard Schools.\textsuperscript{293} Alongside splits at skill and trade level was the more explicit demarcation of being an “established” or a “hired” man, which served as a potent mark of distinction. While the hired worker was paid slightly more they did not possess any job security and were not entitled to superannuation on their retirement. It has been argued that during times of workplace unrest an established Shipwright could have more in common with an established Fitter than his fellow hired Shipwrights, with whom he could make a common cause against the Fitters in demarcation disputes.\textsuperscript{294} Established Shipwrights would hold all the key managerial and supervisory roles and would supervise not just fellow Shipwrights but unskilled and semi-skilled labourers and

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{290}Board of Trade, \textit{Cost of Living of the Working Classes}, 1908 [Cd. 3864]; p.374-375.
\textsuperscript{292}Peter Galliver, \textit{The Portsmouth Dockyard Workforce 1880-1914}, MPhil Thesis (unpublished), University of Southampton, 1986; p.15-16.
\textsuperscript{294}Galliver, \textit{The Portsmouth Dockyard Workforce}; p.15-16.
\end{flushleft}
also minor trades. The established men were always kept on and were picked first by
the Chargehands to work in their “gangs.” Hired men would be picked next with any men
left being drawn at random from a drum. The process brought with it an unequal level
of favouritism based on the quality of a man’s work and personal friendships and
encouraged “oligarchism and nepotism.” Richard Gould argued in his statement to the
Royal Commission on Labour in 1892 that the system of promotions was rife with
favouritism, with Dockyard officials having the power to grant higher marks at their
discretion. However, the position of the Shipwright should not be assumed to be one of
a “Labour Aristocrat”. Certainly, although able to progress through the Dockyard
hierarchy and gain positions as high-ranking officers, the ordinary Shipwright was not the
most highly paid workman in the Royal Dockyard and rates of pay for other trades such as
Patternmakers, Engine Fitters, Boilermakers and Smiths could equal, if not exceed, the
earnings of the Shipwright. Men who served apprenticeships and then worked in the
Drawing Office as Draughtsmen could also earn far more than the ordinary Shipwright
and could remove themselves from the process of manual labour; another mark of status
and distinction.

The Admiralty’s unwillingness to lose their core of skilled Shipwrights during the
transition from wood to iron ships also meant that metal workers recognised as “skilled”
men in private yards were downgraded to “semi-skilled” in the Royal Dockyard and much

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pp.104-105.
296 Roger Thomas, Dreadnought Construction, Portsmouth Dockyard Workers and the Local State c.1905-
297 Lunn and Thomas, ‘Naval Imperialism’; p.153
298 Royal Commission on Labour, Evidence of Richard Gould, ‘Workers in the Government Dockyards and
Arsenals’, Digest of the Evidence taken Before Group A of the Royal Commission of Labour. Volume III,
1893, pp.55-64; p.57. Gould was the Secretary of the Portsmouth Branch Associated Shipwrights Society
(ASS).
299 Thomas, Dreadnought Construction; p285-287.
300 Hired Shipwrights earned a flat rate of 34s. 6d. (probationary rate of 32s. 6d.) and established
Shipwrights 33s. regardless of length of time served. A hired Engine Fitter could earn between 34s. and 48s.
and an established man could earn between 32s. and 45s. HMSO, Instructions As To Cash Duties – 1905,
(London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1905); pp.156-157.
301 A Second Class Draughtsman would earn 39s. for the first three years, rising to 45s. and a First Class
Draughtsman would earn 48s . and 57s. respectively. HMSO, Instructions; p.155.
work was taken from them.\textsuperscript{302} Moreover, the development of new technologies meant that by the Dreadnought building programme Shipwrights, Engineers and Electricians competed to be recognised for their importance in the construction of Britain’s fighting ships.\textsuperscript{303} The powerful hierarchical system in place within the Dockyard walls endowed skilled, established tradesmen more security and thus ostensibly a better platform to parade their cultural capital within the town and their neighbourhoods. They formed an elite in society which prided itself on the basic tenets of working-class respectability, thrift, collective security and independence. The hired, semi-skilled and unskilled workers were subject to fluctuating fortunes based on their workmanship and personal relationships with members of the skilled established workforce. As Savage and Miles have argued, the mid-Victorian labour market reinforced divisions by turning labour inward. As a result workers would police their own labour markets, which led to conflicts between groups of skilled workers while making unskilled workers “responsible for their own fate.”\textsuperscript{304} For unskilled workers their entrance into the Dockyard and subsequent advancement depended on catching the attention of a superior. This was achieved more often than not through the informal institutions of the town such as the church, local political involvement and through local leisure facilities.\textsuperscript{305} It would not be unrealistic to expect, therefore, that this tacit relationship of networking was replicated in the projection of artisan values and exercised to some extent in living patterns. To this end, the residential patterns that will be witnessed later in the chapter were of normative importance and promoted coherency between the industrial and the social spheres within an urban settling.\textsuperscript{306}

\textsuperscript{302} For example, in private ship construction most of the shipbuilding was undertaken by Boilermakers and the men regarded as skilled tradesmen with corresponding responsibilities and salaries. For a more detailed study on work and labour relations and demarcation issues see Galliver, \textit{The Portsmouth Dockyard Workforce}; p.5 and p.9; Kenneth Lunn and Ann Day (eds.) \textit{History of Work and Labour Relations in the Royal Dockyards}, (London and New York: Mansell, 1999); p.xii –xiv.

\textsuperscript{303} Brian H. Patterson, “Giv’ er a Cheer Boys” \textit{The Great Docks of Portsmouth Dockyard 1830-1914}, (Portsmouth: Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Historical Society, 1989); p.40.

\textsuperscript{304} Savage and Miles, \textit{Remaking}; p.48.


These workplace distinctions and interactions would have informed the lives of the Royal Dockyard workers as citizens. The Dockyardmen were reported to have their own social and cultural conventions which were influenced by the Dockyard School and the apprenticeship system. Politeness when addressing one another, especially amongst the skilled men, was important. Indeed, at times the tension created in the workplace could spill out into civilian life. In 1900 the Hampshire Telegraph reported on the assault of a Boilermaker by a Shipwright. The incident arose after the Shipwright, who was in charge, did not let the Boilermaker have the tea which his mate had made for him. The Shipwright was alleged to have thrown the teapot in the dock and when confronted about the incident a few days later struck the Boilermaker. Another incident involving two neighbouring Dockyard Shipwrights in Lord Street, Kingston, ended up in a fight in the street. Critically, however, it is important to note that working-class notions of respectability were markedly different to those of the middle classes. Reports of violent conduct signified public struggles over status and dignity and an articulation of physicality and masculinity that was necessary in their manual labour. Similarly, as will be asserted later in the thesis, activities such as smoking concerts, pleasure outings and visits to the music hall or football stadium were not incongruous to working-class notions of respectability. Rather, they were more focused on creating an expression of “assertive independence” and gaining external recognition by different cultural authorities such as their employers, the civic elite and the local press. Indeed, the transposition of this hierarchical culture based on skill and trade level outside of the Dockyard walls was complicated and not necessarily accepted by outsiders. John Field has noted that as neither a gentleman by birth nor a craftsman by salary, a Dockyard Officer occupied an ambiguous social position. Therefore, although the status of a Dockyardman was underwritten with tacit and explicit delineations in the workplace, their social position

307 John Field, Portsmouth Dockyard and its Workers 1815-1875, The Portsmouth Papers, (Portsmouth: Portsmouth City Council, 1994); p.12; Casey, ‘Class Rule’; p.75.
308 Field, Portsmouth Dockyard; p.12.
309 HT, 22nd September 1900.
310 The Boilermaker had to go to hospital and the Shipwright was subsequently fined shipwright 30s with 13s 6d in costs by the Police Court.
311 HT, 20th May 1899.
313 Crossick, Artisan Elite; p.135
314 Field, Portsmouth Dockyard; p.7
had to be constantly justified and maintained by other means in the social realm. Public forms of expression and respectability were given legitimacy in public forums such as the local press and forms of civic pageantry. Part of this assertion of independence and respectability was the ability to make free choices; this included the district and houses they lived in. The stratified and fragmentary character of the workforce, ensured that Royal Dockyard workers did not experience a homogenous relationship with each other. Similarly these distinctions, based on status, skill and pay level, would have influenced the way in which the workforce experienced their leisure time. As shall be seen, the houses and neighbourhoods of the Royal Dockyard workers were potent symbols of their status where even those who were not so free to choose were able to assert some level of agency and resistance.

Growth

The increase in the work of the Royal Dockyard under the 1889 Naval Defence Act had brought an influx of workers to the town. Overall growth of the population of the town during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries was marked, with 188,133 recorded in 1901; an increase of just over 18 per cent from the previous census. By 1911 this figure had risen another 22.8 per cent to 231,141. Much of this influx was due to the expansion of the Royal Dockyard and its work, which between the two censuses had increased from 10,044 persons employed to 13,505. In 1901 the Portsmouth Kelly’s Directory noted that the spread to Landport was in consequence of the increase of population within the town of Portsea, adding that was the area in which the “artisans of the Dockyard typically resided.”

The decision to build a new town hall in 1879 was a reflection of the change in the physiognomy of the town. The population had spread away from the old walled towns of Old Portsmouth and Portsea into new suburbs to the north, northeast and southeast

315 Thomas, Dreadnought Construction; p.4.
316 Thomas, Portsmouth and Gosport; p. 167.
317 By 1913 this figure was nearer 14,000. Galliver, The Portsmouth Dockyard Workforce; pp.237-238.
regions of Portsea Island. However, the location was dependant on the housing stock available. Until the 1870s much of the town’s development took part in Southsea and Landport, however, the numbers in areas such as Kingston increased as local landowners sold off plots to constructors. As a consequence, in the 1880s Kingston’s housing grew almost two-fold to nearly 6,000 new houses. Municipally, the town gained increasing control of the surrounding area. By 1895 the borough boundaries were extended to include the Great Salterns to the east of Portsea Island. Similarly, a year later the municipal wards were rearranged “in consequence of the rapid growth of some portions of the borough.” By 1904 the borough boundaries extended to include the whole of Portsea Island and that year the village of Cosham on the mainland was incorporated into the borough.

Local studies have detected distinct social stratifications in the physicality of the town through the creation of distinct working-class districts. The growth and change in character bought inevitable challenges to creating a cohesive borough. The geographical and economic segregation of the town led Father Dolling to describe Portsmouth in 1896 as a “quadruple town” with different and often conflicting interests. He added that its particular character was marked by the rapid increase in population whilst the absence of wealthy people and manufactories made the town “a very difficult mass out of which to create a really united city.” By the end of the era Reverend C. F. Garbett noted how the growth and development of the town had affected demographic change, arguing that the prosperity of his parish of St Mary’s was steadily decreasing as those who could afford it

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322 Gates, City of Portsmouth; p.191.
moved out to the modern houses and suburbs of the town. This in turn brought about a change in the character of the streets.\textsuperscript{326}

A Board of Trade report into the cost of living of the working classes characterised Portsmouth’s working class dwellings as long terraces of “usually two-story brick-built houses, with plain fronts, rising directly from the streets”. The table below shows the findings of Portsmouth’s typical working class housing.

**Table 1. Typical Working Class Houses in Portsmouth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No of Rooms</th>
<th>Frontage</th>
<th>Rooms</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Average Rent (Oct 1906)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>11’6’’ to 14’</td>
<td>One sitting room, two bedrooms, scullery, kitchen, back yard</td>
<td>Newer streets – forecourt and/or passage to front door</td>
<td>5s. to 5s. 6d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>13’6’’ to 15’</td>
<td>One sitting room, three bedrooms, scullery, kitchen, back yard</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>5s. 9d. – 6s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>13’6’’ to 15’</td>
<td>Two sitting rooms, three bedrooms, scullery, kitchen, back yard</td>
<td>Ditto</td>
<td>7s. – 8s. 6d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>13’6’’ to 15’</td>
<td>Two sitting rooms, three bedrooms, scullery, kitchen, back yard</td>
<td>Ditto, plus entrance passage and bay windows</td>
<td>9s. 6d.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{327} Board of Trade, Report on the Cost of Living of the Working-Class, 1908


\textsuperscript{327} Board of Trade, Cost of Living; p.376.
The housing was occupied by certain strataums of the working class and was thus a reflection on financial status and the stability of one’s employment. Top-quality housing was denoted by newly-built houses in the suburbs or newer parts of towns, containing five or more rooms and set in small front and rear gardens. The report found that five-roomed houses were typically occupied by “Dockyardmen and labourers in regular employment” while six-roomed superior dwellings were occupied by “better paid artisans, clerks &c.”  

“Men of lower types”, including casual labourers, lived in small four-roomed cottages in the older part of town or occupied a number of rooms in a larger, sub-divided older house in the district. Reverend Garbett calculated that the average earnings for a household amounted to about 30s. a week, but with wide variations of this figure, with rent of a small house with a little strip of garden at the back costing from 4s. in a “poor” street to 8s. 6s. in a “better” street. 

Thus, while the size of the house was an important signifier, the character of street it was on was perhaps more so. The concept of “poor” and “better” streets becomes more significant as a contemporary term as it would suggest that these expressions were in popular use and such streets could be identified amongst local residents. In this context, the living patterns of the Royal Dockyard worker can be envisaged as a correlation between housing stock, respectability, affordability and status, which was negotiated over time and circumstance. It has been noted that the artisan elite were more concerned about their relative status within their class over class position itself. Indeed the conditions of crowding and urbanisation in large towns, which saw ‘respectable’ citizens living cheek by jowl with less desirable neighbours, would have catalysed this need for distinction in both the middle and working classes. The outside embellishments of the houses provided another means of distinguishing one’s rank and respectability. Houses were distinguished by the addition of bay windows and by ‘architectural’ decoration such as coloured string courses, plinths, eaves details, ceramic tiles and coloured glass door

328 Board of Trade, *Cost of Living*; p.376.  
329 Board of Trade, *Cost of Living*; p.376.  
331 Crossick, *Artisan Elite*; p.60.  
332 Thompson, *Town and City*; p.34.  
panels. As the standards for housing improved in the Edwardian era bringing working-class and middle-class housing in line, rather than the internal layout of a house, the main differences which distinguished class and status became location and detail rather than internal plan.

The trend to move further out was facilitated by the development of the local tramway, which was municipalised in 1897 and electrified in 1905. The tram system had enabled many of the lower-middle class and better-paid working class to move out of the city centre into more spacious areas on the outskirts of town which were traditionally the reserve of the wealthy. The tram also enabled those living further afield to work in the Dockyard and campaigns were mounted in 1913 to ensure Dockyard workers living outside the town could get to work in good time so not to get docked wages. Indeed the ability to afford to commute on a daily basis would have been a marker of relative affluence. However, as egalitarian as the provision of cheap trams sounded, routes were chosen carefully and decisions were made by the Corporation to circumvent “less favourable or less attractive” areas for the comfort of their passengers. In 1913 the tramway was extended to meet the demands of those living in the north-easterly area of the island. The work was affected by a petition in 1909 by 1,500 local residents for a tram route to be installed to Milton via Goldsmith Avenue. The Portsmouth Evening News championed the extension; equating the rateable value of the urban sprawl with the added bonuses of a healthy population.

337 David Cannadine, ‘Victorian Cities: How Different?’ in R. J. Morris and R. Rodger (eds.), The Victorian City, A Reader in British Urban History 1820-1914, (London and New York: Longman, 1993), pp.114-146; p.126. In Portsmouth the tram cost either 1d. or 2d. to all destinations except South Parade Pier to Cosham, which was 4d. These provisions were enabled by the Cheap Trains Act. Course, Portsmouth Corporation; p.153.
338 PT, 5th April 1913.
339 Course, Portsmouth Corporation; p.6.
341 PEN, 1st September 1908.
342 PEN, 4th September 1908.
"that the whole of the district represents the working class, and clerks, Dockyardmen, Naval men, and scores of young ladies going to their various duties have been thoroughly drenched this week in coming and going." Similarly in 1913 a route from Commercial Road through Twyford Avenue to Alexandra Park Recreation Grounds united the working class district of Stamshaw with the centre of the town. These trams also connected local workingmen to the many leisure amenities and attractions of the town. A woman signing herself “HG” argued that in Milton:

... We are debarred from the social life of the town. The South Parade Pier for instance is quite out of the question, and many of us would only be too delighted to avail ourselves of the exceptionally fine bands and other sources of entertainment on our new Pier.

As argued in Chapter Two, by the mid-Edwardian era the importance of civic inclusion and access to leisure facilities would have been an important consideration to those more affluent citizens living and working in the town. Perhaps, it may be argued, as much a consideration as being removed enough from the shame and squalor of the slum? Indeed, as the civic elite increasingly sought to incorporate the growing citizenry, the rise in civic pride and local celebration brought national and imperial culture to the streets in the form of parades and decorated trams. Streets and major thoroughfares were decorated on the subscription of local residents. During the 1902 Coronation celebrations the Portsmouth Evening News reported that:

... Portsmouth during the last few days, speedily adorned its streets to signalise what we still trust will be the greatest national event of the decade, and our thoroughfares have been metamorphosed into fairylands

343 PEN, 7th September 1908.
344 Course, Portsmouth; p.23.
345 PEN, 7th September 1908.
of flags and festoons, a veritable kaleidoscope of colour as they flutter in the breeze.\footnote{PEN, 3rd June 1902.}

The neighbourhood, therefore, served as a forum for articulations of citizenship and the identification of notions of pride with ‘place’, which must be looked at more closely.

\textbf{Case studies – Portsea, North End and East Southsea.}

The period was punctuated with two censuses which have been able to provide a wealth of information about the living patterns and social situation of British citizens in the early and later years of the Edwardian era. Local studies based on census returns have only been able to identify general patterns in population changes and shipbuilding trades due to the broad categorisation of occupational data.\footnote{Stapleton noted how it was difficult to discern the proportion of carpenters worked in the building trade and how many worked in the Dockyard by looking at the enumeration returns for the 1841 and 1851 Censuses. F. N. G. Thomas’s analysis of the Dockyard workforce is only able to trace “Dockyard trades and other related trades.” Stapleton, ‘The Admiralty Connection’; p.240; Thomas, \textit{Portsmouth and Gosport}; p.107 and pp.150-152.} Cross-checking the 1901 and 1911 Censuses for Portsmouth with a record of the employment of men in Portsmouth Royal Dockyard enabled a more detailed pattern of the Dockyard workforce to be produced.

Collection of such data created some interesting challenges. Tracking certain trades and skill levels proved difficult as men identified on the Portsmouth Dockyard Employment Records Database were many times not found on the Censuses although they were entered as working in the Dockyard at that time. Moreover, the migratory and seasonal character of employment in the Dockyard did not lend itself to such a decadal analysis. It was therefore decided that tracking names from the Portsmouth Dockyard Employment Database through the Censuses to gain a pattern of living in Portsmouth would produce only scattered results which would only be accurate for those in stable employment, thus skewing the data collected. As an alternative, the resulting data was collected using a sample of areas in Portsmouth to paint a reflection of the living patterns of the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard workers at particular points in time. Unfortunately this data did not yield accurate enough information to pinpoint with statistical precision which
residents worked in the Dockyard. As previously mentioned, the difficulty in categorisation inhibits the distinction of trades who could also be employed outside the Royal Dockyard, Joiners for example, who could have been employed in the building trade. The 1901 Census in many cases did not list to the same detail as the 1911 Census who employed the returnees. Cross-checking with the Dockyard Employment Database was able to illuminate some of these cases and establish other information such as birthdates and career progression, but even the 1911 returnees who have entered their employment being “HM Dockyard”, “Government Dockyard” or such derivatives, when cross-checked with the Dockyard Employment Database, were not listed. This cast doubt over the accuracy of the conclusions using this methodology as the production of statistical evidence would only yield flawed results. However, although the use of the Census data presented some methodological problems this research has been able to identify occupants on a more personal level. Therefore, the findings are produced in a more qualitative fashion, which will give a flavour of the living patterns of the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard workers; tracking where possible social mobility, enclaves of particular trades and skill levels and settlements of migrants from similar areas.

Local studies of Portsmouth have noted that a shift from the west of Portsea Island eastward towards new suburban settlements in the north and southeast was a direct consequence of the expansion of the Dockyard and the need to house the increasing numbers of Dockyardmen and their families. However, these shifts have not been assessed in terms of their usefulness in examining the articulation of distinction and the

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348 It is important to note that other types of shipbuilding, building and engineering works and an “engine fitter” could as likely work for the Royal Dockyard, the Royal Navy, the Army, the Corporation or a private firm. Even Shipwrights, riggers, caulkers and those associated with shipbuilding could work for private shipbuilding companies or small commercial enterprises. Semi-skilled workers could also work in other Government establishments such as Naval Ordinance, Priddy’s Hard Victualling Yard or Gunwharf. Others such as Writers, Clerks and Storemen also present similar problems when declaring they work for the Government or in HM Dockyard.

349 Barry Stapleton has noted the shift of residents from Portsea to these newer suburban areas taking place from the mid-1850s. He has attributed the expansion of suburban housing to the rise of employment within the Dockyard shipbuilding industries. Stapleton, ‘The Admiralty Connection’; p.240. Peter Galliver outlined the development of late-Victorian terraced houses expanding from Southsea to the north of Portsea Island as being “designed for the Dockyard workforce.” Galliver, The Portsmouth Dockyard Workforce; p.295. Roger Thomas noted that by the Edwardian period there was evidence of particular overlays in middle-class and working-class housing in the East Southsea area where “skilled Shipwrights, Dockyard foremen and inspectors rented or bought houses and mingled with small business people and school teachers.” Thomas, Dreadnought Construction; p.19.
processes of identity-making by those who lived within these houses. Three areas have been chosen as case studies to test the assumptions of Dockyard living patterns during the era. Portsea, North End and East Southsea all represent different stages of the development of Portsea Island and the expansion of suburban areas in the borough, as shown in Map 1 below (see also Appendixes A, B and C for detailed maps and sample area information).

1. Map of Portsea Island showing the sample areas of Portsea, East Southsea and North End, c.1910

Portsea became Portsmouth’s first Dockyard settlement after the limits of Old Portsmouth were breached. Dockyard workers started building on “Portsmouth Common” in a piecemeal fashion in the late seventeenth century, which is reflected in the organisation of the street layout (see Maps 2 and 3). The dwellings in Portsea ranged from boarding houses offering single rooms up to seven and eight-roomed dwellings. That Portsea was dependant on the prosperity of the Royal Dockyard is illustrated by the

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351 1911 Census returns.
desperate poverty and hardship following disarmament and slumps in production after
the Napoleonic Wars, which could not be remedied by alternative forms of
employment.\textsuperscript{352} Due to the antiquated housing developments and the relative poverty in
parts of Portsea, the area gained a reputation as a slum; typified by its narrow alleyways
and court housing systems which possessed little air flow, substandard drainage and poor
sanitary provisions. As a consequence, many who could afford to leave the area for a
better class of housing moved to the new developing areas to the north and east.\textsuperscript{353}
Thus, during the Edwardian period growth in the Portsea and Landport areas had
remained somewhat static, only rising nine per cent in the intervening years between
1891 and 1911.\textsuperscript{354}

It was considered undesirable to many artisans to live in the poorer areas of town and the
ability to move to more prestigious housing and show independence from state
legislation, such as the Poor Laws, was a main tenet which marked the stratification of the
working classes.\textsuperscript{355} North End was an example of the suburban working class spread to
the north. The area began to develop in the 1870s and continued expansion in the
Edwardian era until all rural areas and villages, such as Copnor, were incorporated into
the main conurbation (see Maps 5 and 6).\textsuperscript{356} The houses in the area were a mixture of
basic working-class dwellings of five rooms and larger, more prestigious houses of seven
rooms and above with elaborate architectural features such as double bay windows and
plasterwork. Similarly, East Southsea was built between the working class Kingston
district and the middle class suburb of Southsea and represents the spread to the east of
the island (see Maps 10 to 12). East Southsea was markedly more working class than
Southsea itself; which was seen as an enclave for the wealthier residents of the town,
especially the officer class of the Royal Navy and Army.\textsuperscript{357} The houses in this area were
reported to bare more resemblance to working class Landport than to upper-middle class

\textsuperscript{352} Michael Gunton, 'Portsea 1896; Hampshire Sheet 83.07', The Godfrey Edition. Old Ordinance Survey
\textsuperscript{353} Stapleton, 'The Population of the Portsmouth Region'; p.108.
\textsuperscript{354} By 1891 the population totalled 51,985, but by 1911 this had only risen to 56,850. Thomas, Portsmouth
and Gosport; p. 167.
\textsuperscript{356} Thomas, Portsmouth and Gosport; p. 169.
\textsuperscript{357} Riley, Houses and Inhabitants; p.16
Southsea and were built largely between 1898 and 1910.\textsuperscript{358} The dwellings ranged from five to seven rooms, but there are many more examples of shared occupancy than North End on the Census returns. The civil parishes of North End and Buckland and Kingston and East Southsea saw the most rapid expansion. The establishment of new working-class development meant that Fratton, Buckland and Kingston lost their earlier status as high-class residential areas and extensive terraces appeared behind the older ribbon development along the main road.\textsuperscript{359} Between 1891 and 1901 the population of North End and Buckland grew from 29,061 to 44,170; an increase of 52 per cent. This increase continued and between 1901 and 1911 the area saw growth of 48 per cent to 65,161; making the total population growth of the area 100 per cent in twenty years. Kingston and East Southsea saw similar growth from 29,234 in 1891 to 43,144 in 1901. By 1911 the population stood at 61,205; a 90 per cent increase in 20 years.\textsuperscript{360}

Figures 1 to 3 in Appendix E chart the places of birth of Dockyard residents in the respective sample areas for 1911. Although Dockyard migration has been cited as a reason for the expansion of the population, what can be seen is that in each area the residents were predominantly locally born.\textsuperscript{361} There was also a high degree who were born in the surrounding areas of Devonport, Chatham and Pembroke Dockyard.\textsuperscript{362} Ann Day noted the presence of a sizeable Pembroke-born community at the turn of the twentieth century, which amounted to 0.4 per cent of the town’s population and were mainly Dockyard connected.\textsuperscript{363} Settlements of Welsh residents can be seen in the North End and East Southsea samples, denoting that they were most likely to be established workers. The only example of a Welsh resident was born in Cardiff, rather than Pembrokeshire, signalling that the Welsh Dockyard community did not choose to reside in Portsea. Frederick Arthur Neale, who resided in Laburnum Grove, North End, can traced back to his hometown of Pembroke, Wales, in 1901, where he was an Inspector of

\textsuperscript{358} Chapman, ‘Geographical Evolution’; p.16
\textsuperscript{359} Chapman, ‘Geographical Evolution’; p.16.
\textsuperscript{360} Thomas, Portsmouth and Gosport; p. 167.
\textsuperscript{361} This includes other areas of Hampshire, such as the Isle of Wight and Gosport.
\textsuperscript{362} Areas included are parts of Devon, Cornwall and Somerset; Chatham, Ramsgate, Maidstone, Kentish Towns, e.g. Woolwich, New and Old Brompton, Deptford, Sheerness, Plumstead; Pembroke, Carmarthenshire, there was also a return from a Shipwright from Swansea.
Shipwrights in Pembroke Royal Dockyard. Neale illustrates the requirement of established Dockyard workers to serve in any of the Royal Dockyards. Similarly, Walter Charles Collier, an Engine Fitter in the Dockyard, was not found in the 1901 Census at his family’s 2 Jesse Road address, but was present in 1911. In 1901 Collier is found as a boarder in Sheerness. Indeed, further study may be useful to find out the number of men who had left their family homes to work abroad, as the initial assumption of absent male householders has generally been that they were in the Armed Services. The level of migration within the workforce would have certainly had a bearing on the abundance of County Associations which formed during the period, showing that it was through various clubs and societies rather than streets or areas that Dockyardmen preferred to seek commonality. Thus national models of imperial experience can only partially address how the working classes saw their relationship to empire.

In all three sample areas the level of housing was varied. While the sample areas all showed a distinctive working-class community the areas of North End and East Southsea were also mixed with the middle class. The level of integration of the Dockyard population in these areas suggests that stereotypes of ghettoisation or hierarchical segregation would be inaccurate; examples of skilled tradesmen are found in Portsea, and Labourers found in North End. However, arguably the labourers who lived in the suburban communities rather than in lower-class areas such as Portsea and Landport were seeking more actively to improve their situation by moving to more respectable areas of town. All three areas had different characters. Portsea was closest to the Dockyard and parts were famed for their licentiousness. Portsmouth had a national

364 1901 Wales Census. It is worth noting, however, that the Portsmouth Dockyard Employment Database lists Neale as working in Portsmouth from 1884 until his death in 1922. The Frederick A. Neale on the 1901 Wales Census and the Fredrick Arthur Neal from 1911 England Census are definitely the same person when comparing other names within the household in addition to Neale’s details.
365 1901 England Census, 52 Clyde Street, Sheerness, Kent. Walter Collier, born c.1855 Arlesford, Kent, found as a boarder with the family of Henry C Sole, an Insurance Agent. In Portsmouth Collier’s children Tom and Walter junior are listed with their mother. Tom was a Ship Fitter Apprentice, Walter an Electrical Fitter Apprentice.
366 This is highlighted by a case in 1899 of a Dockyard Shipwright who filed for divorce from his wife after she was unfaithful. The Shipwright was sent out to Bermuda to work there for five years just days after his marriage. He sent his wife money for her upkeep, but she left him just months after he came back. The Shipwright claimed damages from his wife’s new partner. The court found in the Shipwright’s favour and £50 damages and a decree nisi was awarded. HT, 29th April 1899.
367 See Chapter Seven.
reputation for its abnormally high number of beer houses and public houses and in Portsea alone there were 125 by 1906. Father Dolling condemned the “little pubs” of the Portsmouth slums which were gathered, he argued, into little districts.

And these are really distressed spots which fester and corrupt, where germs of every kind of disease collect – the places where our soldiers and sailors spend their time. And the public-house is never by itself. Close to it – perhaps on either side of it – are houses of shame and evil.

Queen Street, the major thoroughfare from Portsea to the town centre, had two public houses closed by authorities in as many years for “ill conduct” under the 1904 Licensing Act. The Hard was notorious for being part of the “Devil’s Acre” due to its abundance of public houses. In 1896 attention was called to the area where 45 licensed houses were counted; 13 of these were situated in the row of its 27 buildings. North End and East Southsea were served with a better class of drinking establishment. Large, airy, ostentatious buildings intended to entice a higher class of clientele such as the Pelham Hotel, Chichester Road (1894) or the Rutland Hotel, Francis Avenue (1898) were designed by the architect A. E. Cogswell in an attempt by the drinks trade to secure licenses by building ‘respectable’ drinking establishments. Moreover, the north and east regions of the island were the templates for the new civic ideal and the citizens were served with such rational recreations as public parks and libraries.

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370 The main reason for closure under this term was prostitution. Eley and Riley, The Demise; p.10.
371 HT, 20th June 1896. The issue was raised again in the newspaper on 22nd July 1899.
373 Canoe Lake in Southsea was opened in 1896. In 1891 Kingston Recreation Ground opened, followed by North End in 1892. In 1907 part of North End Recreation Ground was redeveloped into Alexandra Park with the remainder still used for sport. Baffins Park followed in 1912. North End Library opened in 1897 and Carnegie Library, funded by the American steel magnate, Andrew Carnegie, was opened in 1906. Gates, City of Portsmouth; p. 160, p.174, p.176, p.247, p.193 and p.224.
North End was described by Reverend C. F. Garbett as the home of warrant officers, successful tradesmen and subordinate Dockyard officials with large tracts of land also housing the dwellings of artisans and labourers. The rural setting of the early development would have been a welcome antidote to the more crowded areas of Portsea and Landport; offering a small but manageable commute to work with the added benefit of the countryside. Maps 5 to 9 show the area on the closest aspect ratio available covering the period and highlight the extent of the development from a rural settlement on the outskirts of the town to one highly populated with grid formations of working-class and middle-class housing. Unlike North End, the East Southsea sample did not display as much of the higher end of the Dockyard pay scale. As a result a wider mix of trades and grades were found in the sample alongside the higher-paid officers of the Dockyard, Writers and Draughtsmen. The area’s more prestigious housing was situated in Devonshire Avenue and Essex Road, to the east of the sample and was akin to the types of houses seen on Laburnum Grove (pictured above) and Chichester Road. Like parts of North End, the mixed hierarchy of housing quality highlighted the fact that the reputation of an area or street address might have mislead observers into drawing conclusions about the inhabitants. There were not simply “better” streets, but there were “better” houses. This mixture, therefore, stood as a potent example of status within class structures, making the stratification of the Dockyard visible in architectural form. This was most starkly illustrated in the North End sample where the roads built after the 1911 Census (highlighted in orange on Map 9) were notable for containing few unskilled workers.

Garbett, 'The Modern Parish'; p.34.
Typically they were the reserve of the skilled artisan or tradesman with a smattering of higher level workmen, Writers, Storehousemen and Draughtsmen. Preston Road did not have any unskilled workers on it whereas Westbourne Bosham and Bedhampton Roads had only one Skilled Labourer on them each. Funtington Road had four Skilled Labourers and two Labourers residing of those two were dependents, leaving only five dwellings which were headed by Skilled or Unskilled Labourers. Dockyard Apprentices were also present, but due to their age and dependent economic status were not householders. In most cases, these Apprentices were the sons of Dockyardmen, signalling strong family traditions within Dockyard employment. It also signalled the ability to keep their children in the education system for longer; which conferred status and financial security. In 1906 Labour Town Councillor John Pile argued that the fees from Portsmouth’s Higher Grade School, which offered training towards qualification for the Dockyard Exam, were not affordable for the average working man. He calculated that the majority of the pupils enrolled in 1904 were the sons of small business owners and skilled artisans. The higher-paid members of the Dockyard thus had more chances for social mobility although the Dockyard Exam in itself was based on a meritocratic system of qualification.

Whereas North End was an affluent working-class area, Portsea was marked for its extremes of poverty and dilapidation alongside examples of Queen Anne and Georgian grandeur. There was a lack of higher-ranking Dockyard workers, who would have been established, and only in 1911 do some examples exist. Poor quality housing was identified within conditions of overcrowding, dirt, squalor and crime. The layout of such areas were signified by systems of courts and alleys where accommodation was small, squalid and damp with low ceilings, poor ventilation and inadequate sanitary provisions, often shared with other households. Residents were usually on low or casual earnings, had larger than average families, were old and unable to work, or were struggling due to the death of the principle earner. There were regular reports at the turn of the century

375 PEN, 16th October 1905 and PEN, 31st October 1905.
376 Ernest Henry Huxford, Foreman of Stores, was listed in a 10-roomed house on Union Street with his wife, three children and a servant. Huxford is also the only example of a Storesman living in the Portsea sample area. Reginald John Pirie is listed as a Recorder of Work in HM Dockyard who lived in a seven-roomed house on Hanover Street. Pirie shared the property with his mother, two sisters and a niece. As a Recorder of Work, Pirie would have earned an additional 6s. a week based on the HMSO, Instructions; p.155.
377 Burnett, Social History; p.175.
about the condition of the poor in Portsea and Landport. One such case documented how
the six children of a Dockyard Labourer regularly attended the Kent Street School,
Portsea, without sufficient food. The Labourer earned 15s. in wages and paid 4s. in rent
and lived with his family in poverty despite being “very respectable hard-working
people.” The courts and dwellings of White’s Row, Southampton Row, Albion Street
and Kings Bench Alley were particularly identified as unfit for human habitation by Dr
Mearns Fraser, Medical Officer for Portsmouth (see Map 4). In a report to the Town
Council, Dr Fraser illustrated the stark conditions of the slum housing:

... the narrowness, closeness, bad arrangement and bad condition of the
streets and houses and groups of houses, together with the want of light, air,
ventilation and proper conveniences, and other sanitary defects, are
dangerous and injurious to the health of the inhabitants of the buildings in the
said area, and that the evils connected with such houses, streets, courts and
alleys and the sanitary defects in the area cannot be effectually remedied
otherwise than by an Improvement Scheme for the re-arrangement and
reconstruction of the streets and houses within said area.

However, in terms of respectability, sanitation and cramped conditions was just one of
the area’s undesirable features. Its notoriety also came from the area’s reputation as a
den of immorality. This was highlighted in Dr Fraser’s report which numbered 13 out of 46
of the dwellings in Albion Road as being “used for immoral purposes”, in White’s Row this
number was five out of 32 and Southampton Row “at least” 14 out of 40 were
identified. This number is exclusive of the houses which were not occupied, bringing
the ratio of houses being used as brothels to those as dwelling houses much closer.

378 HT, 1st February 1890.
379 Under the by-laws of the time no street over 100 feet in length could be less than 40 feet in width,
however Albion Street measured 360 feet long and 19 feet wide while Southampton Row was 672 feet long
and only 7.5 feet wide. Whites Row was 15 feet wide, but by far the most enclosed was Kings Bench Alley at
586 feet long with width averages of three to four feet. Dr A. Mearns Fraser, Medical Officer of Health,
Portsmouth, ‘Official Representation of the Medical Officer of Health under the Housing of the Working
380 Fraser, ‘Official Representation’; p.1.
381 Fraser, ‘Official Representation’; pp.3-5.
Table 2 in Appendix D charts residents living in these Portsea slum properties based on returnees from the 1901 Census who listed their employment as being in the Dockyard. The linkage between slumdom and skill level is highlighted as only 11 dwellings were occupied by 12 Dockyardmen, all of whom were not artisans. Most had either large families or lived in dwellings where the ratio of inhabitants to rooms was 1:1 or less. Portsea was the area in which the notions of empire manifested themselves in terms of control and local authority interference. By 1911 many of the dwellings in the area were, or were in the process of being, acquired by Portsmouth Corporation and many had been demolished. By 1911 only two Dockyard workers, both Labourers, can be found living in this area and by 1912 the area was transformed into council-owned model dwellings for artisans; which created an enclave of ‘respectable’ artisan housing close to the Royal Dockyard.

The deficiencies recorded in volunteers for the Boer War at the turn of the twentieth century was a catalyst for assessment of the living conditions of the poor. As argued in Chapter Two, this agenda was also pushed by members of the clergy, keen to elevate the morality of Portsmouth’s imperial population and the unionised members of the Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council who wished to widen their political and social influence on the local community. As part of the imperial city Portsea was subject to the civilising influences of the “imperial mission” at the hands of various missionary clergymen. During the Edwardian era Reverend David Barron, Pastor of the Kent Street Baptist Church, became a moralising figure in Portsea where he was “surrounded ... by the great and awful difficulties of the poverty and inherent vice of the slum residents.” However, whereas ecclesiastic men such as Reverend Barron believed that the procurement of the Great Salterns and Baffins areas of Portsea Island by the council had

382 The 1901 Census only recorded the number of rooms in a dwelling if less than “average,” this number seems to be lower than six.
383 Fraser, ‘Official Representation’; p.5. 1911 Census – 6 Union Buildings, Southampton Row, Albert Guy and wife, lodgers in a three-roomed dwelling; 14 Southampton Row, James Cambridge and wife, boarders, one room.
385 Beaven, Visions of Empire; p.56-57.
386 PEN, 2nd November 1901.
the potential to “drain the slums of all impurity”, Mr Baxter of the Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council put the onus on affordable and better standards of housing for the working classes and argued that:

Any movement that arrived at supplying the people with houses they could live in as cheaply as possible would be of benefit. To put vicious people in good houses did not make them moral ...

Robert Esmond reminisced during the Edwardian era that Portsea was “for the most part a community of worthy Naval and Dockyard families who lived soberly” where community pride and neighbourly competition consisted of keeping the doorstep scrubbed and whitened. It must be re-iterated that the notion of working-class respectability differed from the middle-class view. In neighbourhoods where poverty was prevalent outward projection of respectability and cleanliness could be taken as a sign of resistance in the politics of “everyday life” which kept local authority interference and the imperial civilising mission from one’s door.

Slum areas have been characterised by their lack of social cohesion and stability; being populated in the main by migrants. Looking at the census data, Dockyard residents in Portsea tended to be lower-income, migrant workers and there were fewer instances of repeat residence with only seven names recurring in the 1911 Census. The Portsea sample also showed a higher instance of boarding houses and lodgers than the other sample areas. In 1901 eight “Dock Labourers” are listed as boarding at 41 Havant Street. All were single males with ages varying from their mid-twenties to their forties. In 1911 the same address lists four different men also variously listed as “navvie” “Labourer” and “dock builder” in connection with the “Government Dockyard.” The presence in 1911 of a large number of Labourers and Excavators working on the new docks and locks in the Royal Dockyard illustrates the fluidity of the local Portsea community. The impermanence of their employment can be evidenced in the birthplaces of the children of contracted

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387 PEN, 5th December 1903.
388 Robert Esmond, Portsmouth Not So Old, (Portsmouth: Gale and Polden, 1961); p.4.
390 Thompson, ‘Town and City’; p.52.
workers who brought their families to Portsmouth with them. In 14 Wickham Street, 1911, two Census returns listed the families of William Henry Cox from Cardiff, Wales, and Richard William Newbury, from Axminster, Devon. Both men had three rooms each of the property and it would seem that both men settled at various points in Cardiff and Gloucestershire before settling in the south of England.\footnote{William Cox’s children: Boy, 13, Cadoxton (near Cardiff); Boy, 10, Cadoxton (near Cardiff); Boy, 6, Shirehampton, Gloucestershire; Girl, 4, Shirehampton, Gloucestershire; Boy, 6 months, Portsea. Richard Newbury’s children: Boy 8, Cardiff, three Boys aged 6, 5 and 3, Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire; Girl, 1 year, Southampton, Hants. Interestingly, next door in number 13, Richard Dodd, an Engine Driver and Contractor also has children of a similar age born in Avonmouth, Gloucestershire; close to Shirehampton, which may show that groups of men travelled around the country for work.}

Alfred Mason of 16 Havant Street, Portsea, had children born in Liverpool, Bristol, Hull and Portsmouth; which signified a trend of transient migrant workers in the area who specialised in dock excavation.\footnote{Mr Mason, an Engine Driver, Contractor Dock Builder, was living in four rooms with his wife and five children. He was born in Bengal, India, possibly signifying a family connection with the Armed Forces.} In 1911 Portsea had a larger amount of Scottish and Irish residents, all but two of whom were listed as Excavators or Labourers on the new Dock. Many of the itinerant workmen lived in lodgings together or in close proximity. In Union Street four Irish Excavators boarded with the Irish-born Noone family whilst another lived with his sister next door.\footnote{60 and 59 Union Street, Portsea.}

The high volume of Scottish-born residents may be explained by the employment of Morrison and Mason Limited, Glasgow, as the contractors for the construction of “C Lock” and the new pumping station in the Royal Dockyard.\footnote{Patterson, “Giv’ er a Cheer”; p.36.} This banding together would have allowed a form of camaraderie for short periods of time, with the migrant workers making their own community away from home.

The East Southsea sample had a more stable pattern of residency. What was striking was the amount of Dockyardmen that remained living in the same houses in 1911 from the 1901 Census. Out of 315 names 60 were found to be living at the same address and a further six had the same family name, but different first names and ages; perhaps signifying the inheritance of the house. In comparison, the North End 1901 sample roads only yielded a return of 36 names out of 291. It is presumed that Dockyard workers living in this area of Portsea were hired men rather than on the established list and without further examination, unfortunately this cannot be corroborated using either the Censuses
or the Portsmouth Dockyard employment database. The area was, however, notable for its focus on manual work. There were undoubtedly a larger number of Dockyard Labourers and contract workers in the Portsea sample area. Although there were examples of artisan and titular trade residents alongside Skilled and General Labourers, there were no Dockyard Clerks or Writers in either 1901 or 1911; highlighting the significant divide of “outside” (manual, working class) and “inside,” (clerical, middle class) work. Only two Draughtsmen were recorded as living in the area and these were in 1911. As observed by Reverend Garbett, the changing character of a street can be illustrated by the changes in Havant Road, North End, between the two censuses. In 1901 a mix of trades and grades lived in the road, but it was mainly populated by Shipwrights, Dockyard Carpenters and Joiners and Skilled Labourers. Of the six Dockyard Labourers living in the street, three were boarders. However, by 1911 its status had slipped and showed only four Shipwrights (one retired) living on the road with 16 Labourers, one of which was a boarder with another. The most prevalent trade was the Boilermaker with six separate residents on the street, which was a jump from none in 1901. This not only highlighted the growth of the metal trades in warship building, but also that these men were further down on the scale of stratification.

Examples of upward mobility could be identified by tracing some of the inhabitants back through the censuses. John Wignall, Shipwright, then Chargeman of Shipwrights, lived at 130 Orchard Road, East Southsea, in 1901 and 1911. He can be traced through the census returns to Fratton in 1891 and as a young man boarding in Landport in 1881. Similarly, Richard Langmaid, Examiner of Dockyard Work in the Engineering Department, moved to 57 Orchard Road between the 1911 and 1901 Censuses. In 1901 he can be found in Kingston, when he was working as an Engineering Draughtsman and living with his father, Alfred Charles Hibbert, aged 26, lived in 57 Hanover Street with his parents in an eight-roomed house, but this was shared also with six siblings. Hibbert is recorded as progressing from being a Fitter to an Assistant Draughtsman from 1899 to 1929 and is present in the same property on the 1901 Census. The other, Frank Henry Harvey, 22, of 63 Hanover Street lived with his parents also. The house was recorded as having six rooms. He is also recorded on the Dockyard Employment Database as progressing from being an Electrical Fitter to an Assistant Draughtsman from 1908 to 1917. His father was a Blacksmith in Gunwharf and two of his three brothers also worked as Fitters in the Dockyard.

One of the Labourers in a Coal Heaver and has been included due to the non-skilled, manual labour of his job description. 1901 Census.
a Shipwright, in Landport, 1881. In both examples the men have risen through the ranks to take on more responsible roles within the Dockyard and in doing so have moved from their early roots in Landport to progressively newer and more prestigious housing developments. Contrasting the residences of Charles Martell Milne, an Inspector of Shipwrights, and James Henry MacGuigan, a Chargeman of Shipwrights, illustrates the statement a house could make about its owner. Whereas Milne lived in an ostentatious, seven-roomed house with a double bay window and elaborate plaster work, in North End’s prestigious Chichester Road, MacGuigan lived in a basic-looking flat-fronted five-roomed house in Telephone Road, East Southsea. Milne typified the model of an artisan elite with cultural capital. He was instrumental in the operation of the Dockyard Excursions Committee, which was a holiday company offering substantial discounts run by Dockyard artisans. Milne’s relative fortune as an affluent and thrifty officer of the Royal Dockyard was highlighted by his probate which recorded that he died in 1920 leaving a sum of £1999 16s. 8d. to his son. In comparison MacGuigan, a Liberal Radical activist who campaigned for the adoption of single taxation, perhaps signalling by his relatively austere house that he was less interested in distinguishing himself from his fellow workers via material means.

It has been observed that Portsmouth’s local neighbourhoods exercised powerful communal influences. The mixture of trades and grades in the sample areas underline the importance of the social setting in becoming known to people who could put you in a better position, whether that be in the local pub, the church, the local shops or over the garden fence. Neighbourhood interactions may have provided an opportunity for workmen to change professions. Thomas Mogg, who was found living in the same house in East Southsea, was a Sewing Machine Agent in 1901, but a Skilled Labourer in 1911. Harry G. Strugnell, an Electrician’s Skilled Labourer living at 32 Havant Road in 1901 can be traced back to the 1881 Census where his occupation was a Tramway Conductor. Similarly, George Gilham Cates of 37 Telephone Road was recorded as a Boiler Riveter in 1911, but a Shoemaker in 1901. His next door neighbour in 1901 was a Dockyard Engine

398 England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1966 - Charles Martell Milne, 1921; p.265.
399 Thomas, Dreadnought Construction: p.27.
400 Thomas Mogg, 5 Talbot Road, Southsea.
Fitter – could this have made a difference in his change of employment? Although these cases are difficult to prove, they may hint at the informal relationships that existed outside the Dockyard where friends and neighbours were able to recommend people for jobs.

**Conclusion**

By exploring the relationship between socialisation at work and in the local neighbourhood this chapter has shown that Portsmouth’s Royal Dockyard workers were not a homogenised mass, but a stratified and often fragmented group. Comparing three samples of working-class areas it is evident that the structures of the workplace were replicated to some extent in their living patterns. Thus the community was important for proliferating values specific to the local socio-economic structures of the town and creating meaning and identity. However, the streets were more mixed than previously assumed. There was not a “Shipwright street” or a “Labourer street”, but trades and grades often lived side by side. This was due to some extent to the piecemeal and sporadic house building which took place during the period which saw higher-quality artisan dwellings built in the same roads as less prestigious housing. In many ways in North End and East Southsea living patterns mirrored the ‘gang’ system of working that they were all used to where a Chargeman (a Shipwright) chose men of different trades and skill to complete a job. These conditions most probably contributed to the necessary informal networking which aided advancement for subordinate members of the workforce and those seeking work in the Dockyard.

Clear patterns between the slum area of Portsea and the artisanal dwellings characteristic of North End and East Southsea show the prestige of some areas over others. The character of Portsmouth’s suburban housing development was synonymous with the expansion of the Royal Dockyard in the late Victorian and Edwardian era and showed the desire of many Dockyard workers to move away from the overcrowded and insanitary conditions of the centre of town. Movement away was an articulation of working class distinction and respectability based on specific associations of rank and status cultivated in the workplace. The conflict and competition of the Dockyard workforce which
threatened levels of skill differentiation, pay and frequency of work gave immediacy to notions of security, independence and respectability. However, earnings and skill level in themselves did not equate to becoming part of an artisan elite; cultural capital was also highly important and was necessary to ward off interference from outside bodies.\textsuperscript{401} To this end many Dockyard workers actively sought definition outside the Dockyard walls to show outsiders their credentials as respectable citizens. Moreover, the strictures of the imperial mission were experienced differently based on the socio-economic situation of the person; further demonstrating that the influence of imperialism was a subjective process.

What this chapter has demonstrated is that as a stratified and fragmented workforce, the subjectivities and experiences of the Royal Dockyard worker differed depending on the ability to assert their independence. Moreover, within the context of everyday life notions of empire were not as important as everyday social interactions. Empire must therefore be viewed within a context of identity building to track ways in which it intersected and developed meaning on a personal, in addition to a collective, level. It is through the practices and institutions of leisure that notions of empire and identity were mediated and negotiated. As argued in Chapter Two, the notion of imperial citizenship could be used to subjugate, but could also be employed by the working class to expand their rights within the public realm. In the following chapters the thesis shall explore in more detail how models of leisure influenced working-class concepts of empire and how these discourses were used by Dockyardmen to understand, articulate and advance their notions of place and identity. The following chapter will explore this argument through the medium of the local press.

\textsuperscript{401} Crossick, An Artisan Elite; p.118 and p.128.
Chapter 4. Portsmouth’s Local Press and the Royal Dockyard Worker

By the late-nineteenth century the newspaper had become established as a normal part of life for all classes.\textsuperscript{402} Changes in technology and taxation enabled the press to become more widely available to the public at a time when political parties were faced with new problems in the expansion of the male franchise, leading to innovations in the style and coverage of news events to the mass population.\textsuperscript{403} By the beginning of the Edwardian era the press had already forged a pattern of style and content when reporting imperial events.\textsuperscript{404} The potential of the press as a vehicle for imperial propaganda has been argued by many both during the Edwardian period and after. Contemporaries such as J. A. Hobson decried the press as a conduit for jingoism.\textsuperscript{405} Later studies arrived at similar conclusions. Alan J. Lee noted that by the 1870s imperial expansion was perfect fodder for the new style journalism as it promised excitement and tension at a safe distance.\textsuperscript{406} Similarly, J. M. MacKenzie argued that the popular press exploited the spectatorial fashion of colonial warfare.\textsuperscript{407} This chapter will explore the influence of Portsmouth’s local press on the Royal Dockyard workers. It will argue that, although the local newspapers were a powerful mediator of the imperial message, their influence was curbed by the tenets of ‘New Journalism’ which placed their readership at the centre of their ethos and thus gave legitimacy to working-class forms of expression in the spheres of public opinion and leisure.

The influence of the local press as a conduit and communicator of many popular imperialist ideas has been increasingly acknowledged.\textsuperscript{408} This has lately been reinforced

\textsuperscript{405} J. A. Hobson, \textit{The Psychology of Jingoism}, (London: Grant Richards, 1901); p123-124.
\textsuperscript{408} Lucy Brown had previously argued that the provincial papers were useful tools as they could offer municipal news and regional advertisements alongside coverage of world events “appropriate to the citizen-electors of a great empire.” Brown, \textit{Victorian News and Newspapers}; p.4. MacKenzie has recently called for more studies into the press and imperialism to understand how it was disseminated through the
by Jan Rüger who has observed the dramatic growth in the presence of the popular and provincial press at ship launches from the late nineteenth century onwards.\(^\text{409}\) However, there has been little sustained study on how the provincial press mediated relationships of the locality with ‘higher’ political debates about imperialism to their readerships during the Edwardian period.\(^\text{410}\) Indeed, the amount of influence the press had has been contended by Michael Dawson who asserted that, rather than influencing the public, the provincial press actually reflected existing political opinion and represented the balance of partisanship within the locality.\(^\text{411}\) Mark Hampton argued that the concept of the press as the ‘fourth estate’, which was promulgated in the local newspapers with the rise of ‘New Journalism’, actually excluded the public from a meaningful dialogue with government and public affairs.\(^\text{412}\) Moreover, the process of representing “the people” meant that the press had to balance their content to reflect the interests of their target audience who cared less about many aspects of imperial politics and more about the football scores, murder trails or society gossip.\(^\text{413}\) Most recently Brad Beaven has illustrated that the provincial press was important to the study of imperialism as it offered its readership a link with the empire through its fusion with local concerns such as the efforts of citizen soldiers during the Boer War.\(^\text{414}\) Critically, Beaven asserted that the provincial press’s focus on local matters and sports coverage played a large part in forging a sense of local pride and the use of a model of social control would overlook important


\(^{412}\) Mark Hampton, Visions of the Press in Britain, 1850-1950, (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004); p111.

\(^{413}\) Hampton, Visions of the Press; p119.

Indeed, it may be argued that the relationship between the press and its readership was more fluid than a ‘top down’ inculcation of the public.

This chapter will explore how these cultural contexts and identities were mediated within the realm of the local press in regards to the Royal Dockyard workers of Portsmouth. The thesis as a whole will challenge the assumptions raised in the previous chapters that Royal Dockyard workers were economically pre-determined to be deferent and “naval imperialist” by illustrating points of agency in how they negotiated discourses of imperialism. The neglect of these dialogues in press on a localised level has led to historical assumptions of the Portsmouth Dockyard workers based on the election results of the period. Sarah Quail asserted that elections in Portsmouth were dominated by national issues, with local self-interest playing a part for working men who favoured a strong navy. Moreover, she argued that the Portsmouth electorate mainly favoured the Conservatives as the party most likely to deliver this, with the naval scare dominating over all constitutional issues in the General Elections of 1910. Similarly Ken Lunn and Roger Thomas have argued that Portsmouth’s public was heavily influenced by a “strong pro-imperialist ideology ... in the parliamentary politics of the town.” They argued that the election victory of Unionists Admiral Lord Charles Beresford and Mr Bertram Falle in January 1910 was proof of the town’s jingoism and entrenched values of imperialism within its politics.

The aims of this chapter are three fold. Firstly, it will provide a survey of the town’s leading provincial papers and outline their partisanship and target audience. Secondly, focusing on the newspapers’ editorial commentary of the borough’s parliamentary elections from 1900 to 1910, it will show how the national political issues of the day became mediated through priorities of partisan bias and readership appeal. Thirdly, by concentrating on how they were portrayed in the local press this chapter will show how the Royal Dockyard worker was an important element of the social fabric and begin to

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415 Beaven, Visions of Empire; p.89
418 Lunn and Thomas, ‘Naval Imperialism’; p.147.
sketch out ways in which the press enabled them to engage as imperial citizens on their own terms. Crucially the chapter will assert that the local press played a pivotal role in proffering opinion on contemporary events and issues and offered a regional bias which fostered the creation of local patriotism within its readership. Certainly the notions of empire were amplified in Portsmouth due to its role as a naval nexus between the metropole and the British Empire. Thus within Portsmouth’s local press the naval issue became the imperial issue. However, the chapter will also dispel myths about the assumed deference of the Royal Dockyard worker to the Admiralty and illustrate how this diverse electorate were less in favour of the ‘strong navy’ argument than presumed. Through the championing of their rights, the broad advertisement of commercial leisure and reportage on the activities of local clubs and societies, the provincial press normalised leisure for the working classes and enabled the Royal Dockyard workers a forum to legitimise and exercise their rights to recreation which were sometimes at odds with the concept of “imperial citizenship” as espoused by the town’s civic leaders.

Newspapers in Portsmouth

Formerly studies on the local press have tended to overlook the south of England. Lee’s pioneering study of provincial papers from 1855 to 1914 concentrated heavily on the north and midlands. Of the south and south-east he argued that there was no major daily and characterised these areas as “traditional Conservative territory” where the Liberal press was “predictably weakest” due to the prevalence of agricultural areas and a lack of large towns and industry. However, this view was erroneous in the case of Portsmouth, which was a large town almost entirely dependent on heavy industry which possessed a strong and thriving Liberal press.

Portsmouth was served by two broadsheet-style weekly provincial newspapers, the Liberal Hampshire Telegraph and the Conservative Portsmouth Times. The two most prominent daily newspapers were the Portsmouth Evening News and the Evening Mail and were split along similarly partisan lines. The Hampshire Telegraph was established in

419 Lee, The Origins of the Popular Press; p.147.
1802 and reached its peak readership in the 1840s, subsequently settling to circa 3,000 copies a week. The Portsmouth Times, threatened the supremacy of the Hampshire Telegraph when it was founded by J. S. Tibbitts in 1850. It was later bought by the Holbrook family; a wealthy local family with ties to the volunteer forces. The Portsmouth Evening News was originally established in 1877 by James Graham Niven but was purchased along with the Hampshire Telegraph by leading Liberal figures Samuel Storey MP, Andrew Carnegie and John Passmore Edwards in 1883 to further the Liberal cause. By the 1890s it was owned by John Brymer, also a firm Liberal supporter. The Evening Mail, the Portsmouth Evening News’s short-lived Conservative rival, was founded by the Portsmouth Times in 1884. The daily was subsequently purchased by Alfred Harmsworth (later Lord Northcliffe) eleven years later to bolster his Unionist campaign as Parliamentary representative of Portsmouth Borough in the 1895 General Elections and served as a prototype to his national newspaper the Daily Mail. Its name was changed to the Southern Daily Mail in 1896 following Harmsworth’s launch of the Daily Mail. However, Harmsworth sold the newspaper to the Portsmouth Evening News in 1905. Indeed, the Portsmouth Evening News had become so dominant in the local area that it was amalgamated with the Hampshire Telegraph in the same year. Thus, by the mid-Edwardian era, Portsmouth’s main local broadsheet weekly had transitioned into a similar style with reports from its daily sister paper featuring verbatim in the weekly ‘respectable’ paper. Indeed, such was the popularity of the Portsmouth Evening News that by 1914 the newspaper’s nightly sales were in excess of 60,000 copies.

Table 2 details the circulation, price and length of Portsmouth’s four leading newspapers. Whereas the prices did not alter in the Edwardian period, the space for content in the evening daily papers doubled in size; indicating the capacity for increased advertising

424 Fulda, Space, Civic Pride, p.37.
427 Beaven, Visions of Empire; p.35.
space, the diversification of topics and increased detail of coverage, such as sport and serialised fiction.  

Table 2. The Edwardian Provincial Press in Portsmouth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Circulation</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Price</td>
<td>Length in pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampshire Telegraph</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>2d.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portsmouth Times</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>1d.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portsmouth Evening News</td>
<td>Daily (exc. Sundays)</td>
<td>½d.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening Mail/Southern Daily Mail</td>
<td>Daily (exc. Sundays)</td>
<td>½d.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hampshire Telegraph, Portsmouth Times, Portsmouth Evening News and the Southern Daily Mail

Generally speaking, the weekly papers were aimed more at the middle classes, whereas the daily papers were more populist, appealing to a broader working- and lower middle-class audience. The advent of ‘New Journalism’ enabled a diversification of what was deemed as ‘newsworthy’ and the movement away from the verbatim transcription of local and national parliamentary debates also affected how the provincial papers presented and prioritised local news. The town’s links to the Royal Navy and its status as a Royal Dockyard naturally affected the level of coverage afforded within the local press as it directly affected their readership. At different periods the weekly newspapers also incorporated monikers which associated them with the Royal Navy. The full title of the Hampshire Telegraph changed from ... and Sussex Chronicle to ... and Naval Chronicle, in October 1899, whilst their Conservative rival was named the Portsmouth Times and Naval Gazette until January 1898 when it re-branded as the Portsmouth Times and Hampshire

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428 Brown, Victorian News; p.244.
This swap may have been indicative of the Liberal press’s desire to make 
more explicit the links that the paper had with naval and imperial concerns of the day and 
thus attract a wider local audience, whereas the Conservative press were more assured of 
their credentials. Certainly, although the Portsmouth Times had dropped “Naval Gazette” 
from their name, the paper still featured a large section of the same title. Both the 
weeklies within their respective “chronicle” or “gazette” contained news items 
particularly relevant to the Royal Navy and Royal Dockyard. Lower-deck naval reformer 
Lionel Yexley and the author-come-naval campaigner Fred T. Jane were guest 
correspondents for the Hampshire Telegraph and Naval Chronicle; adding naval gravitas 
to an otherwise Liberal-leaning paper. This move reflected the crisis of Liberalism in 
England by the turn of the century which saw its concepts split between Unionist, 
Imperialist and Socialist factions. This was magnified in Portsmouth due to the town’s 
specific link with the Admiralty as the employer of much of its readership. The heightened 
ingoistic feeling of the Boer War posed a further crisis for Portsmouth’s provincial Liberal 
press as it tried to negotiate a new Liberal editorial discourse on war and patriotism. 
As will be demonstrated later, the Hampshire Telegraph became progressively more Liberal 
Unionist while its sister paper, the Portsmouth Evening News, adopted a Liberal 
Imperialist stance, which encouraged a strong Navy whilst retaining the socialist elements 
of Liberalism that appealed to an industrialised workforce such as the Royal Dockyard 
worker.

The Conservative press was limited in Portsmouth and support Dawson’s view that local 
newspapers reflected their readership’s existing bias rather than influenced it. In 1882 
the Evening Star published its first edition in the town but folded within 14 months with 
the editor citing the failure of the Anglo-Egyptian War to generate enough “bloody and

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accessed 5/10/2012.


protracted hostilities ... to sufficiently enable us to secure a foundation in the
borough." The Southern Daily Mail’s amalgamation with the Portsmouth Evening News
undoubtedly exhibited similar tendencies within Portsmouth’s readership. The Southern
Daily Mail was overtly navalist and, at the beginning of the 1900s, more Hampshire-
centric than its rival due to the strength of the county’s Conservative base. After
Harmsworth had taken ownership of the paper in 1895 it had run a serialised fiction of an
invasion of England from the south coast along the lines of “The Battle of Dorking” as a
way of provoking the public into voting for candidates, like himself, who advocated a
stronger naval policy. Owing to a strong Liberal base, the Unionist candidates were
unsuccessful in Portsmouth in the 1895 General Election despite large victories in the rest
of the county. The converging interests of the popular papers meant that there was
little room for two popular papers by the Edwardian period. In its swan-song in 1905 the
Southern Daily Mail argued that, generally, the contemporary press tended to steer clear
of overt political messages in order not to alienate their readership. When reasoning for
the motives of its demise the editor explained the trend away from partisan news
coverage towards a more universal readership and a recognition that newspapers should
cater for "more multifarious tastes and interests." It may also be conjectured that
Portsmouth’s industrialised Dockyard workforce favoured the Portsmouth Evening News
for its Liberal and socialist bias. Thus from 1905 onward the Conservative press was
served only by the Portsmouth Times, a weekly paper aimed at the stereotypical
Conservative audience of the middle- and professional classes. Interestingly, however, the
Portsmouth Times maintained its overt Conservative politicism throughout the period,
whereas the two Liberal papers negotiated an ambivalent relationship between their
political views and their desire to serve their public in a time of Liberal crisis.

Imperial Politics and the Portsmouth Newspapers

435 G. J. Ashworth, Portsmouth’s Political Patterns 1885-1945, The Portsmouth Papers, (Portsmouth City
Council: Portsmouth, 1976); p.16.
436 Ashworth, Portsmouth’s Political Patterns; pp.19-20.
437 SDM, 14th January 1905.
The press has been singled out as one of the ways in which the empire was communicated to the public. However, its effectiveness has been called into question. Undoubtedly over the course of the Edwardian period issues of empire became an inescapable facet of the national political agenda. The recognition of the necessity for direct appeal to the members of the Dockyard workforce was not only reflected in the canvassing of the local population by the politicians, but also in the local press coverage. This can be evidenced in the way the Portsmouth provincial press covered local politics, especially the campaigns for Members of Parliament in the borough. What becomes evident over the period of 1900 to 1910 is that the local press in Portsmouth faced considerable challenges as they tried to fuse a partisan editorial authority with the multiple interests of a diverse readership. Thus, rather than a top-down process of indoctrination, as a readership the Royal Dockyard worker was also an influential element determining the content of the newspapers.

By taking the example of the borough elections and how they were portrayed in the press the chapter will diversify from the analysis of imperial celebrations or points of crisis to show how responses to empire correlated to the everyday lives of the Royal Dockyard worker. Although arguably a portion of the Dockyard workforce were still disenfranchised under property ownership regulations, the response of those enfranchised voters can provide an insight into their responses to political imperial issues throughout the period. Their power as voters was highlighted by Unionist challenger Evelyn Ashley after his loss at the 1895 General Election. Ashley sneered that the elections were swayed by Dockyardmen and those living in the northern part of the town “to whom politics and Imperial considerations and even their own self-interest, were as nothing compared with their socialistic and unreasoning hatred of everything ... they considered superior to

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441 Robert Cook calculated that in 1910 less than half of the Dockyard workforce was eligible to vote. Those who qualified only made up 12 per cent of the total electorate in the borough. Robert Cook, Portsmouth at the Polls, One Hundred and Fifty Years of Reformed Elections in a Naval Dockyard Borough, 1832-1982. (Studley: K. A. F. Brewin Books, 1982); p.14.
themselves either in position or intelligence.”

Although this view was arguably the elitist and disillusioned reasoning of a man who had just lost a hard-fought election, the observation that the Dockyardmen were a distinct group with their own agendas and concerns is important. It demonstrated how, even during such a volatile political crisis which centred on issues of Home Rule, the perceived disintegration of the empire and cuts to naval spending they maintained support for the Liberals as representatives of the working man.

The by-elections of May 1900 were especially poignant as they occurred at a time when the country was embroiled in the war in South Africa and arguably moving towards the height of jingoism in parts of Britain. It was set shortly before the Relief of Mafeking where Portsmouth had committed many of the town’s sailors and regular and volunteer soldiers. The candidates put forward were Thomas Bramsdon, Portsmouth’s coroner and chair of the School Board, for the Liberal Party and James Majendie, a London-based politician, for the Unionists. During the campaign the partisan press fought to prove their candidate was both sufficiently versed in local and imperial politics. The Liberal press sought to reassert the special relationship that the Liberal candidates had with the Dockyard and the Navy’s lower-deck which had been so successful in 1895. The Hampshire Telegraph asked whether the voters wanted a “Townsman or Stranger.”

Similarly the Portsmouth Evening News played on notions of Majendie as an outsider who had little knowledge of the machinations of the grievance system of the Royal Dockyard Workers and Lower Deck personnel. They described how Majendie would tackle their industrial gripes by using his influence behind the scenes rather than pursuing the matter in the open, which elevated the model of the Royal Dockyardmen and argued that his method would be “underhanded” and would not be accepted by “the honest men of

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442 Evening Mail, 17th July 1895.
443 HT, 6th July 1895. The support of the Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council was critical in this and voted to support the Liberal candidates over running a Labour representative due to their “faithful services”. The report documents that the resolution was supported in particular by the Shipwrights, who felt that the efforts of the Liberal Members had aided them in being able to take their grievances to the Admiralty in a way they had never been able to do so before.
444 The by-election was called after junior member Walter Clough had to relinquish his seat due to legal investigations into his business affairs. Cook, Portsmouth at the Polls; p.17.
445 HT, 28th April 1900.
Portsmouth. In contrast, Conservative Southern Daily Mail questioned Bramsdon’s imperialist credentials. The newspaper asked:

... will Portsmouth, proud of its centuries of close association with the first line of defence be false to its cherished traditions by sending to Parliament a member whose support of imperial policy cannot be relied upon?  

At an election rally earlier in the year the paper had proclaimed Majendie’s success based on their assertion that Portsea was “intensely patriotic and imperialist”. Thus the view of the Conservative press divisively viewed the primacy of bread and butter politics over the strong navy argument as being unpatriotic and unimperialist. Bramsdon’s election campaign, and the Liberal press’s antidote, was the assertion that the Liberal candidate was a “Liberal Imperialist.” This stance made a significant contribution to Bramsdon’s popularity and negotiated a sticking point between growing imperial political questions and the traditional Liberal policies of laissez faire and naval retrenchment. Upon Bramsdon’s victory in the by-election Portsmouth Evening News re-iterated that:

... The Tories have no cause for dismay or even bitter reflection. They have a representative every whit as loyal and no less patriotic than the gentleman they would have preferred, he is thoroughly sound and true upon the great questions of Imperial policy and Naval supremacy, he will be able to bring knowledge and judgement to bear on Dockyard matters, and in every respect be able to advance the interests of the town as much as would be possible to any member sitting on the other side.  

Interestingly, both the Liberal and Conservative press commented that although the Dockyard workers had been granted a half-day holiday in order to vote, it was only much

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446 PEN, 28th April 1900.
447 SDM, 3rd May 1900.
448 SDM, 19th Jan 1900.
449 PEN, 4th May 1900. As Chapter Three demonstrated, the broad split in the living patterns in the town may have had a bearing on this statement and Ashley’s observation on the loss of the 1896 election. The territories of the north of the town could be broadly characterised as the home of an increasing number of Dockyard artisans who may have been more unionised, and generally more Liberal in their politics.
later in the day that voters began to fill the polling stations. Both cited bad weather and the Hambledon Races as possible reasons for the initial voter apathy. However, it may also demonstrate the possibility that the Dockyard voters wished to make the most of their time off before exercising their franchise.

Unfortunately copies of the Southern Daily Mail for the period July to December 1900 have been lost so we are unable to assess the build up and reaction to the Khaki election results of October 1900 from all sides of media representation. Sitting Liberal Members Sir John Baker and Thomas Bramsdon contested their seats against Unionists James Majendie and Reginald Lucas. Although we can assume that the arguments between the candidates would have been a repeat from the by-election five months previously, this time the Unionists emerged victorious, illustrating that, as influential as the press may have been, the result mirrored a national trend in the climate of jingoism that the Liberal press would not have been able to adequately stem. The Portsmouth Evening News was keen, however, to disassociate the Unionist candidates from the policies of Liberalism, arguing that they were in fact “Tories” and they had no substance to their policies at a local level beyond saying “We love the Dockyardmen.” The narrow Conservative victory showed that Portsmouth was also susceptible to what the Portsmouth Evening News referred to as the “khaki wave”, despite the popularity of Liberal candidates Sir John Baker and Thomas Bramsdon and a late switch of the Conservative number two candidate.

Portsmouth shared a part in the “Liberal Landslide” of 1906 by returning the two Liberal candidates with Labour’s Mr William Sanders polling third. Sir John Baker and Thomas Bramsdon contested as Liberal candidates, and the Unionist candidates were Major E. H. Hills and Mr Alec Whitelaw. As in the 1900 General Elections, Hills and Whitelaw were both ‘outsiders’; Hills a retired Officer from the Royal Engineers, and Whitelaw a Deputy Lieutenant and Justice of the Peace for Dumbartonshire and Lanarkshire who lived in

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450 HT, 5th May 1900.
451 Microfilm holdings at the British Library’s Colindale Newspaper Library could not be located.
452 Ashworth, Portsmouth’s Political Patterns; p.8. The Unionist candidates, Majendie and Lucas polled only an aggregate Conservative majority of 956. PEN, 5th October 1900.
453 PEN, 29th September 1900.
454 Sir Henry Wolff withdrew due to ill health and was replaced with Reginald Lucas. PEN, 24th September 1900; PEN, 25th September 1900; PEN, 5th October 1900.
Midhurst, Hampshire. Both were also staunch supporters of Chamberlain and Tariff Reform. The local election race was also diversified by the inclusion of a strong Labour challenge from Alderman W. Sanders and an independent candidate, Mr Fred T. Jane, who stood as a ‘Naval’ candidate. Leading up to the 1906 General Elections the perceived threat of a Liberal government who pledged to cut defence spending became a key issue in local politics. Both nationally and locally the Conservative local press could be seen to co-opt the working class electorate. The Portsmouth Times rallied the Unionist vote, contrasting Hills and Whitelaw to “The Radical Party” as being anti-Home Rule and for the “unity of the Empire”. On the issue of Home Rule and Free Trade, the paper tried to appeal to the working man by highlighting the perceived threat to their prospects of employment and levels of earning. This was particularly resonant during the campaign as the employment of Chinese workers in South Africa had led many skilled workmen to distrust the Conservative government, and in areas such as Cornwall swung political support into the hands of the Liberals. For Portsmouth however, it was job losses at home which particularly damaged the Conservatives. Following the Unionists’ loss the Portsmouth Times decried a poster campaign linking the Unionists to the Chinese Labour threat and placed damning and heavy blame on the Royal Dockyard workers who were reeling at the time from large-scale discharges. Indeed, there may have been more to this argument than sour grapes as the Portsmouth Evening News reported how a Dockyard worker’s wife told Liberal canvassers her husband, a Conservative supporter, was going to vote against them after being discharged after 33 years.

456 The junior member, Reginald Lucas, withdrew from the Portsmouth election because as one of the founders of the Free Food league, his position had become “untenable”. He ran instead in Bury where the prospect of winning a seat was more likely. Cook Portsmouth at the Polls; p.18. Interestingly, Alderman Sanders was the Secretary of the Fabian Society, which had its own concepts of Social Imperialism. See Bernard Semmel, Imperialism and Social Reform. English Social-Imperial Thought 1895-1914, (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1960); p.128.
457 Hampton, Visions of the Press; p.11.
458 PT, 13th January 1906.
459 PT, 13th January 1906.
461 PT, 20th January 1906.
462 PEN, 1st January 1906.
The role of the press in the election campaign was given as a reason by the Portsmouth Times for why the Unionists lost. They argued that the Unionist Party suffered from the “great disadvantage” of having no local daily journal to represent their cause and accused the Portsmouth Evening News of only giving half-hearted support to Tariff Reform although it pledged to support it. They also accused their rival of providing indirect support to Sanders "and its successful manoeuvre to bring Mr Jane into the field, contributed in no small degree to the disruption and defeat of the Unionists."\(^{464}\)

However, by 1909 the primacy of the “Naval Question” split the Liberal sister papers and articulated the internal splits within the Liberal movement. The naval question had reached a crisis in the country following the storm in the national press over the rate of German naval construction and the “We Want Eight” campaign sparked by the Liberal Government’s cabinet crisis of naval expenditure versus social policy.\(^{465}\) In Portsmouth, the issue was especially acute and there was a fear that the socialist elements of the Liberal Party were acting to the detriment to national and imperial security by not safeguarding a policy of a strong navy. While the Portsmouth Times was able to maintain its Conservative and Unionist bias, the Liberal papers were split over their support and stance on the issues of the day. The Hampshire Telegraph aligned with the Liberal Unionist cause but the Portsmouth Evening News continued to canvas for the left-wing Liberals and, to a smaller extent, the Independent Labour Party.\(^{466}\) This can be understood when examining the target readership of the two papers. The Portsmouth Evening News aimed to appeal to a wider audience, the Hampshire Telegraph’s readership was derived from the middle class across Hampshire who were not so concerned with the bread and butter issues of the Dockyard workers. Within the tendencies of ‘New Journalism’, the Portsmouth Evening News featured an arguably more balanced coverage of all candidates and election policy, but the paper maintained its Liberal Imperialist stance and published both Liberal Party Bramsdon and Lambert and ILP...

\(^{464}\) PT, 20th January 1906. 
\(^{465}\) Startt, Journalists for Empire; p.176. 
\(^{466}\) Liberal Borough MP Sir John Baker died in November 1909, and Sir Thomas Bramsdon decided not to contest his seat due to ill health. The Liberal Party were subsequently going to be represented by Richard Corinthwaite Lambert in the by-election. However, rumours of a General Election in January led the by-election to be cancelled. Bramsdon returned to contest his seat in the January 1910 election with Lambert as his Liberal running-mate. Following defeat at the January election, Bramsdon and Lambert did not contest the December 1910 General Election, which was represented by Edward George Hemmerde and H. D. Harben.
Sanders advertisements, whereas the Hampshire Telegraph was notably pro-Beresford in its commentary.\textsuperscript{467} The Hampshire Telegraph asserted that the issues of constitutional reform were of secondary importance to the ‘real’ issues and put Beresford’s naval policies at the centre of the election debate.

\[\ldots\text{We say unhesitatingly that no one can sleep peacefully in his bed until we know in rough detail what are to be our Naval Estimates for 1910, and even then we may have to be careful that we are not caught napping.}\textsuperscript{468}\]

For much of the period, in the Portsmouth press, the naval question represented the imperial question. This put the Portsmouth Evening News in a somewhat ambiguous position in regards of its wide readership and popular appeal. Beresford’s candidature evidently presented the Portsmouth Evening News with a problem; he was popular with their navalist lower middle class and lower-deck readership, but not so much with the skilled Dockyard worker.\textsuperscript{469} The trade union movement within the Dockyard was growing which meant that by 1910 increasing numbers of their readership were taking a more practical interest in labour issues. Although anxious of the extent of Beresford’s policies, the paper chose to adopt the role of observer.

\[\ldots\text{the idol of the Navy, has been solemnly warning the country, as he did once before with most beneficial results, that the safety of the Empire is being imperilled by the policy which has recently been pursued, and in Portsmouth at all events, the question of maintenance of our naval supremacy, upon which everything else depends, will be a chief factor in the contest so close at hand.}\textsuperscript{470}\]

Although the Unionists won both General Elections in 1910 an incident outside the Dockyard gates in January 1910 may provide an alternative narrative to the idea that after

\textsuperscript{467} For an example, see PEN, 31\textsuperscript{st} December 1909.
\textsuperscript{468} HT, 8\textsuperscript{th} January 1910.
\textsuperscript{470} PEN, 31\textsuperscript{st} December 1909.
1910 the borough was staunchly in support of the Conservative strong navy argument. Indeed this mirrors Mary Hilson’s observation in the case of Plymouth, where she noted that it was difficult to distinguish a consistency of support for ‘navalist’ candidates in Dockyard elections. Fred T. Jane, canvassing for Beresford, was barracked and booed by a large contingent of the Dockyard workforce and his car was eventually rushed. The Hampshire Telegraph, reported that:

Pictures of Lloyd George were produced and cheered, and one of a Duke was hissed and booed. Calls for cheers for "Beresford" evoked as many boos, but Sir Thomas Bramsdon’s name and those of Alderman Sanders and Mr Lambert were repeatedly well received by the mass of the crowd, though a considerable section near the motor car was distinctly pro-Beresford.

The naval question for the Dockyard workers seemed to be of less importance than the bread and butter issues following the large discharges of the Dockyard in 1905. This was also mixed with a deep distrust of the Conservatives following their handling of recent international affairs. When Jane asked what would become of the Dockyardmen the crowd replied in derisive howls "We're alright." Similarly when he asked whether the crowd were satisfied with Germany building two ships to Britain’s one, the smaller Tory section shouted "No" while the others cheered and sang the Liberal Radical theme tune of the 1910 elections, The Land Song. The incident undermines the notion that all Royal Dockyard workers were conservative and deferential to the Royal Navy. When divorced from accounts of imperial celebration or imperial war, an analysis of the local press and the public’s response to political issues of empire can highlight examples of sustained and everyday responses to the discourse of imperialism. Although by the 1910 elections the naval question was by far the most central issue in the borough, as a whole, the Royal

471 HT, 15th January 1910.
472 Mary Hilson, Political Change and the Rise of Labour in Comparative Perspective. Britain and Sweden 1890-1920 (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2006); p.79.
473 HT, 15th January 1910.
474 Jane was barracked with comments such as “Who gave Helgoland to the Germans?”, “Salisbury and Balfour”; “Who brought eighteen batteries of guns from Germany?”; “The Tories!”; “Who chucked 2000 men out of the dockyards?”, “The Tories”. HT, 15th January 1910.
Dockyard workers were not as naval imperialist as assumed. Rather than navalist, deferential characters, the Royal Dockyard workers begin to take form as a distinct body of men with their own culture and agendas. This can be seen more readily in the local press’s coverage of their rights and leisure during the period.

**Coverage of Dockyard leisure in the local press**

The late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries have been regarded as a time when working-class males began to formulate concepts identity based on popular forms of local patriotism. The concepts of ‘New Journalism’ in the local popular press aided this process of local identity-making and in turn made themselves more successful by their focus on local issues within the community rather than partisan politics. As shown in Table 2, this process can be seen in the doubling in size of both of Portsmouth’s popular local papers in the years between 1900 and 1905. In addition, the inclusion of the Royal Dockyard worker in the local press enabled a self-affirming cycle of identity formation that correlated with their outward projection of values. The notion of leisure and respectability stemmed from the mid-Victorian concept of ‘rational recreation’ and the contestation of how the working classes spent their leisure time, and indeed what was respectable, thus provided a fertile ground on which to base claims of working-class independence. This was of particular relevance to Royal Dockyard workers who had been granted the eight-hour working day by the Admiralty in 1894.

As outlined by Father Dolling, an avid Christian Socialist, the moral question surrounding leisure was that in giving working men better hours and pay “there was a danger of the individual wasting his increased wages and leisure in bad ways.” The importance of creating social cohesiveness based on notions of citizenship and belonging became identified by civic

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476 Beaven, *Visions of Empire*; p.36.
478 PEN, 13th September 1894.
elites in the mid-to-late-Victorian period. The local newspapers were the most significant space where ‘public opinion’ could be formed and reformed; signifying a process of continual change and re-affirmation. This dialogue enabled the communication of values and norms which underpinned the civic project, including notions of ‘public duty’ and ‘civility.’ Moreover, on a hierarchical level within the class system, the local newspapers served as a vessel to display civic participation and gain legitimisation as it would have boosted the cultural capital of those Dockyard workers who wished to distinguish themselves from others in the working class. Thus, the projection of respectability civic duty in the leisure time of the Royal Dockyard workers was an essential tool with which to bargain for increased rights and privileges both at work and as citizens. It will be argued in this section that the Royal Dockyard worker was portrayed as an important imperial citizen which reinforced their claims to respectability, normalised their leisure patterns and enabled the Royal Dockyard workers a forum to legitimise and exercise their rights to recreation.

The town was often conceived as a hub of imperial activity and the local press galvanised the community at the turn of the century through its commentary on the Boer War. The impact of the Boer War touched British citizens in a way that no other imperial war had hitherto done as citizen soldiers were sent to the front to fight a battle in a far-flung corner of the British Empire. The Portsmouth Evening News articulated the town’s sacrifice, situating the heroism of its citizens within a discourse of local patriotism.

Perhaps no other town in the Kingdom has been so intimately associated with the long-drawn out war as Portsmouth ... When volunteers were called for to further aid Great Britain in the struggle of unsuspected severity upon which she had entered, Portsmouth was not chary in sending forth her citizen sons to the rescue. From first to last the town had borne a yeoman

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481 Croll, Civilizing the Urban; p.20.
482 Croll, Civilizing the Urban; p.20.
483 Beaven, Visions of Empire; p.71.
share of the burden of war, and now that peace had come at last where was the interest keener, and where was the joy more personal and sincere than at Portsmouth?  

The newspaper’s propensity to act as a ‘fourth estate’ served as a way to prompt the citizens and establishments of the town and ensure they maintained the civic ideal through public comment. During the visit of the Colonial Premiers to the town in 1907 the Portsmouth Evening News reacted to the decision not to lavish the dignitaries with a civic welcome by publishing a large article illustrating Portsmouth’s links with the colonies. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the Portsmouth Times was quick to stake a claim for the town’s central place in the coronation celebrations of King George V as they were the “premier naval port of the Empire.”

By the late-nineteenth century the Royal Dockyard workers became a source of local pride which could be reflected outwards to compete with other towns and cities. This can be witnessed in the yearly publishing of the Portsmouth Dockyard School’s examination results and their comparison to the other Royal Dockyards. In 1893 the Hampshire Telegraph reported that of the four special Admiralty prizes awarded annually to apprentices from the five government Dockyard schools Portsmouth had won three. They boasted that:

This raises the total of such distinctions won by Portsmouth during the last three years to 10 out of 12 competed for during that time by all the Dockyards, a fact most eloquent as to the nature of instruction given at this Dockyard, and an unquestionable proof of the high intelligence and devotion to study shown by the Portsmouth students.

484 PEN, 2nd June 1902.
485 Croll, Civilizing the Urban; p.43.
486 PEN, 3rd May 1907.
487 PT, May 13th 1911.
489 HT, 22nd April 1893.
Similarly, sections in all the papers through the period published the work and progress of each Royal Dockyard. The tenet that Royal Dockyard workers were important to the town’s imperial mission was apparent during this process and the increased imperial tension of the naval arms race with Germany bolstered this view. During the Dreadnought building programme the national importance of their role and international significance of their work engendered a sense of local pride which was cultivated in the local press. After the launch of HMS *Dreadnought* in February 1906 the *Portsmouth Evening News* praised them in terms of their workmanship and their patriotism as imperial citizens. The paper argued that:

> ... men have worked for pride and the love of it, and as the result of their handicraft lies before them to-day their rejoicing is that of a true patriot and a true workman. And not only have they made a name for themselves, they have placed Portsmouth on a sounder foundation than ever before as chief home of the Navy, the principal seat of our maritime power and excellence.  

Moreover, the article was published at a time when the Royal Dockyard was reeling from drastic cuts to its personnel and thus advertised the importance of the retention of loyal, skilled, highly trained men who they believed were superior to those of the private yards. In August the newspaper called for honouring the workmen in recognition and remuneration for the long hours and hard work they put in and proposed a week or a day’s extra pay as a bonus. It was also quick to defend the Dockyard workers from rumours circulating that the *Dreadnought* was not finished to standard on time. They surmised that “There can be no other aim in view than to prejudice the public in favour of private yards, but the ruse appears to have fallen far short of its mark.” Similarly, the paper pronounced strong reaction to the strike action in private dockyards in May 1908. Fighting the corner of the Royal Dockyard, the *Portsmouth Evening News* commented that “It is a very good object lesson for the Government, prominent members of which are

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490 *PEN*, 10th February 1906.  
491 *PEN*, 31st August 1906.  
492 *PEN*, 7th September 1906.
known to be strongly in favour of abolishing the system in the Royal Dockyards which renders strikes and lockouts impossible.”

Thus the role of the Dockyard worker in the town became of strategic importance to the retention of local wealth and imperial prestige and the image of these men, especially the skilled artisan, became enshrined in an ethos of local imperial duty.

This also conversely enabled the rights and freedoms of the Royal Dockyard worker to be legitimised. As shall be demonstrated in Chapter Six, the expanding tourism market as advertised in the provincial papers reflected a local desire to travel on day trips or longer holidays to farther regions. All four newspapers advertised the Dockyard Excursion Committee’s trips during the period; thus highlighting the presence of the Royal Dockyard worker in the fabric of the town’s commercial leisure enterprises and, more importantly, legitimising their right to act in such an entrepreneurial fashion.

The Conservative Portsmouth Times aimed to articulate the reasons for the Dockyard Excursion Committee’s success, presenting them as shrewd commercial operators.

There are two fundamental causes of the committee's prosperity. The trains travel at an express speed, and the fares are absurdly low. Nor do they pretend to be a charitable society. The profits are the property of the committee, and so are the risks. If they lose a trip they pay - which is seldom - if they gain they share the profits among themselves. To use a modern vulgarity there is no "spoof" in their modus operandi, and as their fares are infinitely lower than those imposed by companies running excursions, the committee are certainly entitled to whatever can be got out of the transaction.

Clearly the fact that the Dockyardmen were operating a self-contained organisation and were not a financial burden was a positive indication of their respectability. The local newspapers also would feature reports of activities that took place on public holidays.

493 PEN, 2nd May 1908.
494 See Chapter Six.
495 PT, 5th December 1896.
which re-enforced the notion that all members of society had a legitimate right to recreational time. Indeed, the local press often championed the rights of the Dockyard worker against the Admiralty to time off during public holidays. In 1906 the Portsmouth Evening News commented on the closure of the Dockyard over the Easter holiday and argued:

Like other people, Dockyardmen enjoy a holiday when the rest of the world is having one, and the Admiralty have no right to deprive them of it merely to suit a few old-fashioned notions. 496

Conversely, in 1902 they had argued against the Dockyard closing to celebrate the King’s birthday as it was going to prove too expensive for the Dockyardmen to afford. 497 Indeed, it did not seem incongruous to the newspaper that the Dockyard workers should not want to celebrate the birthday of the monarch due to financial constraints; belying the notion that observance of monarchical anniversaries was an important function of being an imperial citizen. Facilitating public discussion on issues of leisure and leave was an important function of the local press. The discourse over Dockyard holidays highlights how contested and ambiguous the holiday system was in the Dockyard and how inequitable the employment structure of the Dockyard could be. Correspondence featured in the Portsmouth Evening News on the subject underlined the fact that Dockyard contractors would not welcome the extra days off as they would not get paid. A letter from a contractor signed “Kent” asked for something to be done to compensate them for pay lost on Dockyard holidays. 498 Later in the year, the problem was compounded when the Coronation Holiday was rescheduled from June to August due to the sudden illness of the new King. The Dockyard was to remain open for work on the national August Bank Holiday and observe the Coronation Holiday instead, but the lack of communication the Admiralty had with the Dockyard personnel on making the decision meant that the workers did not know until very late. Although the Portsmouth Evening News praised the Admiralty for its decision it commented that it did “the right thing in the

496 PEN, 12th April 1906.
497 PEN, 22nd May 1902.
498 PEN, 23rd May 1902.
wrong way”. They argued that this could have been avoided if the Admiralty had been more prompt in sorting it out but, signalling the reticence of the Admiralty on matters of Dockyard leisure, they commented that they "have only good reason to fear" that they would be "preaching to deaf ears."499 The Southern Daily Mail also made a similar point, calling the Admiralty “inconsiderate” by withholding the decision until after all the Dockyardmen had made their holiday arrangements for Monday, by which time many of them had paid money for railway tickets.500 However, just months previously the paper reacted to claims by the radical press that discharges in the Dockyards were imminent. They argued that overtime would suffer rather than the number of personnel, and sneered that “as overtime is against the spirit of the eight hours' movement, working men cannot with consistency feel aggrieved if it decreases.”501 Thus, although the Conservative popular newspaper was willing to concede some rights to leisure, they also felt that the Dockyard worker should be more deferential to the concessions they had already received. Similarly partisan views were espoused during the Dockyard trade union unrest of 1913. The Portsmouth Evening News called for calm and rational argument and presented the case of the men as “perfectly reasonable.”502 In contrast, the Portsmouth Times felt that none of the speakers had the“ brains or the courage” to argue in favour of Tariff Reform.503 Indeed, reading the weekly Conservative broadsheet, the Portsmouth Times instead of the Liberal daily Portsmouth Evening News, could endow the readership with more blatant imperial propaganda where Dockyardmen were viewed as dangerously disruptive to Britain’s imperial defence.

However, the advertisement of commercial leisure and its coverage in the local press helped to normalise its presence in the town and the working class’ participation in its various forms. Column inches were devoted to the reviews of music hall programmes and theatrical plays where value judgements would be proffered on their standard and appropriateness for the local audience. A review of Alfred West’s touring cinematographic entertainment "Our Navy and Our Army" was described by the

499 PEN, 2nd August 1902.
500 SDM, 2nd August 1902.
501 SDM, 23rd April 1902.
502 PEN, 17th March 1913; PEN, 18th March 1913.
503 PT, 22nd March 1913.
Portsmouth Evening News as an “instructive and patriotic entertainment.” Later it reinforced imperial pride as it enthused that:

As one sits staring open-eyed at the screen the blood of patriotism runs hot in the veins, and as the scenes of Colonial life and mercantile Navy experiences on the high seas pass before the eye one realises the greatness of Empire.

Endorsements such as these married a sense of participation in commercial leisure with a sense of public-spirited agency. Similarly, the support of local sport, both professional and amateur, was also covered and championed and further helped to engender a sense of local patriotism. From the creation of the town’s professional football club, Portsmouth F.C., in 1898 and throughout the period the local press was quick to underline the local rivalry and interest that came from meetings with other professional clubs along the south coast, in particular Southampton and Brighton. Other trajectories of rivalry were also conceived of with fixtures with other the Royal Dockyards in Chatham and Plymouth. This rivalry was also amplified at a time of increased commercial competition during the naval arms race and would have helped to foster a general atmosphere of civic pride and local rivalry.

Sectional rivalries were also played out in the articles and correspondence pages of the local press. During the 1913 unrest and subsequent concessions gained by some sections of the Dockyard workforce a public spat which highlighted perceived inequalities between trades and levels of skills fomented in the pages of the Portsmouth Evening News. Appendix F highlights a particularly heated demarcation row between Shipwrights and Labourers over pay whereby unskilled men were being laid off and their jobs being taken

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504 PEN, 31st July 1906. See also Chapter Five.
505 PEN, 18th August 1906. See also Chapter Five.
506 Beaven, Leisure, Citizenship; p.72; Jeffrey Hill, Sport, Leisure and Culture in Twentieth Century Britain, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002); p.46.
507 For examples see HT, 7th September 1899 (Southampton) and 4th September 1912 (Brighton). See also Chapter Five.
508 For examples see HT, 9th September 1899 (Chatham) and PEN, 28th August 1906 (Plymouth). See also Chapter Five.
over by skilled men who continued to be paid the same rate. The argument underlined within the public sphere the very notions of certain members of the Dockyard workforce of the perceived worth of their qualifications and labour. It also aptly highlighted the hierarchy which formed their social interactions. One particularly waspish comment from “Ex-Apprentice” argued that while “No one wants the Labourer to live in the “mechanic’s scraps” ... to decry a Shipwright and attempt to ridicule him because he is above the Labourer socially, by juggling with the facts is “not British.””\textsuperscript{509}

The social distinction and opinions of the Dockyardmen highlighted within the pages betrayed notions of superiority and the struggle for subordinate men to receive the privileges of those established, skilled artisans who possessed more security and cultural capital than themselves. The associational culture of Royal Dockyard workers was also represented; giving workmen the opportunity to further showcase their assertive independence and respectability.\textsuperscript{510} Throughout the period many Dockyard workers chose to celebrate when a colleague retired or transferred to another dockyard. Apart from formalised societies, these groupings illustrate the relationship between the workforce as colleagues and as trades. Similarly the reportage on the activities of groups they were involved in outside the Dockyard such as Trade Societies, Friendly Societies, and County Associations legitimised forms of working-class socialising. The occasions would usually take place in public houses where some form of presentation would be made. They showed the extent of trade and sectional socialising outside the Dockyard and normalised respectable working class behaviours, including their attendance in public houses and the staging of smoking concerts. They were publicised as civilised and harmonious events and would have shown the public that they were respectable and respected members of society where the names of those who took part would be published adding local renown to those in the “index of civility.”\textsuperscript{511} Such an example took place in 1889 and highlighted in the local community the relationship that the Royal

\footnote{\textsuperscript{509} \textit{PEN}, 15\textsuperscript{th} May 1913. For the longer version in context see Appendix F. \textsuperscript{510} See Chapter Seven. \textsuperscript{511} Simon Gunn, \textit{The Public Culture of the Victorian Middle Class. Ritual and Authority in the Industrial City 1840 – 1914}, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); p.175.}
Dockyard and its workmen had with the British Empire by their transfer to and from various naval stations in the colonies.\textsuperscript{512}

The chair was taken by Mr H. Ware, and the presentation, which was made by Mr J. Shepherd, took the form of a pair of field glasses and a gold Albert and pendant on which was inscribed, "Presented to Mr J. H. White by his fellow work-men, Portsmouth Dockyard, March 1899." After the presentation the health of Mr White was drunk with musical honours, and the rest of the evening was spent in harmony, to which the following contributed: Messrs. Woodmore, Woods, Kingham, Knowles, Richards jun., Fowler, Watkins, Crocker, Summerfield, Fernandez, Dale, Ansell, Thomas, Godfrey, Bounds, Coupar, Miller, and Mr White. Mr T. Keen ably presided at the pianoforte.\textsuperscript{513}

During a smoking concert in aid of a Chargeman of Shipwrights who was being transferred to Hong Kong the \textit{Portsmouth Times} reported how the National Anthem was played at the end, illustrating the kind of voluntary impromptu conventions of patriotism and ceremony which the men of the Dockyard felt was apt to replicate.\textsuperscript{514}

The publishing of letters from Royal Dockyard workers presented their opinion in the public sphere, albeit selected by editorial means for editorial ends. Nevertheless, it served as a forum for expressing views which the workers would read in their leisure. That the newspapers chose to give space to such dialogues highlights the attempts of the local press to give their readership a voice. However, unless a reader is identified explicitly by name and address or by a moniker or content hinting at their employment it is difficult to assess accurately the volume of representation. Indeed, frustratingly, when looking for the Royal Dockyard worker’s opinion in the local press, it could sometimes be disappointingly absent. When covering the Tsar of Russia’s Peace Conference in 1899, the

\textsuperscript{512} Unfortunately evidence of correspondence or other reaction to the impact of the transfer of workers has not yet surfaced.

\textsuperscript{513} \textit{PEN}, 13\textsuperscript{th} March 1899.

\textsuperscript{514} \textit{PT}, 5\textsuperscript{th} August 1911. However, it must be stressed that, without further comment it is difficult to distinguish this type of social convention as a formality or evidence of an ardent patriotism.
Portsmouth Evening News encouraged attendance to a public conference in the Town Hall. However, correspondence from Shipwright and prominent member of the Workingman’s Liberal Union, James H. MacGuigan, argued that although opinions from the clergy, legal men and commercial men were represented there was not any opportunity for working men to voice their opinions. He argued that it was the working man who through man power and taxation benefitted least from war and referred to the recent actions during the Soudan War.  

What have the workers of England gained from the slaughter of the Omdurman? The groan of the widow and the cry of the orphan are not music to our ears. We have not asked our rulers that the blood of these people be upon us and upon our children. We must abandon the policy of expansion and strive for God’s peace, whether the Czar of Russia be for or against it. I know many workmen in Portsmouth hold these views. The only opposition to peace that I hear from working men is that some provision be made for the unemployed before disarmament takes place.

The assertion that some provision should be made for unemployment suggested that some Dockyard workers saw their work with the Royal Navy in stark terms of employment, not a jingoistic patriotism based on imperial expansion and the conquering of others. However, notably, MacGuigan did not speak out against the dismantling of the empire, the maintenance of the existing empire, or about increasing co-operation with the colonies and dominions, which does not suggest a completely anti-imperial stance.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has shown that applying the social control method to the local press does not register the important cultural contexts and identities of the Royal Dockyard worker.

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515 PEN, 4th March 1899. MacGuigan was a Shipwright and Liberal Radical campaigner. See Chapters Two and Three.  
516 The Battle of Omdurman (1898) was part of the British Soudan Campaign. There was controversy after the battle due to the British troops killing injured Mahdist (“Dervish”) fighters. HT, 7th January 1899.  
An analysis of the local press has demonstrated that there were points of working-class agency hitherto overlooked. While focus on imperial battles and sensational stories in the press have been able to demonstrate a working-class appetite for empire as entertainment, shifting to how the local press negotiated the expectation of their target audience has provided another perspective. The response of the Royal Dockyard workers’ to imperial politics, as tracked through the press coverage of the General Elections of the Edwardian period, illustrate that the press were somewhat mediated by the particular newspaper’s target audience. While the Conservative press was able to maintain its “strong navy” argument, the crisis within the Liberal Party meant that approaches by the Liberal press became compromised under the weight of popular sentiment and the strictures of ‘New Journalism’.

Moreover, the local focus on news and events in the provincial press helped to engender a sense of civic duty and patriotism which elevated members of the Royal Dockyard workforce and enabled them to share in the freedoms of imperial citizenship as well as the burdens of duty. Through trying to gain popular appeal, the local press also held a mirror up to its readership and represented facets of their social lives and legitimised their right to take part in the social and cultural life of the empire. The newspapers normalised working-class leisure through their advertising of commercial sport and reportage of local events and clubs. Furthermore, in acting as the fourth estate it championed the rights of its readership to take part in the extension of leisure privileges and showed fault lines in a community within which identities and approaches to the empire were constantly negotiated. Indeed, rather than deferent and subservient citizens, the Royal Dockyard workers’ responses to imperialism were contingent and based on their own set of priorities. Whereas many voters in Portsmouth obviously bought the strong navy argument, for others it was not enough to entice them to vote Unionist; showing that independence and bread and butter issues were more important to them than imperial scaremongering. With this in mind, in the following chapter the thesis shall explore how the discourse on imperialism was experienced through the Royal Dockyard worker’s interaction with mass entertainment.
Chapter 5. Mass Leisure and Entertainment

As the country’s premier naval port and a growing popular seaside holiday resort Portsmouth continued to develop its commercial entertainments in the Edwardian era. However, the rise of commercial leisure, and the way that the working classes used it, continued to be of grave concern to social reformers.518 Moreover, popular entertainment has been the subject of scrutiny for its apparent use as a vehicle for imperial propaganda and its distasteful offspring, jingoism.519 In 1901 Liberal journalist J. A. Hobson argued that the music hall was the prime conduit of jingoism and a more potent educator than the church, the school, the political meeting, the public house and even the press.520 He also decried the rise of spectatorship as integral to a mob passion symptomatic of jingoism.521 The chapter will demonstrate the influence that visual culture had on the working classes; however, it will challenge previous approaches which favoured a theory of monolithic imperialism which was bestowed from ‘above’ to argue that the working class had more agency than previously assumed. The chapter will examine the relationship between popular imperialism and the Royal Dockyard workers in two stages to construct an understanding of how local imperial identities were formed. The first section will examine the influence of the theatre, music hall and early cinema, while the second will examine this process through support of the local football team. It will argue that these top-down influences were understood, negotiated and re-appropriated to create new meanings in the process of working-class identity-making. As a consequence, the discourses that British citizens had with their empire were more contingent and fluid than previously asserted.

Much historiographical debate on the effects of popular imperialism has been aimed at supporting or disproving Hobson’s thesis on the nature and potency of jingoism.522

519 See Chapter One for a definition of jingoism.
520 J. A. Hobson, The Psychology of Jingoism, (London: Grant Richards, 1901); p.3.
522 J. M. MacKenzie argued that popular entertainment in the years before the First World War displayed a national trend where “the stage perfectly reflected the military anxieties and crazes of the period.” MacKenzie, Propaganda and Empire. The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960, (Manchester
Whereas studies of the music hall have abounded, the exploration of the relationship between sport and empire have mainly focused on ‘top-down’ ideas such as the practice of social Darwinism and rational recreation on the domestic masses, or on the role of sport as a “civiliser” and tool of cultural imperialism used in the Empire at large. Indeed, it has been notoriously difficult to assess the extent to which popular entertainment affected the working classes. The ability of commercial entertainment to produce meaning, identity and even, resistance, has been explored by several historians. For example, Peter Bailey asserted that music hall was one of the sites in the ‘contest for control’ between moralising middle-class reformers and the working classes. He maintained that workers were capable of manipulating the social order to their own advantage, which although piecemeal and less overt than organised political opposition, could be seen as a form of class-based combativey. Patrick Joyce has also argued that the music halls were important in creating meaning, identity and social order. He analogised the music hall to a “laboratory of social style” where the “social selves” of people in different countries could be studied and understood.

523 Bailey, Leisure and Class; p.186.

The study of football in England as an egalitarian, working-class expression of male culture with an absence of overt imperial content has perhaps shielded it from the same treatment as the music hall and the cinema. Indeed, organisationally, Richard Holt argued that English football was too self-absorbed to give itself to the national cause. The concentration of class and gender in the process of identity-making and football support has provided more scope for uncovering examples of agency. Most recently Matthew Taylor has argued that the adoption of football by the troops, and its eventual acceptance by military leaders during the First World War, was evidence of a ‘proletarianisation’ of military culture; highlighting the ability that working-class men had to engender concepts of their leisure and identity onto existing structures of power.

What these studies have suggested is that commercial entertainment was an influential but highly variable tool of imperial propaganda. Certainly the fluidity of these relationships have led recent critics of the ‘popular imperialism thesis’ to cast doubt on whether popular entertainment was an accurate indicator of working class imperialist sentiment.

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525 However, Joyce noted that the halls were less class-ridden than previously argued and represented a popular, rather than a working-class audience. Patrick Joyce, Visions of the People Industrial England and the Question of Class 1848-1914, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991 [1994]); pp.305-306.  
528 Richard Holt has argued that football support was symbolic of a concept of ‘maleness’, which differed from the Christian form of ‘manliness’ and instead embraced older forms masculinity such as toughness and rudeness, and resisted the ‘civilising process’ of fair play and sportsmanship. Holt, Sport and the British; p.173. Similarly August argued that the collective experience of football “built masculine and working-class identity.” Andrew August, The British Working Class, 1832-1940, (Harlow: Pearson, 2007); p.152.  
530 Historians such as Bernard Porter have questioned the music hall’s ability to produce a “thoughtful or joined up imperialism”; arguing that jingoism was popular due to its ability to cause excitement and an excuse for celebration rather than being an indicator of a fervent and ardent imperialist attitude. Bernard Porter, The Absent-minded Imperialists, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004 [2007]); p.199. Similarly, Andrew S. Thompson argued that former studies of popular imperialism did not provide much insight on how the imperial message was actually received. However, he asserted that it would be misleading to conclude that the impact of imperialism on British society was negligible or tangential. Andrew S. Thompson, The Empire Strikes Back? The Impact of Imperialism on Britain From the Mid-Nineteenth Century, (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2005); p.83; p.94.
order to dissipate the idea of monolithic imperialism.\textsuperscript{531} Indeed, regional halls did not develop in the same way as in the capital and the study of music halls at a local level can provide a highly valuable insight into the “big socio-historical questions”.\textsuperscript{532} Paul Maloney concluded that in Glasgow’s music halls Scottish national identity played a key role in shaping the audience’s attitudes towards the British Empire.\textsuperscript{533} However, Brad Beaven has asserted that public attitudes towards empire differed depending on the town’s “political and social milieu”, which has raised the question of the level of influence that locality and local identity played in the process of disseminating the imperial message in addition to national narratives.\textsuperscript{534}

In consequence this chapter will argue that the choices made by Royal Dockyard workers about commercial entertainment was for many a means of self-expression which was imbedded in their specific notions of local identity and understanding of social structures. The presence of the Admiralty in Portsmouth precluded the development of strong networks of philanthropy and entrepreneurialism in the town.\textsuperscript{535} As a consequence, Roger Thomas has argued that the cultural and intellectual life of Edwardian Portsmouth was endowed with a propensity towards more parochial and populist tastes in place of a robust civic patriotism.\textsuperscript{536} Thomas diagnosed this populist content as symptomatic of a civic elite who saw the town’s role in terms of service and deference to the Admiralty. However, the chapter will assert instead that in lieu of wealthy industrial philanthropy Portsmouth’s civic elites and entertainment entrepreneurs sought to institutionalise their own civic patriotism in the popular entertainment venues of the town. The concept was built around the town’s central role in the defence of the realm and the safeguarding of the British Empire as a vehicle to galvanise the public, on one hand, as patriotic customers

\textsuperscript{531} Indeed, Thompson has argued that the process of creating an imperial British identity “was as much about building on regional forms of association as it was about liquidating them.” Thompson, \textit{The Empire Strikes}; p.200.
\textsuperscript{534} Brad Beaven, \textit{Visions of Empire: Patriotism, Popular Culture and the City, 1870-1939}, (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2012); p.192.
\textsuperscript{536} Thomas, \textit{Dreadnought Construction}; p.12.
to patriotic venues, and on the other, as a citizenry distinct from the Admiralty. This chapter will argue that it is through such institutions as the stage, screen and the football stadium that concepts of local imperial citizenship were formed. Concepts of local identity governed the imperial content of mass entertainment and also its relevance to the Royal Dockyard workers. Portsmouth’s civic identity, therefore, was bound with notions of imperial service, which imbued a particular civic-imperial cognisance within the public. Indeed, N. A. Phelps has argued that Holt’s assertion that nation and Empire never fully assimilated into working-class culture, was inaccurate in the case of Portsmouth Football Club. Whereas Holt argued that the city was the dominant feature of working-class culture and thus provided its collective identity, Phelps asserted that Portsmouth’s deep-rooted links with the empire made it a characteristic of their local patriotism. Critically, however, although many aspects of Portsmouth’s commercial culture were suffused with imperial rhetoric, the use of these concepts by sections of the Royal Dockyard workforce would suggest that patronage was based only partially on support of empire. Rather than a “culture of consolation”, mass leisure provided the Royal Dockyard worker with the tools to create a ‘culture of articulation’ where the visual culture of their world was utilised to play a pivotal role in their identity formation and gain leverage in the assertion of citizenship and labour rights.

Stage and Screen

The development of commercial entertainment in Portsmouth has been attributed to the town’s links to the armed forces and in the Southsea district’s reputation as a fashionable watering place. Arguably, the development of mass leisure in the town seemed somewhat behind the times when viewed alongside their northern industrial

See Chapter Two for discussions on local patriotism and the civic elite.


contemporaries. In 1891 the Secretary of the Empire Palace Company, gave a "vigorous speech" in the application for a licence arguing that “There was only one theatre in the borough ... and it seemed to him monstrous that in a town of 150,000 inhabitants one place should have such a monopoly.”

Table 4 in Appendix G shows the main theatres and music halls in Portsmouth from 1890 to 1914. Most of the venues were concentrated in the ‘city centre’ Landport area or the tourist destination of Southsea. The subsequent growth of commercial entertainment in Portsmouth was a sign of the increasing recognition by entrepreneurs and the civic elite of the power and profitability of the town’s growing tourism industry. Certainly, this appetite for populist entertainment is reflected in a cursory study of the venues, which showed that the majority staged variety acts. Indeed in 1908, just a year after the opening of the King’s Theatre, proprietor J. W. Boughton “reluctantly” switched its specialism from melodrama to variety. The increasingly grand buildings built by the Edwardian entertainment entrepreneurs became a vehicle through which to boast the importance of the town. The construction of the King’s Theatre was entrusted to Frank Matcham, the most famous theatre architect of the period, who also re-designed the town’s Prince’s Theatre in 1891. These links with the civic ideal were consolidated in the scheme of decoration which was reminiscent of the Council Chamber at the Town Hall.

The subject of music hall and theatre, however, has produced methodological problems. This study has tried to deviate from a textual analysis of the entertainments themselves as although this can demonstrate how the author has used prevailing ideas of imperialism and patriotism, it does not effectively communicate what the working class audiences would have absorbed. However, while the local press has provided the foundation of this research, the absence of contemporary commentary by Royal Dockyard workers and visitor figures to the halls and theatres has made it difficult to determine audience

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541 HT, 3rd October 1891.
542 R. C. Riley’s study on the growth of Southsea as a fashionable holiday resort highlighted connections with Southsea’s burgeoning status and the development of entertainments in the city. He documented, not just commercial interests, but highlighted the town Corporation’s increased investment in leisure and visitor facilities from the 1870s onwards as the profitability of the town’s tourism trade became more evident. Riley, The Growth of Southsea; p.17-20. See also Webb, ‘Leisure and Pleasure’; p.145.
543 See Table 4 in Appendix G.
544 Lesley Burton, The Kings, Box of Delights, (Portsmouth: The Kings Theatre Trust, 2003); p.10.
545 HT, 14th September 1907.
interaction and identify how the Royal Dockyard worker actually responded to imperial propaganda. Although theatrical and variety programmes were listed in the local press, and at times reviewed, little is commented on about the audience. Therefore, this chapter aims to survey the local entertainments and chart how concepts of the town’s patriotic duty to the British Empire informed contemporary identity formation. As previously argued in Chapter Two, Portsmouth’s civic elites cultivated a model of imperial citizenship during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries which asserted an imperial pride and position of the town independent of the Admiralty. This also manifested itself in the commercial entertainment venues of the town as licensing for such venues were dictated by the civic elites. Rather than the content of the music hall being simply a working-class production, or a response to working-class demand, it was “the residue of what was remaining after the gradual reduction of those public forms of working-class self-expression which had become to be defined as less acceptable.” Indeed, by the Edwardian period the delineation between ‘working class’ venues and the more socially mixed types had already corroded; making the music hall less potent as a site of class expression. As a result, what occurred in the commercial entertainment venues of the town was to a large degree the negotiation of proprietors and magistrates. It was their concepts of the role of Portsmouth as an imperial hub which dictated the style and content of commercial entertainment venues and enshrined the notion of imperial citizenship. In turn, these concepts were used to flesh out collective identities within everyday life which could be used to either reinforce imperial agendas, or as bargaining towards expanding the leisure and freedoms of specific groups. Indeed, understanding the motivations of the working class in everyday activities and the ways in which these concepts were used revealed more about the way working people conceived of their identities within the British Empire.


548 Patrick Joyce, Visions of the People; p.307; Russell, Popular Music; p.90.
Certainly, commercial culture was used to placate the Dockyard workers and inculcate them into a pro-navalist ethos. After the launch of *HMS Queen Elizabeth* in 1913 Lady Meux, the wife of the Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth, Admiral Hedworth Meux, treated the officers and men involved in the construction of the new dreadnought to a night of entertainment at the Hippodrome.\(^\text{549}\) The wives of the men were also invited and guests included Lady Churchill, wife of First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill, and Admiral Superintendent of Portsmouth Dockyard Rear Admiral H. L. Heath and his wife. During the evening “special features appropriate to the occasion” were included, such as moving image of the launch of the *Queen Elizabeth* and a topical song about the political career of Winston Churchill.\(^\text{550}\) The special nature of the event was broadcast outside the theatre also, which was decorated with large flags that reportedly attracted a good deal of attention.\(^\text{551}\) However, the Admiralty have been noted as being averse to investing in the cultural and social fabric of the town and its workmen during the period.\(^\text{552}\) Although it seemed like a gracious gesture, when considered alongside the unrest earlier in the year over pay and demarcation issues resulting in large trade union demonstrations, this can be seen as a definite attempt to instil pride and patriotism in their employees.\(^\text{553}\) Indeed, the attempted inculcation of the Royal Dockyard workers, and evidence produced earlier in this thesis on the instability of naval imperialist policy on the Royal Dockyard workers, illustrates how the potency of imperial propaganda had certain limitations when applied directly onto the bread and butter issues of everyday life.

By the beginning of the period the content in the music halls and theatres had been largely accepted and legitimised.\(^\text{554}\) By the opening of the Coliseum in 1913, the most famous, and risqué star of the music hall, Marie Lloyd, was lauded in the local press as a coup for the town; the news earning a spot on the front page of the *Portsmouth Evening*...

\(^{549}\) Lady Meux was also invited to lay the keel plate of the ship when construction started. The laying of the keel plate became a naval ceremony in the Edwardian era. It was customary for a female patron to drive in the first rivets of the new ship. Jan Rüger, *The Great Naval Game. Britain and Germany in the Age of Empire*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); p.36.

\(^{550}\) *PEN*, 29th October 1913.

\(^{551}\) *PEN*, 29th October 1913.

\(^{552}\) Thomas, *Dreadnought Construction*; p.9.

\(^{553}\) *PEN*, 29th October 1913.

\(^{554}\) As Bailey has asserted, although it still fell short of the mark of the social reformers, the music hall entrepreneur had “manifested a potential for defining and enforcing socially appropriate behaviour.” Bailey, *Leisure and Class*; p.174.
However, proprietors were still keen to stay within licensing guidelines and
censor themselves in order to safeguard their capital investment. Thus the music hall
entrepreneur played a crucial role in defining and enforcing appropriate behaviour under
the “rules of good citizenship”. As Theatre Royal proprietor J. W. Boughton explained to
the Hampshire Telegraph in 1899, the Lord Chamberlain’s office could refuse a licence for
a play if they found fault under judgments of morality or good taste.

Similar standards were applied on a civic level. When applying to the local magistrates for the proposed Coliseum variety theatre in 1906, Moss Empires underlined their claims to respectability, which would be present in both the programme of performances and the design of the building. Mr R. Allen, Director of Moss Empires, testified that their proposed theatre would be for all classes of people and a place where “a man might take his wife and family to without being offended by any improprieties.” This would also be achieved by not including a promenade in the design so there could consequently be “no inducement for improper characters to resort to the place.” Although the magistrates were unable to grant a licence on the basis that the venue was not yet built they were, however, “favourably impressed with the proposal to erect a music hall on the site in question in accordance with the plans produced.” Similarly, when the Hippodrome opened in 1907 the proprietors signalled their relationship with the civic ideal by stating that they had “carried out their original promises to give the town a palatial building”. Moreover, they were anxious to ensure that they gained a reputation within the town for respectability. The Directors ... hoped that townspeople would be able to come to the Hippodrome without fear of any offence whatever to good taste, and they were determined to uphold in Portsmouth that reputation they had gained in their houses of entertainment in other towns. By giving performances above suspicion from start to finish.

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555 PEN, 1st July 1913. It must be noted that at this time the local newspapers rarely used the front page to advertise their headline articles.
557 HT, 16th December 1899.
558 PEN, 11th April 1906.
559 PEN, 11th April 1906.
560 HT, 18th May 1907.
Resistance to the opening of new commercial entertainment establishments were mainly framed, not due to “moral objection” to the type of entertainment, but on the grounds of “public policy.” When the directors of the Empire Palace acquired land in Stanhope Road, not far from the Empire, and proposed to build a “larger and much finer” venue it was refused by the local authorities in the Brewster Sessions at the Town Hall. Local Non-conformist religious groups had objected on the grounds that the former building would most likely remain a music hall; leading to increased alcohol consumption in the borough. Concern for the state of commercial leisure and the impact it had on society came from local religious groups. In 1912 the vicar of St Mark’s Church, Reverend L. E. Blackburne made an address on the subject of the Christian attitude towards amusement during a meeting of the Portsmouth Churchworkers’ Union at the St Mark’s Institute, North End. He commented on the rapid spread of amusements; citing the growth of theatres and picture palaces in London and the rise in football supporting. However, his indictment was based not on the morality or the content of commercial leisure, but in terms of national efficiency:

He did not say that the music halls and the theatrical stage were immoral, but in general rather the contrary. Still, there was a tendency to play down to the more animal part of nature, and to create excitement. The love of games may adversely affect the national prosperity, when it is remembered how we hinder ourselves in the competition with other nations by loss of time in their pursuit.

Therefore, in a town whose workforce was geared towards the defence of the Empire, Portsmouth’s commercial entertainment had to acquit itself on patriotic grounds as being fit for the imperial citizen. Theatre and music hall entertainment underwent an “explicit fusion of imperialism and entertainment” between the years 1890 to 1914. This was particularly resonant in Portsmouth due to the town’s public image being constructed

561 HT, 15th September 1900.
562 HT, 8th September 1900.
563 HT, 15th September 1900.
564 HT, 10th May 1912.
565 Beaven, Visions of Empire; p.181.
around its symbiotic relationship with the British Empire. Indeed, there was a strong imperialist narrative running through much of the popular entertainment in the town during the Edwardian period. However, far from being a monolithic imperialism, it resonated on a local level and took its signifiers from less abstract notions of empire, nationhood and monarchy by synthesising them with tangible and visible relations with the Dockyard and presence of the Royal Navy and the various Army regiments garrisoned in the town. Proprietors were eager to ingratiate themselves with the magistrates and the paying public by incorporating the tenets of the town’s civic patriotism. Portsmouth’s playhouses and music halls aligned themselves with local causes, which provided the public with tangible links to Portsmouth’s place in the British Empire. After the opening of the Theatre Royal in 1856 high ranking military officers of the Royal Navy or local Army Regiments would patronise an evening’s entertainment named the “Fashionable Dress Box Night.” 566 This tradition was carried forward with such events as the special matinee in aid of “The Crimean and Indian Mutiny Veterans’ Fund” at the King’s Theatre or the matinee to commemorate the “Battle of Trafalgar and to assist the funds of the Trafalgar Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Institute” at the Hippodrome; both in 1909. 567

A sense of civic pride was also achieved through the architecture and interior design of the venues. In 1899 the Empire Palace was lavishly redecorated to incorporate historic signifiers of civic pride. The manifestation of civic patriotism within these venues of entertainment presented as natural the symbiosis of the Royal Navy, the establishments and their patrons. The Portsmouth Evening News reported that no expense had been spared “to make the place look as pretty and elaborate as any in the South of England” and the sloping ceiling of the dress circle, which was formerly plain, was “enriched with modelled plaster work, and in each bay with handsome paintings in oils of warships of different periods dating from 1700”. 568 These symbols would not only have resonated with the many sailors and naval officers but also with those who worked, or had familial

566 References in the HT October and November 1856.
568 PEN, 29th July 1899.
links with those who worked, in the Dockyard building those ships through the
generations. Similarly, Portsmouth’s premier playhouse, the Theatre Royal underwent a
lavish refurbishment in 1900 which embraced the city’s civic patriotism with the overt use
of nautical and military themes. One theatre historian has described its uniqueness,
underlining the importance of the use of symbolism in communicating Portsmouth’s civic
character:

The redecoration of the fronts of the upper and dress circles introduced
ornamentation suggestive of the naval and military importance of
Portsmouth. The boxes were divided by the bows of ships with figureheads
and the dress circle front was composed of dolphins, mermaids, anchors
and lifebelts. Even the lamplights were nautical, being formed of brass
anchors. All this gave the theatre an atmosphere of originality by getting
away from the more conventional auditorium adornments.\(^{569}\)

This evolution can also be noted in the Theatre Royal’s programmes which show their
increasing alignment with the Royal Navy’s connection with the town. Below examples
can be seen of the front covers of programmes produced in 1889, 1894 and 1907. The
earliest of the three featured the standard proscenium theatrical symbolism of the
neoclassical style: cherubs, lyres, lutes, sheet music are mixed with costumed actors who
stand on plinths before the pillars which make up the border and seem to be looking on in
readiness to perform the bill of fare presented in the centre of the page. By 1894 the
symbols of comedy and tragedy featured and are personified by two actresses below a
stage surmounted by the British Royal Coat of Arms on the lavish swag of the stage
curtain. However, by 1907 the actual programme is relegated to the inside pages and the
central illustration featured a romantic depiction of a wooden warship.\(^{570}\)

\(^{569}\) H. Sargeant, A History of Portsmouth Theatres, The Portsmouth Papers, (Portsmouth: Portsmouth City

\(^{570}\) Portsmouth Theatre Royal, Programmes dated Monday 29\(^{th}\) April 1889, 1894 and 1907, Portsmouth
History Centre, accession number X468A/7/8/6/1, 2 and 5.
The Boer War was a catalyst for the increased public awareness and consumption of imperialistic commercial leisure. Before the outbreak of hostilities the various commercial entertainment venues increasingly staged militarised views of the empire which had a specific local flavour. The Empire Palace staged Khartoum, an "Exciting Military Spectacle by 100 Local Children, produced by Professor Selkirk." Later it incorporated Edison life-size pictures featuring footage of "England's Bulwarks" and a march past of 3,000 blue jackets at the Naval Depot, taken by special permission of the Admiralty. The hub for patriotic plays in Portsmouth seemed to be the Prince’s Theatre. In 1898 it juxtaposed naval drama A Sailor and His Lass, which had been “delighting” audiences, with military drama Death or Glory Boys the following week. During the build up to the Boer War in 1899 it presented a number of patriotic and imperial plays including The Union Jack (February), For Life and Liberty (March), Death or Glory Boys and Soldiers of the Queen (both April). Reports in the local press document how well patronised these plays were. The subsequently “extremely successful” Soldiers of the Queen was surmised before its run as being “A piece of the most exciting description and brimful of "war alarms," will also win plenty of approval.” However, some pieces fell foul of Portsmouth’s discerning public. Although praised for its drama and excitement, Death or Glory Boys was criticised for its inaccuracy in portraying life in the Army. The unique relationship that Portsmouth had with the military provoked intense celebrations after the news of the Relief of Mafeking broke on the night of the 18th May 1900. The Portsmouth Evening News reported that the occasion was “entirely unprecedented and demonstrate[d] the intense interest and anxiety which has been felt in Portsmouth.” Huge crowds spilled out onto the streets to sing patriotic songs and rejoice with one another. On Fratton Bridge, in the northern suburb of the town where many Dockyard workers resided, there was an impromptu concert. Similarly, when the news was broken by the proprietor in the Empire Palace the audience cheered wildly and

571 Attridge, Nationalism, Imperialism and Identity; p.18; Beaven, Visions of Empire; p.184.
572 PEN, 5th January 1899.
573 PEN, 18th February 1899.
574 HT, 2nd April 1898.
575 HT, 29th April 1899; HT, 22nd April 1899.
576 PEN, 4th April 1899.
577 PEN, 19th May 1900.
sang *For He’s A Jolly Good Fellow*. Although it is difficult to divorce this outpouring of patriotic feeling from the tension of the Boer War, the act of collective celebration and the use of music hall idioms were a signal of the pervasiveness of commercial leisure in the everyday vocabulary of the local population. Indeed, it is unsurprising, conditioned as they were with the proliferation of naval, civic and commercial displays of patriotism, that they would celebrate in such a way.

However, the continuity and enthusiasm for imperial entertainment in Portsmouth can be evidenced in the popularity of the *Our Navy* series of films by local filmmaker, Alfred West. The Boer War was to provide the inspiration for the transformation of cinema into an effective means of imperial propaganda which synthesised the new media into “an extension of theatrical conventions, using military music and spectacle, and concentrating on British heroism and Boer treachery.” This new footage provided an opportunity for the public to see ‘actuality’ material and aided popular conceptions of the armed forces and the nature of twentieth century warfare, the monarchy and the world at large. West’s films featured a strong connection with the Senior Service and were noted in the local press for their strong patriotic and imperial resonance on the viewer. When West sold his catalogue of films in 1913 he maintained that:

> This patriotic entertainment – borne under Royal auspices – has ... and is still fulfilling a useful purpose in stimulating enthusiasm, and enabling the public to have an insight into the ways and doings of those who

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578 HT, 26th May 1900.
579 West was born in Gosport and worked in the family photographers firm in the town before opening a branch in Portsmouth. West’s ‘Our Navy’ series was incredibly popular in its time and was shown in London and throughout the provinces, though he has been largely forgotten about in the historical canon of early cinema. He must thus be seen within a context of the burgeoning cinema industry alongside the likes of R. W. Paul and Cecil Hepworth. In this vein, West’s work would fit with what MacKenzie has noted as early cinema’s continuity with nineteenth century forms of popular entertainment which transferred the genres of imperial adventure and military spectacle from the declining music halls to the new technologies of the silver screen. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*; pp.68-69.
580 Attridge, *Nationalism, Imperialism and Identity*; p.27.
582 PEN, 18th August 1906. Quoted in Chapter Four.
SAFEGUARD THE INTERESTS OF THE EMPIRE and keep watch and ward
over its HONOUR AND SAFETY. 583

His first public showings took place at the Portland Hall, Southsea, on 14th September 1898 with a matinee and evening viewing. Although in its infancy as an event, the films were mixed with vocalists and instrumental sections, mirroring the style of the music halls in an event that lasted over two hours. However, far from aligning itself with 'low' music hall values, it was promoted as a respectable class of entertainment and advertised in the local newspapers with being “Under Royal and Distinguished Patronage.” 584 The event borrowed from the canon of popular entertainment. To add to the sense of theatricality, the screen was also “tastefully and appropriately” decorated in bunting and surrounded by plants, an orchestra provided the soundtrack and naval songs were performed in addition to the footage. 585

West’s films were recognised to be not just of local, but of national, value and he was invited by the Secretary of the Navy League to bring them to London for screening at St. James’s Hall, Piccadilly. 586 They were given a permanent London home at the Polytechnic, Regent Street, and received strong patronage from the Navy League and the Royal Navy, who afforded West unprecedented access. The First Lord of the Admiralty had given his patronage to the exhibition "recognising the good ... (it) is doing throughout the country in making the British public familiar with our first line of defence". 587 Indeed, it was reported that after a showing in Portsmouth attended by some 200 boys from the Shaftesbury Avenue National Refuge, who were on a camping holiday at Fort Cumberland, a letter of thanks to West attested that the number of their boys wanting to join the Navy had almost trebled. 588 West ran several provincial touring companies which would take the show around the country, as well as the dominions of the British Empire, simultaneously. He noted the success of his films in counteracting the apathy of patriotic

584 HT, 10th September 1898.
585 Songs sung included The Bay of Biscay, They all Love Jack and The Sailor Sighs. HT, 17th September 1898.
587 HT, 20th January 1900.
588 PEN, 10th September 1900.
feeling, especially in the midlands where the citizens did not have any opportunity to see
the work of the navy or army.\textsuperscript{589} In his autobiography West boasted that:

With the aid of these pictures it was made possible for people to realise
what life in the Services is like, and in the midlands, where many had never
seen a ship and some not even the sea, the films aroused intense patriotic
feeling and stimulated recruiting.\textsuperscript{590}

Although such an audience may have been predisposed to support of the British Empire,
such outpourings of patriotism gave little opportunity for audiences to express contrary
opinions. For example, when a man put his hat on and tried to leave during “God Save the
King” in Nova Scotia, Canada, he was publically shamed by the audience.\textsuperscript{591} West also
adopted similar tactics to theatre and music hall proprietors by engaging the civic
patriotism of the town it was visiting by dedicating the earnings of special showings to
local charities.\textsuperscript{592}

The \textit{Our Navy} series of films served as paragon of cinematic imperial propaganda during
the Edwardian period. As the \textit{Our Navy} series began to evolve it incorporated more
themes of the British Empire, the monarchy and footage of local interest. In a town such
as Portsmouth, which was ‘home’ to West and the Royal Navy, this sense of patriotism
must have been extremely palpable. Reports in the Portsmouth local press record footage
of a highly monarchistic and militaristic tone, such as the Delhi Durbar, which were “most
enthusiastically received”.\textsuperscript{593} These were also mixed with footage of the empire at large
and moving images of events of a local nature such as the fleet at Spithead, a children’s
demonstration at Canoe Lake, the decorations of the Portsmouth streets (taken from the

\textsuperscript{589} \textit{West, Sea Salts}; p.60.
\textsuperscript{590} \textit{West, Sea Salts}; p.5.
\textsuperscript{591} \textit{PEN}, 26\textsuperscript{th} June 1901.
\textsuperscript{592} From 6\textsuperscript{th} to the 8\textsuperscript{th} October 1898 proceeds of the showing of \textit{Our Navy} were in aid of Portsmouth’s Eye
and Ear Infirmary. \textit{HT}, 24\textsuperscript{th} September 1898. During the Boer War a special performance raised over £30 for
Mayor’s Fund for the Bluejackets and Marines engaged in the war. \textit{PEN} 27\textsuperscript{th} March 1900. Similarly, when
visiting Liverpool the proceeds of the first night went to the Lord Mayor of Liverpool’s Transvaal Fund. \textit{HT},
13\textsuperscript{rd} January 1900.
\textsuperscript{593} \textit{PEN}, 10\textsuperscript{th} February 1903. Other example include the funeral of Queen Victoria, the coronation of King
Edward VII, life and training in the Royal Navy, British troops and naval brigades in South Africa, a review of
Indian and colonial troops or the Royal Tour of India, 1906. \textit{PEN}, 8\textsuperscript{th} July 1902. \textit{PEN}, 31\textsuperscript{st} July 1906.
top of a tramcar in motion), and the King’s Birthday Review on Southsea Common in 1902. \footnote{PEN, 8th July 1902.} Unfortunately little of West’s footage has survived but evidence of the extent of the \textit{Our Navy} footage can be seen by looking at the company’s catalogue which included footage of Navy, Army and Merchant Navy life in addition to films of \textit{Our Colonies} and \textit{Our Homeland}. \footnote{Wessex Film and Sound Archive hold some footage reportedly from Alfred West’s ‘Our Navy, Our Army’ under the finding number AV222/1/V1. Related documents are also held under the catalogue number 3/61/2/3. Alfred West, \textit{Life in Our Navy, Our Army}, catalogue found online at Wessex Film and Sound Archive, \url{http://www.hants.gov.uk/rh/wfsa-media/alfred-west.pdf}, last accessed 17/10/2011.} The juxtaposition of these images would have situated the viewer as part of a large imperial network. In a place such as Portsmouth where the tone of the town was very much engendered with a heightened militarism, West’s \textit{Our Navy} series had a particular potency. Its enduring appeal is evidenced by the use of the Portsmouth public as a sounding board for each new programme of films before their screening in London and the provinces, and in 1906 the show successfully ran in the town for over three months. \footnote{PEN, 4th October 1906.}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{torpedo.png}
\caption{‘Torpedoed’, Screen Shot from Alfred West’s Film Catalogue. Wessex Film and Sound Archive.}
\end{figure}
However, such entertainments left little room for a more personal expression of imperial engagement except for the choice of patronage. Evidence suggests that the workers of the Royal Dockyard used commercial leisure to express their influence in the town and creating collective security and identities as a way of warding off attacks to their trade status from other shipbuilding trades. Such an example of this was the annual entertainment held by the Shipwrights’ Constructive Association (SCA). The events were open to invited guests only and attended by prominent officials in the Dockyard, indicating that its main function was as a way to influence and promote the status and respectability of the Shipwright by showing themselves as patrons of the arts and able and responsible citizens. The show for the SCA, who prided themselves on their emphasis on respectability and self-improvement, was performed by “a number of well-known amateurs” and such activities would also suggest that their notions of popular
entertainment and respectability were not mutually exclusive. Notions of collective security and ragged trouser philanthropy were the most prominent reasons for the staging of such events. In 1906 members of the Boilermakers’ Society staged their own concert with the help of local amateurs to raise money for the unemployed of the Boiler Department of Portsmouth Dockyard following the large-scale discharges in 1905. Similarly, in 1914 a dramatics and choral section had formed under the banner of the Dockyard Athletics Club who aimed to stage a concert in aid of the Dockyard Orphanage Fund.

The smoking concert also acted as a re-creation of popular culture by the public for their mutual entertainment and thus exhibited how ordinary people used formats of commercial entertainment less formally away from the music halls and theatres. It was a forum where Dockyardmen could perform popular songs and sketches for the amusement of their sectional groups of workmates to create group identities and solidarity against their industrial foes. For example, in 1906 the Riggers of the Dockyard raised funds via a “largely attended” smoking concert at a local public house in aid of a former workmate, Mr E. McCormack, who was invalided working in Gibraltar. As McCormack was a hired man he was not entitled to receive any pension or gratuity and the Riggers argued that the Admiralty had "repudiated all responsibility" for his condition. As with the theatrical entertainments above, little is mentioned in reports on smoking concerts about the patriotic or imperial element within them, suggesting that the explicit assertion of such values was of little importance to those present. Indeed, the example above portrays the relationship between Portsmouth and the British Empire as an inconvenience; as someone who has given their service in the Empire has been failed and not looked after by the Admiralty. Thus, the use of re-creation by simulating popular commercial entertainment can be seen as a vessel for providing security and self-help amongst a section of the Dockyard workforce rather than celebrating the British Empire.

597 In 1890 the “varied and attractive programme” which included many popular musical numbers and humorous songs, was held at Portsmouth’s Albert Hall and was the seventh annual entertainment of its kind. HT, 1st February, 1890. The role and composition of the SCA is explored in Chapter Seven.
598 PEN, 4th March 1906.
599 Admiralty Papers, Portsmouth Station, ADM 179/68.
600 Russell, Popular Music; p.133.
601 PEN, 16th February 1906.
and Admiralty provisions of employee care. Meanwhile during the smoking concert of the Established Boilermakers Society in 1913 there was a toast to the King, but the Society also toasted itself and boasted that 95 per cent of the Dockyard’s established Boilermakers were members of their society; illustrating that collective security could be aligned with notions of patriotism and duty.⁶⁰² Although these activities did not include explicit ideas about imperialism, what they do expose is the need for collective security under trade identities and the struggle for labour rights, which were bound with notions of citizenship. As Portsmouth’s citizenship and the nature of their employment by the Royal Navy was similarly bound with concepts of the British Empire, the collective identities created at a local level naturally became imbued with such values. This can be seen to an extent with the support of Portsmouth’s professional football team by Dockyard workmen.

The Football Crowd

For many males in the Edwardian era local patriotism was most fervently manifested in the football stadium of the local professional football club. This section will highlight ways in which the many formations of identity engendered by spectatorship brought the Royal Dockyard worker into a dialogue with the British Empire. For the Royal Dockyard worker, clear links between work and leisure existed as a mark of distinction and identity which was shown in the ability to regularly support the local team and was even demarked territorially in the football grounds. The thesis has asserted in Chapter Two that Portsmouth’s civic identity from the late-Victorian era was bound with notions of imperial service and, although it may not have been the case for other towns and cities, the towns’ particular relationship with the Royal Navy manifested a unique relationship with the British Empire. It was the notion of civic patriotism that most aptly illustrated how the outlets of commercial culture brought into focus notions of identity and how they interposed with concepts of empire.

⁶⁰² PEN, 6th January 1913.
The benefits of sport to the imperial mission were certainly prominent during the Edwardian era. The anxiety about degeneracy and ‘physical degradation’ dated from the 1880s onwards and was “one of the fashionable modern idioms of the age.” However, pessimism about the state of the British Empire was underlined by the recruitment and performance of British soldiers during the Boer War, which revealed deficiencies in working-class health. After the Boer War these issues sparked fresh alarm and brought concepts of Social Darwinism and Eugenics to the fore. The rise in spectatorship became increasingly linked to criticisms of the degeneration of the imperial race. However, professional football seemed to be late in the ‘imperialising’ of British popular culture. Indeed, it was only after disappointing recruitment figures that the civic elites and local newspapers in Portsmouth began to target supporters with patriotic messages. Patriotic football songs such as The Pompey Boys created in November 1914 by A. J. Bowler transposed the lexicons of military duty and the football pitch onto the imaginations of Portsmouth’s citizens as they began to conceive of their role in the conflict:

God bless these lads of Pompey, the lads in red and blue,
Who one and all, rose to the call, to see old England through,
We’re proud of every Briton, from near or far away,
But we’re extra proud of this little crowd of Pompey’s boys today.

Chorus:
Hallo Hallo Play Up Pompey
Kaiser must go off side is he,

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603 Harris, Private Lives, Public Spirit; p.33-34.
606 For example Robert Sturdee demanded in the Westminster Review, 1903, that the nation’s males took an active participation in the game rather than a passive interest. Russell, Football and the English; p.73.
Whereas J. A. Hobson, argued that the rise of spectatorship was a form of mental degeneracy which transferred spectatoral lust from the sports pitches with the British public’s rising jingoistic preoccupation with war. Hobson, Imperialism; pp.214-215.
607 The phrase ‘imperialising’ is attributed to Porter, Absent-minded; p.2.
608 Beaven, Visions of Empire; p.102
They’re mighty fond of football, they bubble over with fun,
But when their country calls them, they quickly shoulder gun,
You wouldn’t think it in them, when cup tie crowds go by,
Who said they’d fear the Prussians? And wink the other eye.

They’ve heard their brothers calling, from the trenches on the Aisne,
They’ve heard the call appalling, of Belgium in its pain,
They see the goal of duty, they mean to fight and win,
Give back to Louvain Beauty, and crush the men of sin.

God bless the Bonnie Laddies, increase their numbers too,
Be with them as they rally to see old England through,
Go with them to the conflict, and bring them back once more,
Triumphant over the vandals, to sing on England’s shore.  

However, this was after Portsmouth’s football recruitment rallies only yielded a total of 34 men over two separate occasions. Like professional football itself, many Dockyardmen carried on in their roles, signalling a continuation of everyday life rather than a rush to arms. Portsmouth’s Dockyard workers’ reticence in enlistment for the Great War may have been due to their already pivotal role in the town’s war effort. Indeed, in Portsmouth’s case, local links with empire were more subtle and based on local patriotism and work-based concepts of masculine identity. Support of a professional football team, therefore, can be viewed as a potent agent for the articulation of local, gendered and class-based identities which were largely resistant to ‘imperialising’ until

611 Barring call ups from Reserved Lists; some Dockyard workmen were ex-servicemen and would have been eligible for re-mobilisation. Mike Neasom, Mick Cooper and Doug Robinson, *Pompey. The History of Portsmouth Football Club*, (Portsmouth: Milestone Publications, 1984); p.20.
much later in the period. Hobson’s jingoistic “passion of the spectator” must therefore be indicative of deeper attachments to values other than a nebulous and ubiquitous British Empire.613

The Dockyard worker’s place within the scheme of football support can be attributed to the foundation of a professional team. In the Hampshire Telegraph the correspondent named “Sportsman” provided anecdotal evidence of how it stereotypically affected the Royal Dockyard worker:

A Dockyardman was never tired of holding football – and any other game or the matter of that – up to opprobrium, and his cronies were incessantly chaffing the workmates about wasting their Saturday afternoons on a cold football field while there was a good fire always burning at the “Pig and Whistle,” an exciting game of “hokum” or “shove-halfpenny” always in prospect, and, what was more acceptable, plenty of good beer so long as their money lasted. “I’ll bloomenwell watch that they don’t get me on no football field” was the stereotyped conclusion to the many arguments. One day one of the men who always patronised the football match was surprised to see his hitherto sarcastic mate also making his way to Fratton Park. The latter got down as far as the road leading to the entrance, stopped for a minute, then, pulling himself together as if he were about to take his first plunge into a cold tub, pulled his sixpence from his pocket, and sneaked into the ground, hoping that he would not be recognised. However, on the Monday he was naturally chaffed, but swore by all that was good that he had no intention of going “but walked up that way by accident, and was carried into the ground by the crowd.” Now he attends the matches with great regularity and no one has the “football fever” more severely than he.614

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613 Hobson, The Psychology; p.9.
614 HT, 30th December 1899.
For many working-class males, especially migrant workers, support of the local football team became a way in which to cultivate a sense of belonging and place. Certainly the Royal Dockyard worker contributed to this dialogue of civic patriotism through the support of the local football club. This was facilitated by the Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee who would run excursion trains to football matches; enabling not just home but away support also. There is also evidence that they also carried the Portsmouth team themselves in a specially allocated carriage, further demonstrating the explicit links between football support in the town and Dockyard workers’ patronage.

However, the consistent support of the club was contingent to a large extent on the earnings of the supporter and the availability of disposable income within their budget. The relationship between trade and rank in Portsmouth continued to be of more importance than class consciousness into the mid-twentieth century. Indeed, a substantial number of the supporters would have been from the skilled artisan class, who could better afford to regularly attend matches either at home or away. Football supporting, then, could be seen in a context of a status symbol which identified those who could regularly afford to go and those who could not. Some trades prided themselves on their support of the local football team. For example, in 1901 the Smiths and Hammermen of ‘No. 2 Smithery’ burst into the club’s anthem, the “Pompey Chimes”, when the chairman announced that Portsmouth had just won their game with Millwall during their smoking concert. The Boilermakers were also particularly identified as being ardent supporters, as a report of an English Cup game against Bedminster at Bristol in 1899 illustrated:

At the conclusion of the match some Boilermakers from Portsmouth Dockyard, who had been waving their banner and cheering vociferously during the game, were set upon by some of the Bristol spectators, and

616 HT, 16th December 1899.
617 See Chapter Seven.
619 Mason, Association Football; pp.154-156.
620 PEN, 23rd September 1901.
several were severely mauled. The flag was rescued after it had been torn from the staff, which was broken.  

The report highlights a discernible trade sectionalism occurring in the football stands, illustrating evidence that the bond created inside work through the identification oneself with a particular set of people was transposed into the shared experience of commercial leisure. Indeed, the Dockyard’s Boilermakers had a particular relationship with the club, the north-east corner of the ground being called “Boilermakers’ Hump”, showing that men of the Dockyard also demarked themselves symbolically, with flags, and spatially, with where they stood in the ground. The assertion of identity for the Boilermakers was pertinent as their status as skilled tradesmen was undermined by the Shipwrights of the Royal Dockyard. As highlighted in Chapter Three, during the transition from wood to steel ship construction the Boilermakers had taken over from Shipwrights in the private yards in the construction of the hull. However, the Admiralty’s reluctance to lose their core of skilled artisans meant that in the Royal Dockyard this work was performed by the Shipwrights and thus the work and skill of the Boilermaker was seen as lower in comparison.

Although attendance at football matches could, like attendance to the music hall or theatre, indicate social status, exposure to dialogues with empire occurred at a subtler level which encompassed notions of local identity. Until recently regional variations have been overlooked in the development of professional football, which would have actively shaped the outlook of supporters and their relationship with the game. Indeed, the town was comparatively late in forming its own professional football team. Portsmouth was in line with many London clubs who did not turn professional until the turn of the

621 HT, 16th December 1899.
624 Taylor, The Association Game; p.62.
625 Portsmouth Football Club was founded in 1898, lagging behind other local towns such as Southampton, Bournemouth, Ringwood, Fordingbridge and Basingstoke who had already established clubs in the 1870s. Neasom et al., Pompey; p.7. However, this assertion is slightly misleading and it must be noted that the turn to professionalism was considerably later than this. Southampton, for example, originated from a church team in the 1880s and did not turn professional until the 1890s. Russell, Football and the English; p.37.
twentieth century due the ethos of amateurism in southern England and had its roots in middle class, church and army movements. 626 The league system proved a vital factor in boosting the game’s popularity and enabled its supporters a window to the world through which the whole network of football culture could be viewed. 627 This was also augmented by English Cup ties, ‘North’ versus ‘South’ matches and internationals which bolstered the supporter’s connection with the country and the empire. 628 In these settings wider versions of rivalries could be played out, bringing the supporters into contact with other nations and enabling conclusions to be made about their playing prowess. In 1899, for example, Portsmouth Reserve Team played host to ‘The Kaffirs’ in the form of a football team who were making a tour of the country. 629 The Hampshire Telegraph surmised that:

The Africans have not much idea of football, and although Portsmouth took matters very calmly, they won seven goals to three. 630

Similarly in 1907 Portsmouth undertook a tour of Austria and Germany and in every match beat their opponents convincingly, perhaps boosting a feeling of superiority over the teams of other nations. 631 However, these matches were not widely reported and afforded supporters little regular opportunity to create a consistent dialogue with racial or imperial discourses. Arguably it was the manner in which regional loyalties were re-enforced by pitting local civic rivals against one another which produced the keenest interest and shaped the concept of football support in the town. Indeed Portsmouth’s citizens were all too keen to accept their own team, especially since local rivals Southampton had a successful club of their own. 632 It is evident that looking at reports of

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626 Taylor, The Association Game; p.64; Neasom et al., Pompey; p.7; Dean Hayes, Portsmouth FC, An A-Z, (Seaford: S. B. Publications, 1997); pp.95-96.

627 David Russell suggested that within football notions of local patriotism could act as a building block for wider loyalties and affiliations. Russell, Football and the English; p.68. Taylor, The Association Game; p.70.

628 Cooper and Robinson, state that during the 1902 to 1903 season Portsmouth had 12 international players. Their examples include Albert Houlker, who played for England in the England versus Wales international played at Fratton Park that year. Other international players mentioned were Matt Reilly (Ireland); Arthur Chadwick, C. B. Fry, Albert Houlker, Dan Cunliffe, Frederick Wheldon and Steven Smith (England); Robert Marshall and Alexander Brown (Scotland). Cooper and Robinson, Pompey Diary, no page numbers.

629 HT, 9th December 1899.

630 HT, 9th December 1899.

631 PEN, 24th May 1907 and PEN, 27th May 1907.

Portsmouth Football Club’s fixtures during the Edwardian era, which were mainly in the Southern League, rivalries were strongest amongst neighbouring port towns and those with similar industries, such as the other Royal Dockyard towns of Plymouth and Chatham. Local rivalry was quickly stirred up in the provincial press for the first local derby match against Southampton. The Hampshire Telegraph roused its readership by framing the match in terms of historic precedent both on and off the pitch:

The first of what, it is hoped, will be a long series of historic football battles between Portsmouth and Southampton took place today at Fratton Park ...
There has always been a deal of rivalry between the two towns, but Southampton long since took the initiative in securing the services of a good professional team. Last season when the Royal Artillery met the Saints in the Southern League there was a considerable amount of interest evinced, and now that Portsmouth can also boast of its own professional eleven that interest has vastly increased.633

Similarly for fixtures with Brighton it was reported that “Such keen rivalry exists … a good gate for the match was practically assured.”634 Rivalries with the other Royal Dockyard towns were similarly conceived by the local press. For Portsmouth’s first fixture with Chatham the rivalry was considered innate and thus unquestionable:

Naturally there is a deal of rivalry between the Dockyard towns, and among 4,000 spectators who witnessed the match were not a few Service men who accorded Portsmouth a hearty welcome.635

The rivalry was further fuelled during the analysis when the Hampshire Telegraph criticised Chatham for their reputation for “rough play” and praised Portsmouth for being the superior team on the day.636 The culture of Dockyard sporting rivalry was even promoted by the civic elite. To mark Plymouth’s professional football club’s first game

633 HT, 7th September 1899.
634 PEN, 12th September 1912.
635 HT, 7th September 1899.
636 HT, 9th September 1899.
with Portsmouth it was announced that the Mayor was to hold a banquet for the players and directors of both teams. It was remarked in the local press that “The function will be an interesting one, and will be a pleasant introduction to the friendly football rivalry which will now exist between the two Dockyard towns.”

The photograph below shows the first match of the Southern Division 1906-1907 season against Plymouth. The game attracted an attendance of 20,000 people which was “considerably augmented by the excursion from Plymouth.”

The most popular matches however, were the more prestigious English Cup Ties and the home attendance record was broken some four months later on 12th January 1907 with a match against Manchester United when almost 24,500 spectators were counted at the turnstiles. Contemporary comment on the rise in “football fever” noted that it was only a recent phenomenon for the people of Portsmouth to be inclined to support any type of sport at all. In an article in The Referee by G. R. Sims and re-published in the Hampshire Telegraph the author recounted his experience of being in Portsmouth when the latest edition of the football results came out. Such was the hubbub that he speculated that it was some important international breaking news:

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637 PEN, 24th August 1903.
638 PEN, 1st September 1906. This was possibly a trip the Plymouth Dockyard Excursion Committee organised. See Chapter Six for an account of the Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee.
639 HT, 30th December 1899.
Suddenly, with hoarse cries, the newspaper hawkers came rushing along with huge piles of the latest edition over their shoulders. No sooner did they appear than the crowd closed around them and tore the papers from their hands. Everyman - soldier, sailor, or civilian - seemed to be seizing a paper and eagerly devouring its contents ... I received the first copy, and opening it with trembling hands, I glanced at the huge headline. This was the headline that was staring me in the face: - PORTSMOUTH V. SHEPPEY UNITED. RESULT. What do you think of it? The intense excitement, the mad rush for papers, had nothing to do with the Transvaal, or with Dreyfus. It was simply the eager desire of the population of Portsmouth to learn the result of a football match.640

Indeed, Sheppey being another Royal Dockyard locale, highlights the tone and expectation of inter-Dockyard clashes. Through such reports it would be easy to attribute a jingoistic character to the behaviour of the crowd. However, the dialogue between club and supporter was contingent on many factors. The grossly fluctuating gate receipts of the period show that Portsmouth’s relationship with its football club could be conditional. Over the period of 1899 until the First World War the attendance for home matches peaked and troughed from match to match and season to season for a number of reasons. While the Edwardian period was a time when ground records were broken the rain, the playing standard of the club, the calibre of the opponent and other commitments away from the football stadium would have had an impact on attendance.641 Indeed, an example of the fluctuating popularity of football can be evidenced in the massive attendance in 1907 for Manchester United’s match against Portsmouth, mentioned earlier. However, the success of attracting supporters to a new football team did not translate as well to the net profit of the club. Although almost 161,000 watched Portsmouth’s home matches in their first season, after the visiting clubs were paid their share, gate receipts totalled £4,596 and the operating loss was £875.642 By 1911

640 HT. 30th September 1899.
641 Mason, Association Football; p.141.
642 Neasom et al., Pompey; p.11.
Portsmouth’s fortunes became so untenable that the club faced financial collapse. They had been relegated to the Second Division of the Southern League and the subsequent falling gate takings, coupled with the escalating costs of away games in a league populated mainly by Welsh teams, meant that in May 1911 the club started up a cash appeal in order to keep it afloat.⁶⁴³

Therefore, rather than a consistent attendance at football matches, it was presence of the football club itself which had an impact on the popular imagination of the town. Through this new institution Portsmouth citizens could create a dialogue with how they saw themselves and interacted with outsiders.⁶⁴⁴ Sport produced parallels with civic progress and the local team became a powerful talisman for the town and its socio-economic development.⁶⁴⁵ Moreover, the team became imbued with a localised persona which was symbolic of those who supported it.⁶⁴⁶ Indeed, the popular image of “Pompey” came to be personified in the image of a sailor, thus merging Portsmouth’s role as a naval town to a certain type of class and manliness.⁶⁴⁷ Recalling some of his former football teams, former player C. B. Fry wrote of “Pompey”:

He is heavily supported by soldiers from the forts and barracks, by sailors from the battleships and other crafts, and by dock hands of various grades ... Pompey as a team is more of a sailor than anything else, rollicking, good-natured, dare-devil fellow, moving with free limbs and a hearty roll.⁶⁴⁸

Other idioms of local patriotism were used to create a specific identity such as the ‘Pompey Chimes’ football chant, which resonated to the tune of the bells of the town hall

⁶⁴³ Neasom et al., Pompey; p.18.
⁶⁴⁴ Mason argued that the local football team can be seen both to contribute to the intensity or diffusion of local consciousness through the mediums of cultural exchange such as regular matches, local newspaper coverage and conversations with people. Mason, Association Football; p.234.
⁶⁴⁵ Andy Croll has noted how the professional Rugby in Merthyr became a symbol of the town itself and the sporting success of the local team could be seen as a metaphor for the town’s progress and be used to promote more positive images of the district. Andy Croll, Civilizing the Urban. Popular Culture and Public Space in Merthyr, c.1880-1914, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000); pp.170-171.
⁶⁴⁶ Holt, Sport and the British; p.173.
⁶⁴⁷ There are many folkloric stories as to the origins of the name, the most common explanation is of its naval origins as a nickname given to the town by Royal Navy sailors.
Moreover, a distinct military tone of the ditty was incorporated by its recitation on the cornet by the supporters. Indeed, the affinity with militarism and of sport was very prevalent during the era. Certainly Portsmouth F.C.’s fans may have considered league rivalry as a type of war as a poem published in the Portsmouth Evening News entitled ‘Pompey’s Progress, or Rank Restored’ suggests. The poem, about the club’s relegation to the Second Division of the Southern League and its subsequent re-promotion the following year, personified the clubs of Leyton Orient, Luton and Brompton as military figures:

Lieutenant Leyton helped to chase, poor Pompey from his pride of place, and Luton gave a hand, to push him from his honoured band, and Capt. Brompton helped to kick, the poor chap out, - a dirty trick, but ne’er a sign of grief to show, they sympathised with Pompey’s woe.

Conclusion

Although it can be easily asserted that there was a strong imperialist narrative running through the commercial outlets of leisure in Portsmouth during the late Victorian and Edwardian period, the way in which imperialism was communicated and understood was contingent on local agendas. The relationship between local patriotism and empire was more prominent in Portsmouth than many other towns and cities due to its unique relationship with the Royal Navy. Although to some degree aspects of navalism, militarism, monarchism and the town’s role in the safeguarding of the British Empire would have been subtly absorbed by its citizens, whether imperialism was a motivating factor in seeking out certain entertainments during the era of high imperialism remains sketchy. Certainly, the civic elites and the provincial press reinforced the local focus of commercial leisure through legislative laws and civic patriotism. Portsmouth’s distinct civic naval and imperial bonds were consciously incorporated by the hubs of mass leisure to create a local consciousness and civic identity. Overt civic rivalry could be witnessed...

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651 PEN, 23rd April 1912.
after the creation of the town’s first professional football team in 1898 which the local press were instrumental in with other port and Dockyard towns. This local iconography resonated through the commercial entertainment of the town to build an archetype which formed the backbone of working-class concepts of place and identity.

However, far from being merely an invocation of jingoistic and crude nationalism, through the medium of commercial cultural institutions, the Portsmouth public were able to create a dialogue with their locality, nation and empire. The extension of the franchise and the tendency of commercial leisure to exhibit the morality and respectability of their entertainments enabled the working classes to exercise their rights to leisure and exhibit good citizenship by patronising the town’s cultural scene. Using the lexicon of the music hall and the football field, Royal Dockyard workers were able to establish meaning and conceive of themselves through tangible and specific local relationships to notions of empire and their place in the imperial project. This was an important aspect of identity formation and displayed a far more fluid dialogue with ‘top down’ imperialising influences than previously argued. Concepts of imperialism and Empire, therefore, were based on shifting notions of local identity, class, status and gender roles over, or in addition to, wider discourses on the British Empire. The key to assessing the level of imperial inculcation and the complicity of the working class, therefore, was not simply whether or not they were imperialist; but to measure to what degree and at what time or occasion did this imperialism manifest itself? In addition to this and, most importantly, we must ask; for what reasons? This will be assessed in more detail in the following two chapters.
Chapter 6. Dockyard Outings and Excursions

By the late-nineteenth century opportunities had expanded greatly for the working classes in the realm of travel and holiday-making, enabled in part by the changes to tourism prompted by the staging of the Great Exhibition in London, 1851. The development of the tourism industry and the uptake of cheap passenger tickets meant that by 1872 British railway companies earned half of their income from third class traffic. By the 1890s the Royal Dockyards were among the employers that had conceded holidays to their workforces. Government Dockyard workers fared better than many who were privately employed, but did not earn as much as their counterparts in private yards. By 1894 the adoption of the eight-hour day in the Royal Dockyards led to a standardisation of their working hours and in the early 1900s the electrification of Dockyard lighting meant that work patterns were further consolidated. Due to perceived inequalities in Royal Dockyard employment the era is marked for being a tumultuous time as the workforce began to assert more vociferously a desire for better pay and conditions under trade union standards. The success of the concession of the eight-hour day and the struggle for better pay and conditions led to inevitable scrutiny of the Royal Dockyard worker. The projection of values in the struggle for labour rights, therefore, became an incredibly important political signifier in the industrialised Edwardian era of how Royal Dockyard workers managed and spent their leisure time.

653 Barton, Working-class Organisations; p.37.
655 By the early twentieth century some workers had secured agreement for unpaid leave with their employers. Barton, Working-class Organisations; p.7.
656 Royal Dockyard workers would be expected to work a 48-hour week over six days; Saturday being a half day. HMSO, Instructions As To Cash Duties – 1905. (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1905); p.19. PEN, 23rd August 1906.
658 As previously quoted, when the Southern Daily Mail reacted to claims in the “radical” press that discharges in the Dockyards were imminent, they commented on cuts to be made to overtime rather than personnel. They argued that “as overtime is against the spirit of the eight hours’ movement, working men cannot with consistency feel aggrieved if it decreases.” SDM, 23rd April 1902.
Recent studies have sought to situate working-class tourism and holiday-making as an active and collective process, enabled by working-class organisations and a desire by the working classes to develop their own independent leisure patterns. Importantly Susan Barton argued that the examination of working-class leisure must be set in context; clearly relating it to the quest for free time as an element of labour history in industrial society. Through an examination of the workplace outings of the Royal Dockyard worker and the activities of the Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee this chapter will thus explore the implications of work-related leisure activities enabled by an expansion to the travel industry. It shall be argued that not only were outings and excursions great opportunities for working-class men to broaden their horizons and avail themselves of the recreational pleasures available, but they were also important statements on status, citizenship and respectability.

Southern England has largely been under-explored and characterised as non-agitational. John K. Walton argued that the scope of the working class to develop holiday-making patterns was limited in southern England due to the absence of traditional holidays and “lack of a common focus for absenteeism.” Similarly Barton argued that it was only the adoption of the August Bank Holiday which enabled southern workers a common focus for collective holiday-making. There is, however, strong evidence of regular outings and excursion travel in the culture of skilled artisans of the Royal Dockyard worker in Portsmouth dating from the early 1880s, which suggests that, for the industrialised workers of the Royal Dockyard, this may not have been the case. Their exploits were documented in the local press on a regular basis, which exhibited the importance of these activities in their leisure time. Some departments of the Dockyard also commissioned group photographs to document the occasion and kept albums of activities and colleagues. Albums held in the collection of the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Historical Trust provided a fascinating insight into the strong sectional and trade loyalties.

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660 Barton, Working-class Organisations; p.9.
662 Barton, Working-class Organisations; p.91.
manifested in the nature of Royal Dockyard employment in the late-Victorian and Edwardian era. Another critical source was a collection of Dockyard Excursion Committee papers spanning from the early 1900s to the mid-1920s, documenting the organisation, their trips and some of their financial details. These two sources displayed a distinct pattern of leisure created by the Royal Dockyard worker and neither collection has been used in academic research on leisure and imperialism. The trips to London organised by the Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee included the chance of visiting the great exhibitions of the late-Victorian and Edwardian age. Academics seeking to highlight a popular imperialism thesis have noted the imperialist subtexts of the great London exhibitions. However, Bernard Porter has argued that such activities were “usually done for what else could be got out of those activities, rather than for imperialism: for the sugar and not the pill.” Similarly, using exhibitions and cinema as examples, Andrew S. Thompson has argued that it is not possible to use leisure and recreation habits alone as an adequate measure of working-class attitudes to empire and more attention must be paid to the home and the workplace as conduits of imperial experience. This chapter will therefore seek to construct a more nuanced understanding of the relationships between the attendance of great exhibitions and empire by assessing participation in the broader context of organised Dockyard excursions and outings of the period.

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663 Portsmouth Dockyard Manager Electrical Engineers’ Department (EEM), EEM Department Photograph Album 1910-1936, and Portsmouth Dockyard Manager Engineers’ Department (MED), MED Drawing Office Staff Outings Album c.1895-1914, Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Historical Trust collection.

664 Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, Papers of the Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, Portsmouth History Centre, Kemp Collection, uncatalogued.

665 J. M. MacKenzie identified them as successful examples of imperial propaganda which combined the genres of entertainment, education and the trade fair and used their transient nature to give a sense of urgency for visitors to attend. J. M. MacKenzie, Propaganda and Empire, The Manipulation of Public Opinion, 1880-1960, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984); p.97. Echoing MacKenzie, Paul Greenhalgh pinpointed the Boer War as a catalyst for an increased defence of British imperialism within the content of the Great Exhibitions and argued that in their aim of engendering national pride in the empire they “undoubtedly succeeded.” Paul Greenhalgh, Ephemeral Vistas. The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World’s Fairs, 1851-1939, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988); pp.58-59. Similarly, Peter Hoffenberg has argued that the popularity of and participation at imperial exhibitions suggested that “the general public cannot be labelled only ‘indifferent’ to national and imperial issues.” Peter Hoffenberg, An Empire on Display: English, Indian, and Australian Exhibitions from the Crystal Palace to the Great War, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); p.29.


The volume of outings and excursions organised among trade and sectional groups illustrated the importance of workplace in the working-class male’s identity. The chapter will further argue that by involvement in formal outings within their workplace groupings and through the creation of an excursion travel business the Royal Dockyard worker had great autonomy in creating their leisure patterns and actively shaped the patterns of excursion- and holiday-making in Portsmouth. Moreover, the formal leisure patterns of the Royal Dockyard workers were explicitly designed to secure labour and citizenship rights. In the context of the heightened industrial unrest and imperial threat of the Edwardian era, Royal Dockyardmen, who were instrumental in the realisation of the Naval Arms Race, fused notions of empire and patriotism with their broader aims and used them to gain respectability, independence and social status in order to legitimise their right to better terms and conditions in industry.

Dockyard Works’ Outings

The works’ annual outing has often been regarded as an event the owner of a firm or factory would arrange and pay for the day’s entertainments as a gesture of paternalism to their employees. Although they followed many of the same structures, such as the organisation of the day and activities taken part in, the outings of the Royal Dockyard artisan were self-organised, self-funded and reflected a level of independence from the institution of work. Analysis of the activities and behaviour of those who took part highlight specific leisure practices and promote a fuller understanding of what the Dockyard workforce found important, and most crucially, how they conceived themselves and their place in society. Although working people in Britain continued to understand their place in society through class, the formation of identities was a pluralistic process where a number of ‘identities’, such as gender, craft, religion, locality, nation and empire, could be adopted simultaneously. It is pertinent therefore, that, as with the trades themselves, there was a distinct absence of women at these occasions with the onus being on the Victorian and Edwardian notions of male company and male bonding.

669 August, The British; p.2.
Many photographs still exist of Dockyard outings and the recording of these moments mark their importance in the lives of workers. The albums of the MED Drawing Office (Manager Engineering Department) and EEM (Electrical Engineering Manager) Departments illustrate how the separate trades of the Dockyard had a proud and active social aspect to them and the leaves of the albums documented outings, sporting pursuits and portraits of esteemed colleagues. The photographs in this section of the chapter illustrate some examples of the many outings which took place throughout the period. The outings exposed the high degree of sectionalism within Admiralty employment; highlighting the heterogeneity of Portsmouth’s Dockyardmen. It also exhibited the process of creating ‘distinction’ within their class caste in their everyday lives through the articulation of the hierarchical and stratified culture of the Dockyard in their leisure time. Hugh Cunningham noted that in certain trades such as shipbuilding, “the male camaraderie of those who had served an apprenticeship continued in work and carried on to leisure”. However, arguably an additional function of the Dockyard workplace outing was its use to reinforce collective security through an assertion of the independence and respectability of a particular trade and artisans. This was extremely important as the Admiralty fostered competition between Dockyard trades and grades and between

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670 MED, Photograph Album and EEM Photo Album, PRDHT.
671 See Chapter Three.
672 Hugh Cunningham, 'Leisure and Culture'; p.302.
Established and Hired workers. Riveters, Ironcaulkers and Drillers, who in private yards would have held trade status, were regarded as “Skilled Labourers” in the Royal Dockyards and for a long time were denied entry to craft unions.\footnote{The Boilermakers’ Society only admitted Ironcaulkers and Drillers as members in 1914. Galliver, ‘Trade Unionism’; p.113.} Moreover, during the period, Shipwrights, the Royal Dockyard’s elite, were being challenged for supremacy by the Fitters and the new engineering and electrical trades, who were fighting for better pay and recognition in Admiralty employment.\footnote{Brian H. Patterson, “Giv’ er a Cheer Boys” The Great Docks of Portsmouth Dockyard 1830-1914, (Portsmouth: Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Historical Society, 1989); p.40. PEN, 18th May 1906.} That the albums were compiled by staff from the Engineering departments is strong evidence of a desire to galvanise collective security and photographs also feature of dinners and outings with national associations. By 1913 the unrest over pay and conditions in the Royal Dockyard had escalated so much that engineering trade unions actively campaigned for pay increases outside the Admiralty’s internal grievance system of petitioning.\footnote{Trade Unions included the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE), Steam Engine Makers’ Society (SEMS) and the Patternmakers’ Society. They were also supported by the Government Labourers’ Union. The situation was diffused by the Admiralty raising of wages by 2s. a week in all sections of the workforce. Therefore, although the Engineers gained a portion of the rise they had protested for, sectional rivalries prevailed. Galliver, “Trade Unionism”; p.116 and p.119.}
All the major trades seemed to have taken part in some form of outing, which was reported widely in the local press and offered these trades legitimacy on many levels.\textsuperscript{676} The reports were submitted by those who took part and their motivations for seeking publication must have been to advertise their particular leisure freedoms and show off their ability to indulge in a leisurely activity and enhance their collective identity.\textsuperscript{677} It is significant that there was an absence of reference to the empire, monarchy or their employer, the Admiralty, in the reports of their exploits, highlighting the supremacy of collective notions of industrial identity over national or imperial ones within this sphere of socialising.\textsuperscript{678} Many Dockyard trades and grades established networks of collective security on a sectional, trade and national basis and there was an undeniable political aspect to this which saw fruition in the Edwardian era. When the Associated Shipwrights’ Society (ASS) held their first excursion to Winchester in 1901 their importance and status was underlined by being shown around Winchester Cathedral by the Dean and escorted by a police constable to guide them to the chapel and hospital of St Cross. There they were met by the Cannon and given a tour of the site.\textsuperscript{679} Similar reports on the Portsmouth Branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE) show how the well-paid skilled artisans of the Dockyard were able to charter a boat to Warsash in 1903.\textsuperscript{680} More explicitly political, in 1904 their outing to Westbourne was used to report on the Branch’s development in the region and finances and an “excellent speech” was given by the organising district delegate about “the need for Labour representation to remedy present evils.”\textsuperscript{681} Indeed, in the manner of friendly society conviviality, it may be correct to assume that these outings provided an opportunity to gather the members and discuss formally

\textsuperscript{676} For a discussion on ‘New Journalism’ and the relationship between readership and newspaper influence, see Chapter Four.

\textsuperscript{677} Indeed, the Portsmouth Evening News complained to prospective contributors that belated offerings could not be included due to the daily nature of the paper and their wish to remain current. PEN, 17\textsuperscript{th} July 1906.

\textsuperscript{678} A programme for a smoking concert for the Electrical Engineer’s Department at The Crystal Palace Hotel on Friday 15\textsuperscript{th} December 1922, documented the proceedings of the evening, showing toasts to the King and the singing of the National Anthem; hinting that patriotic songs and toasts may well have been part of their entertainments, however, these are not reported and are difficult to corroborate. EEM, Photo Album, PRDHT.

\textsuperscript{679} PEN, 24\textsuperscript{th} June 1901.

\textsuperscript{680} PEN, 16\textsuperscript{th} September 1903.

\textsuperscript{681} PEN, 7\textsuperscript{th} September 1904.
and informally the progress and direction of the trades associations. The albums of the MED Drawing Office and EEM both featured pictures of outings in connection with the United Draughtsmens’ Association, which denoted the participation in a national network of associations which was complimented by convivial outings and excursions in order to promote improved lines of communication and brotherhood between branches.

That the Draughtsmen of the MED enjoyed such a vibrant and varied programme of leisure together was a testament to their position in the Dockyard as among the highest-paid artisans. Table 5 in Appendix H illustrates the weekly rates of pay of the Dockyard Trades in 1905, which shows that Draughtsmen and those working in the engineering and metal trades had the potential to earn the most money. The scant reporting on the activities of unskilled workers may therefore indicate that their disparate tasks were a hindrance to a coherent trade identity alongside their absence of disposable income. Unskilled Labourers tended to socialise as a collective as part of the larger General Labourers’ Union. In 1903, for example, a smoking concert and an outing to Westbourne were arranged in connection with a conference of the Federation of Government Labourers’ Unions which was gathered in Portsmouth to discuss the low rates of pay of Government Labourers. Such a device aptly illustrates the importance of maintaining a convivial and collective identity in the fight for better pay and conditions. Similarly, evidence of annual outings among the Skilled Labourer trades highlights their aspirations to form trade identities of their own and take part in this collectivist artisanal culture. Attaining the social distinction of artisanal stratus would no doubt offer them more industrial support and elevated status.

Outings, therefore, were a mark of distinction amongst the complex trades hierarchy of the Royal Dockyard whereby trade pride was amalgamated with a wider element of socialising and networking. Certainly the ‘elite’ of the Dockyard, the Shipwrights, took delight in reporting how during an outing in 1913 Mr

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682 The role of friendly societies and trades associations and unions will be further discussed in Chapter Seven.
684 The Federation combined all of the Labourers’ unions of the Royal Dockyards. PEN, 6th March 1903.
685 See for example Portsmouth Dockyard Ironcaulkers’ outing, PEN, 14th August 1899 or the Skilled Labourers of the Painters’ shop, PEN, 12th July 1904.
Pearce’s division were able to congratulate an ex-colleague Mr Thomas Kersey, who had recently obtained a seat on the town’s Board of Guardians. Indeed, the party hoped that Kersey’s new position “might be of benefit to all concerned”, showing how the relationship between trades and their influential ex-colleagues could be exploited outside of work.  

The organisation and tone of the Dockyard outings reflected their independent nature and the capability of the Dockyardmen to act as their own agents. The events mirrored other outings made by convivial groups such as friendly societies or county associations and were highly organised by a secretary and committee with the entertainment usually generated by the members of the party. A good example of this was an outing of Blacksmiths in 1899:

The workmen of the Smithery Fitting Shop of Portsmouth Dockyard held their annual outing on Saturday, driving to Woolston in four-horse brakes. The party stopped at Fareham for breakfast, which was served at the "Royal Oak", and paid a visit to Messrs Drover’s hothouse and rose garden. The holiday-makers arrived at Woolston shortly after noon, and dined at the "Railway" Hotel, after which they crossed the river to Southampton, where the afternoon was pleasantly spent. Returning to Fareham for tea, the party was joined by Mr Harrison, Foreman of Smiths, and Messrs Morely and Salter, who received a hearty welcome. Several members of the company gave songs and recitations, and in the course of the proceedings Mr Goble presented a handsome timepiece to Mr T. Hunt in recognition of his services as Hon. Secretary of the Smiths’ Outing Club. The party drank to the health of Mr Harrison and passed votes of thanks to the host of the "Royal Oak" and Mr Drover, and the homeward journey was then resumed, Portsmouth being reached at midnight. The arrangements for the outing

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686 PEN, 21st July 1913.
were carried out in an efficient manner by the Secretary and a Committee
comprising of Messrs Goble, Mills, Turner and Cobb.\textsuperscript{687}

Seventeen days later many of the members reasserted their trade identity by attending
the fourth annual outing of their national trade society, the Royal Dockyard Smiths'
Association, to Winchester. During the outing over 500 members and their friends took
part in a round of sightseeing and particular mention is given to “the Law Courts, Cells
and Museum, as well as the Great Hall of Winchester Castle.” Afterwards 200 members
sat down to tea at St John’s Hall.\textsuperscript{688} The Blacksmiths’ option to use their outings for the
pursuit of knowledge was also significant. Other favoured pastimes included
combinations of sporting competitions, rambling or scenic drives. For example, the
highlights from an outing of the Skilled Labourers of the Painters’ Shop was a visit to an
historic church and then sports with the village children.\textsuperscript{689} Through these outings
Dockyard workers were able to explore other social identities. Football and tug o’ war
competitions between ‘marrieds’ and ‘benedicts’ conferred not only manliness, but
underpinned marital status as a social convention; and while the single men came off
better at football as, presumably many were still young, the married men usually got their
revenge with the tug of war, showing their brawn cultivated through years of working in
hard manual roles.\textsuperscript{690}

\textsuperscript{687} PEN, 10\textsuperscript{th} July 1899.
\textsuperscript{688} PEN, 27\textsuperscript{th} July 1899.
\textsuperscript{689} PEN, 12\textsuperscript{th} July 1904.
\textsuperscript{690} Ironcaulkers’ outing, PEN, 14\textsuperscript{th} August 1899.

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The activities participated in would have also exhibited to the outside world that the many Dockyard trades and grades were not using their recreation time frivolously. Although all activities signify different qualities, all are on a par with national preoccupations in leisure, and all seem on the surface to be rational recreations. However, it would be more accurate to describe the Dockyardmen as making choices based on cultivating their ‘assertive independence’ away from a middle-class rationalising experience of leisure, which centred on specific notions of status, respectability and collective security. Social convention was an important component of the annual works’ outing. This included wearing your best clothes and making a good impression to your superiors and peers. Indeed August observed that “Skilled work conferred status, but rough behaviour led to a loss of standing” Delgado, however, noted that “The ‘togetherness’ engendered by a firm’s outing did much to cement companionship when it came to drinking.” In order to facilitate this, drink would be carried with them on the

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693 August, *The British*; p.146.
694 Delgado, *The Annual*; p.70.
journey, or frequent stops were made for refreshments. Certainly, a convivial atmosphere not at odds with the ideology of the artisan elite and drinking has been identified as a part of the rites of “assertive independence”, witnessed in the friendly societies and voluntary groups of the Victorian era. However, rather than a “cultural absolute” the adoption of ‘respectability’ was a more pluralistic cluster of roles to be assumed depending on the behaviour it was judged the occasion called for. However, publically, respectability remained entrenched in Victorian and Edwardian mentalities and in the local press, reports of drinking had a marked absence although many of the outings usually finished with a smoking concert. For example, Mr W. Baker’s division of Shipwrights outing in 1890 left the period between tea and the return home at 11.30 quite vague. As “A Smoking Expert” wrote in the Hampshire Telegraph, smoking concerts usually followed prescribed customs whether the audience was a workman or a gentleman:

The" rough and horny-handed," who select the "Blackman's Arms," in an unpretentious district of Portsea or Landport as their headquarters, have, however, one thing in common with the aristocratic or middle class element who hold their reunion at a leading hotel, and that is, both classes are devout worshippers at the shrine of the aforesaid Lady Nicotina. All constraint is thrown to the wind when men meet at these convivial gatherings. The main thing is to order plenty of drink and smoke plenty of tobacco, and you are sure to get on alright.

This evidence is crucial to the understanding of what also may have occurred on the many other excursions of the period in relation to the Dockyard Excursion Committee discussed below. Many of the various working mens’ societies and works groups patronised the

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695 Delgado, The Annual; p.70.
698 August, The British; p.147.
699 HT, 26th July 1890.
700 HT, 9th December 1899.
excursions for their own outings and, in addition to being important in their own right, they serve as a yardstick to gauge the behaviour and tone of the Dockyard workforce on other trips.  

The lack of comment on the British Empire and imperialism illustrate that it was not a significant factor in the work and trade-based outings explored above. The participants were more concerned with the extension of work and leisure privileges and collective security. However, the extension of that freedom was contingent on notions of citizenship, which was bolstered through the civic elite and the local press. As previously argued in Chapter Two, by the Edwardian era the notion of citizenship in Portsmouth became imbued with an imperial element. This is more readily evident in the activities of the Dockyard Excursion Committee who used notions of empire and imperial service to qualify the operation of their business and impress on the Admiralty and local elites the importance of holiday-making for the Royal Dockyard workers.

The Dockyard Excursion Committee

The Dockyard excursion developed from a single day trip in 1883 to become a well-established element of the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard worker’s leisure calendar offering half-day and day trips to lengthier holidays away. Though there were a range of excursions available through the regional railway companies, an enterprising group of Dockyard artisans took the lead in arranging their own excursion, the success of which generated an independent business which lasted until the mid 1930s.  

There has been an assumption in the historiography of tourism that workers in the south were characterised by a lack of absenteeism and common focus for collective holiday-making

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701 Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, Receipt Book, 1913, Portsmouth History Centre, Kemp collection, unaccessioned item.

702 The First World War was a watershed for the Dockyard Excursion Committee and sounded the death knell for excursions of this type. Excursion trains were largely stopped during the First World War, and when normal operations were resumed in 1921 the railway companies had caught on to the profitability of such railway excursions and preferred to attach extra coaches to their pre-existing services rather than provide special trains. The Dockyard Excursion Committee did, however continue to organise trips, most notably to the British Empire Exhibitions at Wembley in 1924 and 1925, until 1935. Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, Papers; Charles E. Kemp, ‘Portsmouth Dockyard Excursions’, The Railway Magazine, August 1950, pp.563-565; p.565. Charles Martell Milne, one of the founding members of the Dockyard Holiday League and Secretary of the Dockyard Excursion Committee, was Charles E. Kemp’s maternal grandfather and Mr Walter James Kemp, Secretary of the Dockyard Excursion Committee 1910-1927, was his father.
due to the effective quashing of traditional wakes and holidays.\textsuperscript{703} This observation had portrayed southern workers as passive and prone to take a less combative approach to their rights to time off. This shall be shown to be misleading in the case of Portsmouth’s Dockyard workers. Certainly by the \textit{Dreadnought} era, the strictures of Admiralty employment and the already comparatively generous arrangements for the working week meant that fewer men absented themselves from work. Comment in the \textbf{Portsmouth Evening News} showed surprise in the lack of unsanctioned absence the following Easter Monday, 1906; putting it down to a mixture of workmen making the Yard ready for the forthcoming Admiralty inspection and also a harder line being taken on unsanctioned leave.

\begin{quote}
... the reason is undoubtedly the changed conditions that now prevail to those that operated even a year ago ... in some of the workshops the word was privately passed around last week that the absenteeism would be inquired into, and men absent without leave would be marked. A large number of applications for leave for the afternoon had been sent in, and these were granted, the men of course, losing the time, but with or without leave, a large percentage of the men were expected to be out this afternoon.\textsuperscript{704}
\end{quote}

Although nowhere near on the same scale as northern and midland workers, what this report demonstrated was the Dockyard workers’ desire for more leave in addition to what they already received. However, the idea of being “marked” would have been very threatening indeed, especially for hired workers who arguably had less job security. The report also highlighted the fragile balance between duty, wage earning and leisure, especially in the context of the situation in 1906 where wide-spread reductions in autumn 1905 resulted in the loss of 8,000 hired workers.\textsuperscript{705} While it is erroneous to assume that the Dockyard workforce could be flippant with their work duties, as will be seen later, the desire for leisure and the observation of traditional or national holidays continually rose.

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\textsuperscript{703} Walton, ‘The Demand’; p.263; Barton, \textit{Working-class Organisations}; p.91. \\
\textsuperscript{704} PEN, 16\textsuperscript{th} April 1906. \\
\end{flushright}
in conflict with the decisions of either Admiralty or municipal rulings. It will be asserted that Royal Dockyard workers used the notions of imperial duty as a means to advocate more time off and to extend their leisure rights.

Portsmouth was comparatively behind in developing a coherent mass excursion programme which was due in part to the late development of the town’s rail links.\textsuperscript{706} The trips operated by the artisans of the Dockyard Excursion Committee stand as a strong example of a southern scheme of working-class independent holiday organisation. Indeed, the influence of the Dockyard Excursion Committee ensured that the tone of working-class holiday and excursion-making in Portsmouth was shaped by the particular conditions of Dockyard artisanal culture. The schedule of excursions was based on the income, expectations, tastes and values of the Royal Dockyard artisan, and the tone of proceedings owed much to their experiences as negotiators through the Admiralty petitioning system. The excursions attracted huge numbers of Dockyard workers and their ‘friends’ and were widely reported and advertised in the local press; exhibiting the position of the Dockyard’s skilled artisans in Portsmouth society. Indeed, these men would certainly qualify as an “artisan elite” with a powerful influence on working-class culture.\textsuperscript{707} However, while many Marxist and Marxian historians have blamed the labour aristocracy for obfuscating class-consciousness, this section will seek to move away from the Marxist critique of the Labour Aristocracy and view the process of Dockyard holiday-making as a social construct and product of self-conscious identity-making.\textsuperscript{708} Moreover, it will demonstrate the ways in which the artisans of the Royal Dockyard exploited their positions of “Humble Servants” of “My Lords”\textsuperscript{709} in order to legitimise their claim for better pay and conditions, including increased freedoms in

\textsuperscript{706} Barton has illustrated a tradition of working-class rail excursions in the north of the country from the 1830s and 1840s. Barton, \textit{Working-class Organisations}; pp.29-33. In Portsmouth the Town Station was not opened until 1847, and a direct line to London not opened until 1859; decades after many northern hubs had received rail links and passenger traffic had become more than a novelty from the usual business of good conveyance. M. G. Harvey and E. Rooke, \textit{Railway Heritage: Portsmouth}, (Peterborough: Silver Link Publishing, 1997); p.8; p.10. Portsmouth Harbour Station, the line that serviced the Royal Dockyard, was not opened until 1876, with Fratton and East Southsea Stations opening in 1885. R. C. Riley, \textit{Railways and Portsmouth Society 1847-1947}, The Portsmouth Papers, (Portsmouth: Portsmouth City Council, 2000); p.1.

\textsuperscript{707} Crossick argued that the labour aristocracy in Kentish London achieved social stability through its radicalism, collective organising and rejection of narrow individualism. Crossick, \textit{Artisan Elite}; p.254.


\textsuperscript{709} The monikers of “My Lords” and “Your Humble Servant” were the conventions by which Dockyardmen had to address petitions to the Admiralty. Lunn and Day, ‘Deference and Defiance’; p.147.
leisure. The legitimisation of this type of leisure activity was achieved in part due to the support given to the organisers by the local press and sections of the municipal government, who were keen to incorporate the skilled Dockyardmen.\textsuperscript{710}

The first Dockyard excursion was run on Saturday 22\textsuperscript{nd} September 1883 to the International Fisheries Exhibition in Kensington, following a petition by William Madge, Leading Man of Millwrights to use a cancelled closure for Admiralty inspection as an opportunity to visit the exhibition before it closed in October.\textsuperscript{711} At this time the Royal Dockyards would still close on the day of the Admiralty inspection, affording the workmen a paid holiday. Its cancellation meant that they would not receive this holiday unless they gave a good enough reason. The trip was arranged by Madge and a committee in connection with the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway Company (LB&SCR) at a reduced rate of 3s. 6d. and they sold tickets to the exhibition at a reduction of one third of the price.\textsuperscript{712} The venture attracted an estimated four-to-five thousand excursionists who packed eight trains leaving Portsmouth between 5.25 and 8.00 am and returning from Victoria between 10.00pm and midnight, or at 6.00pm the following day.\textsuperscript{713} The success of the first trip led to the establishment of the Dockyard Holiday League.\textsuperscript{714} However, an undisclosed disagreement between Mr Madge and the Committee led to his departure, although he still organised occasional Dockyard excursions independently.\textsuperscript{715} The Dockyard Excursion Committee was established on 1\textsuperscript{st} January 1886 and dominated

\textsuperscript{710} For a discussion on why the municipal government and the local press sought to incorporate the Royal Dockyard workforce see Chapters Two and Four.  
\textsuperscript{711} HT, 24\textsuperscript{th} November 1883.  
\textsuperscript{712} The standard price for a return to Victoria Station was 5s. In addition to the train journey 671 of the 700 discounted tickets available to the exhibition were sold. Harvey and Rooke, Railway Heritage; p.51; Kemp broke down the actual number of tickets as 600 adult and 100 child tickets with 591 adult and 80 child tickets sold at 3s. and 1s. 6d. each respectively. Kemp, ‘Portsmouth Dockyard’; p.563.  
\textsuperscript{713} PT, 26\textsuperscript{th} September 1883. The first two trains left from Portsmouth Harbour Station, servicing most of the Gosport residents who used a special ferry service to convey them across the harbour, and the subsequent six left from the Town Station. HT, 29\textsuperscript{th} September 1883.  
\textsuperscript{714} Mr Madge assumed the duties of Chairman and Treasurer and was assisted by Mr Charles Martell Milne, a Shipwright, as Secretary. The Committee was managed by an executive committee of 20 members representing every department of the Dockyard. Kemp, ‘Portsmouth Dockyard’; p.563.  
\textsuperscript{715} Kemp, ‘Portsmouth Dockyard’; p.564. Madge’s trips in comparison to the Dockyard Excursion Committee’s were quite similar, although a lot less frequent and it is clear that the two committees were vying for the patronage of the dockyard workforce. For example, Mr Madge arranged an excursion to Scotland via the London and North Western Railway on 25\textsuperscript{th} June 1886 returning between four and 14 days for 35s. Less than a month later on 9\textsuperscript{th} July the Dockyard Excursion Committee, now chaired by Mr J. Kingston, also ran an excursion to Scotland via South Western and Midland Railways, returning up to 10 days later for also 35s.
Portsmouth excursion traffic throughout the Edwardian period. In their first year the Committee carried 6,708 people; a decade later this figure stood at 30,604 passengers, peaking in 1908 at conveying 38,478 excursionists to a range of destinations around the United Kingdom and further afield.\textsuperscript{716}

The artisanal nature of the excursions can be evidenced in the ways the Excursion Committee organised their trips. Clearly, price and choice was an important issue and tickets provided had to be within the budget of the majority of the Royal Dockyard workforce. Table 6 in Appendix I presents examples of long-distance excursions offered by the Committee in the Edwardian period. When compared to the average weekly wages of the Royal Dockyard worker in 1905 in Table 5, the prices indicate that for the Dockyard artisan, the excursions were relatively reasonable, although tougher for unskilled workers to afford. However, shorter distance trips were more achievable for those earning less. Indeed the Hampshire Telegraph attributed the success of the Dockyard excursions as “being suited to all classes, at fares ranging from one shilling to thirty.”\textsuperscript{717} The outings were flexible with tickets to exhibitions being sold separately rather than as part of a package. The trains also made many stops along the line to enable excursionists to alight at their desired destination, rather than dropping everyone at a central point. Passengers travelled Third Class and the appeal of such excursions may have also lain in their strong sense of group identity and collectivist nature, which was distinct from other forms of excursion that catered for wealthier, middle-class passengers.\textsuperscript{718} No evidence has come to light of a particular savings scheme in connection with the Dockyard excursions and many passengers could pay on the day albeit at a higher fare. However, there was a strong tradition of thrift and subscription to various beneficial funds which may have enabled those who wished to fund such an excursion to do so, and it would not be unreasonable to assume that characteristically thrifty artisans would have saved up in order to ensure a holiday away.\textsuperscript{719} Indeed, a subscription fund for a trip to Paris was set up a year in

\textsuperscript{716} Harvey and Rooke, Railway Heritage; p.51.  
\textsuperscript{717} HT, 7\textsuperscript{th} November 1891.  
\textsuperscript{718} Barton argued that group travel in a shared railway carriage was never appealing to the middle class whose more reserved, private culture meant that they shunned group or communal facilities in favour of individual or family ones. Barton, Working-class Organisations; p.34.  
\textsuperscript{719} Walton referred to Lancastrian ‘going off’ clubs which would save money 50 weeks of the year. Walton, The British Seaside; p.52.
advance in 1883 by the Dockyard Holiday League, and similarly another excursion to the French capital to visit the International Exhibition, 1900, was advertised a year in advance undoubtedly to give those who wanted to go the opportunity to save up.\textsuperscript{720}

Walton has illustrated how specific holiday trends occurred in the industrial areas of the north and midlands to various seaside resorts. Crucially, he demonstrated that patterns of holiday-making were dependent on specific industries, the presence of working-class self-help organisations and existing pre-industrial traditions and argued that the south had a weak basis for collective holiday-making.\textsuperscript{721} However, what can be seen is that Portsmouth Dockyard workers also had a distinctive pattern of holiday-making based on the specific leisure needs of the clientele of the Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee. Although some foreign trips were offered by Mr Madge’s competing Dockyard excursions, by the turn of the century the Dockyard Excursion Committee had streamlined their operations to include destination staples on specific holidays which complimented the leave of the Royal Dockyards.\textsuperscript{722} The Dockyard excursions developed over time to reflect the specific needs of their clientele. By 1906 most ordinary Royal Dockyard Workers received four day’s paid holiday a year: Christmas Day, Good Friday, the day set for the King’s Birthday and August Bank Holiday.\textsuperscript{723} Most workmen could be granted up to 14 days’ unpaid leave a year and some would frequently extend their holidays by taking them around the recognised paid vacations.\textsuperscript{724} Excursions on the August Bank Holiday, the monarch’s birthday holiday, Easter and Whitsun proved

\textsuperscript{720} PEN, 20\textsuperscript{th} December 1883. The cost for this trip was £2 16s including boat fare and second-class rail travel to and from the hotel on arrival and departure, three days in Paris, board and lodgings and one day’s admission to the exhibition. PEN, 10\textsuperscript{th} May 1899.

\textsuperscript{721} Walton, The British Seaside; p.52.

\textsuperscript{722} Excursions were arranged by Madge to Paris in 1884 and 1885 and to the International Exhibition, Paris, in 1900. HT, 20\textsuperscript{th} June 1885; PEN, 10\textsuperscript{th} May 1899.

\textsuperscript{723} HMSO, Instructions; p.33. However this would change if the holidays fell on a Sunday or Saturday. In the case of a Sunday, the holiday would be observed on the following Monday. If a Saturday, then Saturday half-day hours would be observed on the Friday before. Also, due to the Factories and Workshops Act, workpeople in the Spinning and Ropery departments and boys (but not apprentices) were also allowed Easter Monday and Boxing Day as leave. Special terms also applied to those on sick and hurt lists. Officers of the Yard and Admiralty Writing and Accounts Staff were entitled to more paid holidays, see HMSO, Instructions, ‘Appendix 1’; pp. 148-149.

\textsuperscript{724} HMSO, Instructions; p.36, states that workpeople could apply to their Principle Officer who may grant them leave “provided their services can be spared.” It would not be unreasonable to assume that many in the Dockyard made some provision for this as with the ‘going off’ clubs described in Walton, The British Seaside; p.52.
increasingly popular with numbers in their thousands. The Committee also offered special excursions during the year to enable their clientele to experience the latest exhibition, football match or event, which would see numbers in the hundreds. As an example, Appendix I shows the range of excursions available and figures of patronage for 1912. As can be seen, whereas the north and midlands displayed strong trends to seaside resorts, in Portsmouth, which already offered a dynamic seaside culture, it was rural and city destinations which were most frequently organised. Many excursions were also to other dockyards. This may have been due to the transfer of established workers in the Dockyard and the migratory nature of work in the ship construction industry. Indeed, there is a strong possibility that there was a significant number travelling 'home' to see relatives. These trips also served as good exercises in bonding with their colleagues in other Royal Dockyards and would have aided the increasingly inter-Dockyard nature of trade union membership reflected in the Edwardian era. However, children’s’ tickets were also sold by the Dockyard Excursion Committee, distinguishing their use from those works’ outings and signalling that these excursions were also used as family events. The Dockyard excursions reflected a specific element of working-class artisanal culture. Their concerns for respectability and independence were mixed with a populism that was characteristic of the ideology and values of the Labour Aristocracy, which were distinct from middle-class values. Such excursions were part of the collectivist culture of working-class life due to the strong sense of group identity and nature of over-crowding in working-class living. However, there was also evidence of distinction and stratification within the operation. For example, the excursion to the Fisheries Exhibition conveyed officials in a special train with saloon carriages, and later, the Dockyard Excursion Committee would travel separately in their own saloon carriage. The opportunity to pre-book a separate carriage was extended to others wishing to pay a bit extra for the privilege and is documented in a Dockyard Excursion Committee receipt book dating from June 1913.

725 See Walton, 'The Demand for'.
726 An example of which would be Plymouth’s Branch of the Royal Dockyard Ex-Apprentices’ Association, who used their Dockyard Excursion Committee to convey them to Portsmouth in 1910 for a day out with their counterparts in Portsmouth. HT, 19th August 1910.
727 Crossick, An Artisan Elite; p.151.
728 Barton, Working-Class Organisations; p.34.
729 Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, Receipt Book, no page numbers.
Picture 14. Dockyard Excursion Committee Bill Advertising a Trip to Portsmouth v. Grimsby, January 1902

Picture 15. Dockyard Excursion Committee Bill Offering Trips to London, the Stanley Cycle Show, the National Show and Horsham, November 1902

Picture 16. Dockyard Excursion Committee Bill Offering Cheap Admission to the Anglo-American Exhibition, August 1914

All courtesy of Portsmouth History Centre.
As can be seen in Appendix I, the range of special events catered for by the Committee ranged from football matches, a temperance choral festival, the Brewers’ Exhibition and the great London exhibitions. As discussed previously, for the artisan elite of the Dockyard Excursion Committee a programme of excursions encompassing rational and popular culture was not incongruous.\(^{730}\) What the range of attractions highlighted were the artisanal values of respectability, which incorporated working-class popular culture rather than replicating middle-class ideals of respectability. The value of entertainment in recreation was a key element in the formulation of its sensibilities; indeed, the great exhibitions of the period were as likely to be seen as Barnum’s Circus.\(^{731}\) Behaviour and social convention would have also differed and Ray Riley has argued that the request for “as many lavatory thirds as possible” on Dockyard Excursion trains was evidence that “these occasions may not have been noted for their sobriety.”\(^{732}\) Additionally, an inference was made to “liquid refreshment” being taken on an excursion train to Plymouth arranged for the Plymouth versus Portsmouth football match in 1904, but the six-hour long journey was reasonably cited.\(^{733}\) Evidence of trouble occurring at any of the excursions was not widely reported. The only evidence found concerned the case of 21 year-old John Best, who was arrested for being drunk and disorderly at Victoria Station following the first Dockyard excursion to the International Fisheries Exhibition in 1883.\(^{734}\)

The lack of reporting on disorderly behaviour may denote that, in a similar fashion to Dockyard works’ outings, the Dockyard Excursion stood as an example of respectable citizenship in action. The success of Madge’s petition in 1883 and the unprecedented popularity of the first Dockyard excursion soon legitimised the venture and led the local newspapers to champion further enterprise.\(^{735}\) The newspapers made connections with

\(^{730}\) See also Chapters Three and Five.  
\(^{731}\) The Hampshire Telegraph reported how a “successful” Dockyard Excursion the previous Saturday was very successful, with “The cheap tickets to Barnum’s show ... all disposed of in a few hours, and the demand far exceeded the supply.” HT, 15th February 1890.  
\(^{732}\) R. C. Riley, Railways and Portsmouth; p.12.  
\(^{733}\) PEN, 26th October 1904. Peter Bailey has argued that the archetypal working class excursionist Bill Banks displayed the kind of duality which juxtaposed respectability with reveling, marking an “internal consistency” of seemingly contradictory behaviour. Bailey, “‘Will the Real’; p.341.  
\(^{734}\) PT, 26th September 1883. Best’s occupation was not reported, and he has proved difficult to track through the Censuses and Dockyard employee records.  
\(^{735}\) The Hampshire Telegraph argued that the lateness in the year of the scheduled inspection would have meant that the Dockyardmen would be unable to take “little advantage” of the time off for “recreative
the civilising and educational qualities of such exhibitions, which placed exhibition visiting firmly in the category of ‘rational’ recreation. As the Portsmouth Evening News espoused in 1883:

> The purpose of the excursion itself was an excellent one, and the manner in which it was availed of affords unmistakable proof of the great interest taken in the Fisheries Exhibition by the very class whom the lesson it teaches was intended to reach. There is little doubt that the 4,500 excursionists were thoroughly pleased with their trip, affording, as it must have done, an agreeable break in the round of their monotonous labour.  

Although the report supposed much about the nature of manual labour, the explicit linkages between education and respectability would have appealed to many self-improving artisans. However, the imperial subtexts of such exhibitions have been noted by the supporters of a popular imperialism thesis. Absence of first-hand sources on the Dockyard workers’ experiences in the exhibitions themselves present methodological problems in assessing the impact of imperialism. Certainly, the regularity of excursions to the great London exhibitions denoted a popular demand by the Dockyard excursionists to see them. After the demand shown for the excursion to the Fisheries Exhibition both Dockyard Excursion Committees organised frequent excursions for each big London exhibition from the International Fisheries Exhibition in 1883 until the Anglo-American Exposition in 1914 before the First World Ward broke their routine. Pictures 17 and 18 show programmes for the Empire of India Exhibition, 1895, and the Military Exhibition, 1901, which were part of the collection of papers of the Dockyard Excursion Committee and illustrate direct links with the literature produced by the exhibition organisers.

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736 HT, 29th September 1883. Meanwhile the Portsmouth Times commented that the trip was “sociably arranged for reasonable recreation.” PT, 26th September 1883.
737 PEN, 24th September 1883.
738 Chapter Seven includes a discussion on various Dockyard trades associations and how they used self-improvement as a tool to secure their legitimacy to privileges in the workplace.
739 MacKenzie argued that the great exhibitions came to be dominated by conscious and unconscious approaches to imperial propaganda from the 1880s onwards. J. M. MacKenzie, Propaganda and Empire; p.97. Similarly, Hoffenberg has asserted that “almost every English and colonial exhibition between 1851 and 1914 expressed the traditionalist political culture of the host nation and the British Empire.” Hoffenberg, An Empire; p.273.
Portsmouth History Centre

Picture 17. Guide to the Empire India Exhibition (1895).
Portsmouth History Centre
Undoubtedly the great London exhibitions encapsulated national preoccupations with the military and the Empire. The Empire of India Exhibition, for example, aimed to educate its visitors on the “wonderland of the East.” The guidebook stated that:

It is an acknowledged fact that we of England know too little of the marvels of that Empire which is one of our proudest and wealthiest possessions. Therefore it is the intention of the promoters, most laudably carried out, to bring India home to our hearts and sensibility, by presenting that most illimitable continent in miniature for our understanding and appreciation.

Similarly, the Military Exhibition, 1901, also had a striking imperial message which was especially present in the Daily Graphic Comparative Diagrams of “The British Army in 1800 and 1900,” by Major B. R. Ward R.E.. The guidebook argued in favour of increased numbers of military personnel to safeguard the British Empire:

John Bull has expanded prodigiously, but not in the direction of militarism or land-power. The growth of John Bull’s Empire beyond the sea, however, strikingly illustrated by the large force now raised outside the United Kingdom ... A large map of the world, showing British Possessions at the commencement and end of the century, should bring home clearly to our minds our increased responsibilities. Whether or not it may be true that this Empire has been built up in “a fit of absence of mind,” it behoves us at least, as trustees for this great estate, not to adopt the “Absent-Minded Beggar” as our ideal, and consequently to forget to pay the necessary insurance premium.

In an exhibition on military uniforms in the Historical Loans Section argued that the modern-day soldier’s respectable behaviour was doing a great deal to “render easy the...
task of the Patriotic Minister, and to further the cause of the Empire.” Meanwhile, displays depicting “Boerland” and a Boer farm enlightened the public about “the home life of our latest colonists” thus legitimising and normalising British rule over others. The finale of the Military Exhibition was Director General Imre Kiralfy’s military spectacle “China” or the “Relief of the Legations”, a six-scene tableau depicting the recent Boxer Rebellion. However, as Hoffenberg observed, exhibitions of the early and mid-1880s were places of amusement and education which invited visitors to participate and the entertainment value must also be factored into why these exhibitions appealed to the British public. Although many Royal Dockyard workers may have felt compelled to attend these great imperial exhibitions due to an affinity with their role in the protection of the empire, it is too simplistic to suggest that this was their main motivation. A report in the Hampshire Telegraph on the activities of the first Dockyard excursionists to London in 1883 noted the eagerness of some Dockyard workers to see the sights rather than imbibe an imperial message. A few decided to forego the International Fisheries Exhibition only visiting later to see the illumination spectacular in the evening.

Londoners are generally considered the most inveterate sightseers, but they are quite out of the running when matched against the provincial visitor who is tolerably active and has his wits about him. The extent of the ground covered by the latter in the course of a few hours is simply surprising, as witness four members of the Dockyard party, who arrived by the first train, proceeded direct to Westminster, inspected as much as they could of the Houses of Parliament ... visited the Abbey, then proceeded to the Strand, “did” the Royal Courts of Justice, and passing east of Temple Bar, took in St Paul’s Cathedral, Billingsgate Fish Market, and the Tower, and returned to the Fisheries in time to see the place illuminated ...

742 Military Exhibition, Official Guide; p.61.
744 Hoffenberg, An Empire; p.250.
745 Porter, Absent-minded; p.208; Thompson, Empire Strikes; p.240.
746 HT, 29th September 1883.
Indeed, with the amount of attractions taken in on this excursion, there would have been little time to appreciate fully such a large exhibition, let alone the other attractions. Both examples of the exhibitions visited by Dockyard excursionists included popular and spectacular entertainments such as circuses, Ferris wheels and water chute rides. Moreover, the disparate themes of the great London exhibitions suggest that visiting them was part of a ‘season’ of events and excursions where the imperial subtext was a lesser consideration to taking advantage of the range of entertainments on offer. Therefore, while Dockyard Excursions denoted a popular desire by members of the Royal Dockyard workforce to attend, these must be set within a context of the excursion programmes as a whole, with attention paid to the values and ideology of artisanal leisure. Visiting imperial-themed and ‘improving’ exhibitions may have helped them to legitimise their aims and was a vehicle for respectability in the leisure sphere where pandering to recognised ideas of ‘respectable’ leisure afforded them greater personal benefits and freedoms. Support of “Empire”, therefore, could be seen as a badge of respectability. It is perhaps in this light that attendance to major ‘imperial’ London exhibitions should be viewed.

The desire of the Dockyard worker to visit such exhibitions had as much to do with their preoccupations of projecting respectability and the quest for varied recreation and leisure opportunities. This can be seen when looking across the whole range of exhibitions and arguably ‘imperialist’ exhibitions such as the Empire of India Exhibition (1895) or the Colonial Exhibition (1905), must be juxtaposed next to the visits to exhibitions of lesser imperial matter such as the Brewers’ Exhibitions and the Stanley Cycle Show. Moreover, in an era of what MacKenzie coined “imperial nationalism; compounded of monarchism, militarism, and Social Darwinism”, for the Dockyard Excursion Committee, Coronation or Jubilee Holidays or the King’s Birthday Holiday were more significantly seen as opportunities to exhibit their recreational freedoms.⁷⁴⁷ Even occasions of local and national naval significance of which they were directly or indirectly involved, such as ship launches can also be tempered with a desire to seek entertainment elsewhere. For example, while Roger Thomas has argued that the working classes of Portsmouth were

⁷⁴⁷ MacKenzie, Propaganda and Empire; p.2.
highly receptive to imperial propaganda, citing the launch of HMS Iron Duke in 1912, this assertion proved a more complex matter with the knowledge that a Dockyard Excursion Committee-organised trip to London scheduled for the same day attracted over 600 excursionists.\(^{748}\) Clearly for some their day off was a chance to take part in other activities rather than take part in the imperial pageantry of a ship launch.

![Picture 19. The Dockyard Excursion Committee, c.1900. Portsmouth History Centre.](image)

Certainly part of the motivating factor for the members of the Dockyard Excursion Committee must have been the benefits to their finances and social status. Indeed, the Committee members would fit into the model that John Benson identified as “Penny Capitalism” which was part of a search, mainly by middle-aged skilled artisans, for freedom from the restraints of factory and other work disciplines.\(^{749}\) The business was run on very shrewd terms which displayed their intelligence and powers of bargaining and liaison. Arguably, these qualities were honed in the intensive apprenticeship training required to become a Dockyard artisan and the necessity to collectively petition the Admiralty on matters of workplace concessions. The Dockyard Excursion Committee was...


run on a co-operative basis, where a certain number of excursionists had to be guaranteed in order to make the excursion financially viable.\textsuperscript{750} In 1886 it was agreed with LB&SCR and London and South West Railway (L&SWR) that the trains would only run with the sale of 300 adult fares for which the Committee negotiated a five per cent of the commission on ticket sales.\textsuperscript{751} Indeed the Committee had already made a profit from the May 24\textsuperscript{th} 1884 trip to Birmingham where enough money was taken to provide the executive committee with four shillings each, while the rest of the general committee received half-a-crown.\textsuperscript{752} This business practice was praised and legitimised in 1896 by the Portsmouth Times who heartily approved of an operation which provided cheap travel with the financial risks taken by the Dockyardmen operating the Committee.\textsuperscript{753} The Dockyard Excursion Committee acted more like a travel company than a committee of skilled artisans who worked in the Royal Dockyard. Evidence suggests that on some excursions the Committee printed tourist material on the principle sights for the benefit of their patrons, and some bills even advised excursionists of the tourist destinations near particular towns.\textsuperscript{754} The profitability of the Dockyard excursions elevated the status of the Committee members to a position as prime movers in excursion travel in the town and surrounding area. Mr Sam Knight, District Agent for the LB&SCR, accompanied the excursionists on their first trip in September 1883, signifying the train Company’s will to maintain a mutually beneficial relationship with the Dockyardmen. In May 1885 Mr Knight also wooed the Committee by treating them to an outing to London in private saloon carriages and a preview of the International Inventions Exhibition with the aim of enticing the Committee to run excursions for it.\textsuperscript{755} The Dockyardmen held a powerful bargaining position with the local railway companies following the success of the Fisheries Exhibition and the deftly negotiated competitive rates with the rail companies who vied for their business. Indeed in 1886 LB&SCR and L&SWR agreed to take alternate turns on a

\textsuperscript{750} This was explained by William Madge in response to a letter to the editor of someone questioning how the Dockyard Excursion Committee were able to keep fares so low. \textit{PEN}, 15\textsuperscript{th} June 1886.

\textsuperscript{751} Kemp, ‘Portsmouth Dockyard’; p.564.

\textsuperscript{752} Kemp, ‘Portsmouth Dockyard’; p.564.

\textsuperscript{753} \textit{PT}, 5\textsuperscript{th} December 1896. Quoted in Chapter Four.

\textsuperscript{754} \textit{HT}, 31\textsuperscript{st} May 1884. Dockyard Excursion Committee Bill, ‘King’s Birthday Holiday. Monday, June 22\textsuperscript{nd} 1914’, Kemp Collection. On the bill advertising a trip to various destinations in 1914, potential patrons were guided to “Brighton for the Aquarium and Pavilion. Frequent Motor Trains run between Brighton and the Dyke. Tunbridge Wells for High Rocks and Mineral Springs. Hastings for Battle Abbey and the Caves.”

\textsuperscript{755} \textit{HT}, 9\textsuperscript{th} May 1885.
Saturday to convey their excursionists to the Health Exhibition in London.\textsuperscript{756} Being able to generate thousands of ticket sales in the Portsmouth area was a powerful bargaining tool which the railway companies could not ignore. Evidence of their business acumen exists in correspondence confirming agreements of percentages of the profits from ticket sales from both companies, who they also seem to have played off each other.\textsuperscript{757} The Dockyard Excursion Committee were also courted by the organisers of the 1911 Coronation Exhibition; showing the eagerness of the organisers to ensure the trade of the Dockyard Excursion Committee. Letters from Charles Kiralfy to Milne offered discounted ticket deals and strongly urged the Committee to promote the exhibition.\textsuperscript{758} Kiralfy also requested a meeting to discuss arrangements for the forthcoming Anglo-Latin exhibition.\textsuperscript{759} The rise of excursion travel in Portsmouth meant that the railway station became progressively busier and platform space was at a premium. A testimony to the Dockyarmen’s organisational skills, Committee Secretary, Charles Milne, built his own scale model of Portsmouth stations with model trains to solve such problems; ensuring that the normal service of the railway companies was not disturbed and that the Dockyard excursions could go ahead.\textsuperscript{760} The Committee also liaised on occasion with local government officials to provide tramcar transport to aid travel to train stations.\textsuperscript{761}

The artisans of the Dockyard Excursion Committee were also influential in the town due to the popularity of their excursions with those outside the Dockyard. To achieve such a large number of patrons, and affect their cheap fares and commission percentages, the Dockyard Excursions Committees opened out their excursions to others - their ‘friends’-

\textsuperscript{756} Kemp, ‘Portsmouth Dockyard’; p.564.
\textsuperscript{757} A letter from D. Greenwood of LB&SCR to the Committee Secretary, Charles Milne in 1900 confirms an allowance of seven per cent commission in connection with Coronation Holiday bookings “all round, as on London traffic, which is I understand your arrangement with the London and South Western Co.” Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, \textit{Letter to Charles Milne from D. Greenwood}, dated 11\textsuperscript{th} June 1900.
\textsuperscript{758} Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, \textit{Letter from Charles Kiralfy to Charles Milne}, dated 14\textsuperscript{th} July 1911. The letter advises that “it might be to your Company’s advantage to embody at the foot of our advertisement an announcement indicating the dates on which your Company will run excursions ... An advertisement such as suggested should result to our mutual advantage.”
\textsuperscript{759} Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, \textit{Letter from Charles Kiralfy to Charles Milne}, dated 19\textsuperscript{th} July 1911.
\textsuperscript{760} Kemp, ‘Portsmouth Dockyard’; p.565.
\textsuperscript{761} \textit{PEN}, 21\textsuperscript{st} June 1904; \textit{PEN}, 6\textsuperscript{th} June 1913.
which arguably endowed their status as prominent members within the community.  

Using their status as leisure providers, members of the Dockyard Excursion Committee actively championed the rights to increased leisure provisions for Dockyardmen and the working classes. However, sometimes these ideas clashed with the local government and other influential groups in the town, showing how the structure of local holiday observation in Portsmouth remained uncertain during the Edwardian period. The Admiralty scrapped the observance of the Coronation Holiday after granting Dockyard workers the eight-hour day. By 1885 the national August Bank Holiday was observed in the Yard instead.  

That year the Dockyard Excursion Committee appealed to the Mayor of Portsmouth to challenge the Admiralty decision on it. The Committee was unsuccessful though local canvassing and public pressure saved the Coronation Holiday for the civilians of Portsmouth; leading to an inequity in holiday observation in the town. By 1899 there remained public petitioning for the Coronation Holiday to be observed regardless of whether the Royal Dockyard did so by local shop owners and the Early Closing Association. The issue of the Coronation Holiday was repeatedly challenged by the Dockyard Excursion Committee; in 1901 Milne highlighted that a petition of nearly 500 tradesmen had been presented to the Mayor “as in past years.” Milne argued that if the Mayor would not act, then the public should take matters into their own hands, adding that the Dockyard Excursion Committee would be happy to arrange cheap excursions for that day if desired. In 1903 Mr C. Evans, the Chairman of the Dockyard Excursion Committee, argued against the observance of the King’s Birthday Holiday in June as a national holiday, preferring the re-introduction of the Coronation Holiday for Dockyard workers. He asserted that that the Dockyardmen were not asking

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762 What constituted being a friend of the Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee is unclear. Evidence from a Dockyard Excursion Committee receipt book dated 1913 included such disparate groups as the Oddfellows, church groups, temperance societies, county associations and various local choirs; which may indicate membership by dockyard members. However, other groups such as the Master Butchers’ Association and employees of Portsmouth Water Works Company conferred looser connections. It is also documented in a timetable within the collection that the players of Portsmouth Football Club also used the excursion trains of the Committee in October 1914 to transport them to their matches. Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, Receipt Book, 1913.

763 HT, 1st September 1894.

764 HT, 15th September 1895.

765 HT, 1st June 1895. Councillor Power, Chairman of the Roads and Works Committee, canvassed the local tradesmen to gauge their feelings on the loss of the holiday. A large petition was subsequently submitted to the Mayor who agreed to the continuing observance of the Coronation Holiday in Portsmouth.

766 PEN, 13th June 1899.

767 PEN, 17th June 1901.
for a new holiday, but the observance of an old one, which would take the pressure off the railway companies to provide a glut of excursions on national bank holidays. This argument worked against the public in favour of a special Dockyard holiday; highlighting the complex arguments and loyalties at play when bargaining for greater leisure freedoms. Although the Coronation Holiday ceased to be a paid Dockyard holiday, the Dockyard Excursions Committee continued to run trips, perhaps signalling an act of defiance to the Admiralty. Indeed, correspondence to the Mayor of Portsmouth, Alderman W. J. Dupree, in June 1910 suggests that they did not drop the matter for many more years, but the Mayor was certainly willing to make enquiries on their behalf.

It was during the First World War, however, that the activities Dockyard Excursion Committee’s were severely curtailed. Most importantly, evidence shows that they, and the workforce they represented, were keen to ensure the continuation of their leisure privileges even in a time of war. Due to increased pressure on the rail network by the armed forces the Railway Executive Committee suspended all cheap rail traffic; making the dockyard excursions impossible to stage. In 1915 only two excursions were permitted, however, the Committee did attempt to conduct a programme of excursions on the weekend of the King’s Birthday holiday, June 25th to 27th 1915. On 9th June 1915 Charles Milne, wrote a letter to the Railway Executive Committee requesting they temporarily lift the restrictions and permit them to run a “portion of the usual Excursions for the recreation of our 15,000 Loyal Employés” over that weekend. Milne began his address by pointing out the particular privilege of this holiday for the dockyard workforce: “His Majesty having been graciously pleased to grant the Royal Dockyards the usual holiday in honour of his birthday.” His language was couched in very specific terms; the notion of being a servant of the crown has been used to gain an advantage, whilst

768 PEN, 29th April 1903.
769 Trips to London advertised for the Coronation Holiday, PEN, 20th June 1901. Almost 6,000 people used the Dockyard Excursion Committee-arranged trips to London, Bournemouth, Weymouth and Brighton that year. PEN, 29th June 1901. Trips were also arranged in 1903. PEN, 29th April 1903. Eleven trips were arranged in 1904. PEN, 23rd June 1904.
770 Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, Letter from Mayor Dupree to Charles Milne, dated 2nd June 1910.
772 Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, Letter from Milne to the Railway Executive Committee, dated 9th June 1915.
precedent for such activities and the assertion of the deservedness of the Royal Dockyard workers also lent itself to the persuasiveness of the argument.

I most respectfully ask you to waive the Order for this period only; as we have had no opportunity for a holiday since war was declared; and, as we find Restall’s advertise cheap trips every week to all parts of the country for the General Public we feel sure you will give a favourable consideration to our Loyal Dockyard Workers who now much need a change.773

Milne’s observation that other firms were offering excursion trips to those perhaps not engaged in war work also highlighted the point that there were still pleasure trips taking place in the district; making this request seem less unreasonable. Most interestingly, however, was the argued need of the workers to experience some form of break. By the outbreak of war Dockyard excursions of this type had been running for over thirty years, and the monarch’s birthday was a traditional holiday for the Royal Dockyard worker – according to Milne “the greatest holiday locally of the year.” Pending a decision from the Lords of the Admiralty on a petition submitted on the issue of the holiday arrangements, Milne continued to organise the excursions with Mr J. Scott, LB&SCR Superintendent of the Line, proposing trips to London Victoria and various stops along the line. He added that “I have cut it down considerably on owing to the great delay in getting a settlement it will not be possible for the Mayor to announce a Public Holiday so it will be good employees only.”774 Unfortunately the Lords of the Admiralty did not concur with Milne’s petition and cited the “unprecedented requirements for naval and military traffic.”775

Significantly, however, what this dialogue highlighted was the will of the Dockyard artisan elite, even in a time of war and threat to the empire, to secure themselves recreational

773 Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, Letter, 9th June 1915.
774 Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, Letter from Milne to J. Scott, Superintendent of the Line LB&SCR, 18th June 1915. “Good employees” would have been those who were granted leave especially from their superiors and connoted the favouritism and inequities of the Dockyard system. See HMSO, Instructions; p.36 and comments in Chapter Three on Richard Gould’s evidence during the Royal Commission on Labour. Royal Commission on Labour, Evidence of Richard Gould, ‘Workers in the Government Dockyards and Arsenals’, Digest of the Evidence taken Before Group A of the Royal Commission of Labour, Volume III, 1893, pp.55-64; p.57.
775 Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, Letter from W. Grahame Greene to the Admiral Superintendent, Portsmouth Dockyard, 14th June 1915.
time. For the artisan elite of the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard the balance of duty and time for entertainment and escapism was not an unreasonable request and the appeal to their right was couched in the language of precedent and deservedness as “loyal” employees of the crown. As hard-working citizens of empire and the constructors of the Royal Navy’s ships, many Dockyardmen felt entitled to make claims for the extension of rights and freedoms in their leisure time; illustrating how imperial discourses could be appropriated by workers, rather than the process simply being a matter of ‘imperialising’ the working classes from the top downwards.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has shown that there was a strong sense of workplace collective security which transposed onto the leisure time of the Royal Dockyard workers. Contrary to previous studies on working-class holiday-making, the Dockyard workforce not only engaged with their growing leisure freedoms, but they displayed shrewd organisational and entrepreneurial talents which actively facilitated and shaped the leisure patterns of the local area. Moreover, the tone and range of entertainments mixed ‘rational’ recreations with more populist fare; showing ideas of respectability that were unique from the middle-class and displayed an assertive independence the workplace and the state.

Like the Dockyard workforce itself, the relationships between trades and skill levels was complex and different loyalties would come to the fore depending on the circumstance. Dockyard outings and excursions promoted the strengthening of sectional and trade identities as well as larger Dockyard or social identities which were essential for collective security in the industrial world. These outings were additionally an outward projection of the participant group or individual’s ability to take part in leisure reserved for those who could afford it. Moreover, their exercise of consumer choice was strong evidence of working-class engagement with culture and on what they spent their disposable income.\(^\text{776}\) Outings and excursions served as a potent symbol of status and respectability.

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\(^\text{776}\) Barton, *Working-Class Organisations*; p.82.
and their conduct was reported and legitimised in the local press. However, their claims to citizenship were to advance their status and security, rather than a wholesale adoption of imperial attitudes. The Dockyard workforce has been assumed to be imperialist, navalist and nationalist by the very nature of their employment. However, this chapter has demonstrated that Royal Dockyard workers were less pre-occupied about imperial or naval issues than they were about everyday bread and butter politics and penny capitalism. Crucially, this did not mean that they were essentially uninterested in empire, or anti-imperialist. Rather, more accurately, the Royal Dockyard worker was very much aware of their imperial function and it was the way in which they used notions of empire which sheds new light on the study of the working classes and their relationship with imperialism. Rather than the working class being ignorant or not caring about the empire, they were acutely aware of it and used the privileges afforded by being citizens of the British Empire - imperial citizens - to their advantage. This can also be readily witnessed in their membership to clubs and societies.
Chapter 7. Clubs and Societies of the Royal Dockyard Worker

The Edwardian expansion of working-class leisure was largely a continuation of the patterns already established in the mid-to-late Victorian era; and clubs and societies which had seen growth in the Victorian era, such as friendly societies, association football and other sporting clubs, continued to grow. Although the struggle to control and influence some sections of working class recreation remained, for example the temperance movement, by the turn of the twentieth century formal patterns of working-class leisure had been established, and were flourishing. There was a range of activities competing for the leisure time and disposable income of working class males. Through taking the Royal Dockyard worker as an example, we are able to articulate more fully the lives and pre-occupations of the working class industrial worker in Edwardian England. The chapter will explore the associational culture of the Royal Dockyard worker to show how membership to a range of clubs and societies aided working-class individuals in creating and maintaining collective identities within the industrialised world. It will argue that, rather than being atomised individuals, the process of identity-making was constructed within a class model and that local and communal bonds continued to be important, although these also evolved over time and circumstance. Moreover, the identity of being an ‘imperial citizen’ and the concept of the British Empire was picked up and adopted at different times for different reasons. Rather than being a constant and consistent concept, it was highly subjective, and negotiated and interpreted according to factors such as personal political beliefs, economic circumstance, occasion and perceived threats or triumphs within the discourse of imperial thought throughout the period.

The role of class in identity-making has been challenged in recent years by Trevor Griffiths who argued that the working class was more stratified than previously argued with notions of religion, skill and wage hierarchies largely subordinating class consciousness. However, Brad Beaven has underlined the plurality within the culture of working-class

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men which was able to accommodate many different and fluid identities while still maintaining a consciousness of class structure.\footnote{Beaven, Leisure, Citizenship; p.6. Indeed, Andrew August has argued that the notion of class in Britain also ran concurrently with other forms of identity such as nationality and ethnicity, regionality and gender. August, The British Working Class; p.159.} Portsmouth’s Dockyard workers have been noted for their exceptional circumstances as employees of the state and characterised as politically and culturally conservative. Peter Galliver argued that the leisure and societies of the Royal Dockyard workers cultivated a defensive culture in order to protect the lifestyle afforded by Dockyard employment and achieve an acceptable, or enjoyable, way of life within an existing social and economic order.\footnote{Peter Galliver, The Portsmouth Dockyard Workforce 1880-1914, MPhil Thesis (unpublished), University of Southampton, 1986; p.299.} Neil Casey has argued that these behaviours were learned in the Dockyard Schools, which created an artisan ethic of “self-improvement, stability, ‘intelligence’, and, most of all, respectability.”\footnote{Neil Casey, ‘Class Rule: The Hegemonic Role of the Royal Dockyard Schools, 1840-1914’, in Kenneth Lunn and Ann Day (eds.), History of Work and Labour Relations in the Royal Dockyards, (London and New York: Mansell, 1999), pp.66-86; p.80.} Certainly the process of identity-making was a socialised experience which occurred on a local level with structures being played out in the encounters members of the community had with one another at work, in the shops and at church.\footnote{Paul Thompson, The Edwardians. The Remaking of British Society, (London and New York: Routledge [Second Edition], 1992); p.288.} Recently Ben Jones has argued that working-class identities were shaped in the home, workplace and wider community and underpinned normative structures of working-class living; giving salience to the role of class socialisation in the identity-making process.\footnote{Ben Jones, The Working Class in Mid-Twentieth Century England. Community Identity and Social Memory, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012); p.67.} Through analysing the associational culture of the Dockyard workforce the chapter will argue that members can be seen traversing the pitfalls of distinction and identity in Edwardian society which defined their everyday lives and highlight pre-occupations with the values of working-class respectability, thrift, collective security and independence.

What can also be seen in the Edwardian period is an extension of these ethics over geographical boundaries. Unionisation, friendly and trades societies all began to widen their scope to seek out larger bases of collective security, while county societies marked a new level of socialisation as migrant workers settled in the town. The identity-making process, therefore, consisted of multiple layers which, while on the surface may at times...
have seemed contradictory, did not necessarily conflict with each other. While trade, grade, religious and political stratifications demarked sections of the working class from each other and sometimes determined socialisation patterns, the concepts of working-class identity formed a commonality.

Furthermore, the chapter will challenge the theory of monolithic imperialism by highlighting the plurality of the imperial experience and the subjective nature of the imperial discourse. It will demonstrate how the Royal Dockyard worker was an active agent in the construction of their imperial identity. By focussing on their involvement in clubs and societies and through exploring their belief structures and socialisation both inside and outside of the workplace the chapter will show how the Royal Dockyard workers conceived of their identities in a myriad of collective ways. It will achieve this in three stages; firstly it will look at the breadth of associational culture and links with religion and political affiliation to show how religion and politics shaped membership to certain clubs and societies. Secondly, the chapter will highlight specific Dockyard activities, taking trade unionism and then Dockyard-personnel organised sports and arts clubs as examples to underline the importance of work structures in many aspects of late Victorian and Edwardian leisure. The chapter will then explore membership to clubs outside of the Dockyard taking the examples of membership to friendly societies, county societies and the Volunteer and Territorial Forces to demonstrate how other loyalties and affiliations also played an important role in the creation and maintenance of social identities. Although on many occasions meta-narratives of imperial thought pervaded through discourses surrounding social conventions of race, patriotism and gender, it was everyday concerns such as sociability (stemming the feeling of assertion of gendered identities, migrational alienation, trade loyalties and protection) and claiming respectable citizenship on a local level that were more pertinent reasons for how the Royal Dockyard worker spent their recreational hours and why.

Societies: Religion and Politics

During the Edwardian period working-class societies and clubs of all kinds thrived in Portsmouth. Local newspaper reports often surfaced about men of the Dockyard which
revealed their interests outside the Dockyard walls. On his retirement, Shipfitter Harry Hall was described in the *Hampshire Telegraph*:

He was well known in various departments of public life in the town. Formerly he was a Volunteer, being one of the first men in Portsmouth to join the movement in 1859. He has been an active Freemason and Oddfellow, and has twice passed through the chair of the lodge in the latter Order. He was one of the founders of Portsmouth Trades Council, has had the post of Chairman of the Committee of the Hospital Saturday Fund, and in politics and matters of benevolence he has from time to time taken a prominent part.785

Harry Hall’s broad range of interests highlight the many social obligations a Dockyard worker could hold simultaneously outside his working hours. Hall also stood for election on the Board of Guardians, the School Board and held an aborted attempt at becoming a town councillor for the ward of Buckland.786 His candidature for election on the Portsmouth School Board was announced by Hall in the local newspaper, who stated that it was “at the request of a large number of working men, members of friendly societies and trade societies.”787 Similarly, in 1913, the funeral of John Williams, Inspector of Painters, was attended by members of the Dockyard alongside representatives of the North End Bowling Association and of the Pembroke Club with wreaths from the members of the Corporation Bowling Club, the Pembroke County Club, members of the Twyford Avenue Wesleyan Society Class and teachers of St Agatha’s School.788 Williams’ interests highlight how notions of recreation traversed other subjectivities such as area of residence, regional ties, public duty and faith. A week later, the funeral of Frederick Totterdell, a Coppersmith, was reported in the local paper under the heading “A Rechabite Funeral. Impressive Kingston Service.” The event was attended by members of his Order and fellow workmates at the Dockyard as well as members of the Portsmouth Friendly Societies Council and the Portsmouth Choral Society, of which he was secretary of

785 *HT*, 7th January 1899.
786 *HT*, 1st April 1899; *HT*, 8th December 1900; *HT*, 28th October 1899.
787 *HT*, 29th December 1900.
788 *PEN*, 12th May 1913.
for many years. The ceremony was presided over by Reverend Roberts Hern of Lake Road Baptist Church, highlighting the link often made between Non-conformity and the Dockyard. His Rechabite membership also highlights the links between Non-conformity and the temperance movement.

The subject of faith and religion sometimes played a large part in the social life of the working class and could be a determining factor in their identity-making process. While it has been argued that religious identity had subsumed class identity, what can be evidenced in many cases of the Royal Dockyard worker is that while their subjective experience differed, their class status and material conditions were important to how they comprehended these identities. Dockyardmen understood religion within class, which was reflected in the activities undertaken by them during the period. What differed were their approaches to social action. For example, Hugh Cunningham found that working class men who served in the Volunteer Forces were typically Church of England followers, whereas Non-conformists and organised Labour generally distanced themselves from the movement. Indeed, Peter Galliver has attributed the Unionist outlook of Harry Hall as symptomatic of his Church of England faith, but found that the assumed role of Conservative working class men in Portsmouth was a passive adoption of a set of values and a deference to their leaders which was only enacted at election time or when their values were challenged. Evidence of the importance of faith to members of the Dockyard workforce can be evidenced by the example of the Reredos of the Holy Trinity Church, Portsea, which was crafted for free by Dockyard Shipwrights of the

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789 PROHT, Portsmouth Dockyard Employment Database; PEN, 19th May 1913.
790 W. Donald Cooper attributed the financial crisis of the Non-conformist churches in Portsmouth in the last quarter of the nineteenth century to the discharges from the Dockyard and reductions in wages. W. Donald Cooper, Methodism in Portsmouth 1750-1932, The Portsmouth Papers, (Portsmouth: Portsmouth City Council, 1973); p.10.
791 Cooper, Methodism; p.11 and p.17. G. J. Ashworth, Portsmouth's Political Patterns 1885-1945, The Portsmouth Papers, (Portsmouth: Portsmouth City Council, 1976); p.3.
792 Griffiths, The Lancashire Working; p.322
congregation in 1877 for the improvement of their church. Similarly, Father Robert Dolling recognised the exertions of a Mr Grigg in his mission who after toiling in the Dockyard six days a week worked in the evenings amongst the poor and preached on a Sunday. Dolling commented that Grigg’s story was an “example of honest labour, and of a life which proved the depth of his religious convictions, was beyond all price in the Dockyard.” Conversely, the prominence of Liberalism and Labour politics with Dockyard workers has been recognised to have been influenced by the large number of Non-conformists working in the Dockyard. At a speech delivered at the Working Men’s Liberal Union (WMLU) headquarters Shipwright C. W. Vine answered the question “Why am I a Liberal?”, arguing that he was so because he was a Non-conformist, a free-trader and a political reformer. In Portsmouth during the late-Victorian and Edwardian era members of the trade union movement increasingly moved towards the Independent Labour Party. Indeed, in 1896 the Christian Socialist Father Dolling lamented that during his work with members of the Portsmouth Labour movement the men he encountered were almost always Non-conformist, which he put down to the egalitarian nature of the faith and its mechanisms of self-reliance and preaching.

798 HT. 22nd May 1886.
799 Galliver, The Portsmouth Dockyard Workforce; p.67 and p.137.
800 Dolling, Ten Years; p.131.
Similarly, for many, political disposition and membership to societies were inextricably linked. Representative for a Portsmouth branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers and Labour Party activist, David Naysmith explained the symbiosis of his relationship with the Co-operative movement:

My co-operation, my trade unionism, and my politics are linked together in common bonds – bonds that cannot be broken. To me is seems impossible to keep them apart for separate use. I must take my trade unionism into the co-operative movement, and both into my politics.\(^{801}\)

Expressions such as these highlight the importance of memberships to clubs and societies in the identity-making process where workingmen could use them to make a statement about their position in the world and seek out others like themselves.

Although Royal Dockyard workers were involved in the construction of His Majesty’s warships, this did not exclude them from joining the Labour Party. Portsmouth’s Labour Edwardian municipal trailblazers; Councillors John MacTavish and Robert Muir Allen, were

Royal Dockyard employees and MacTavish eventually lost his seat on the Town Council in 1914 due to anti-war protests. However, commentators and social reformers sometimes saw institutes like the workingmens’ clubs as a corrupting influence and a sham to political action and respectability. In 1901 Reverend David Barron launched a scathing attack on political clubs singling out the Dockyard workmen.

These institutions are simply drinking and gambling saloons ... Many were employed in the Dockyard, worked hard for their daily bread, and were married and had families depending upon them. These men had votes, and if they were to speak as one body their influence would be great, but when they were attached to clubs, there was no discussion of any value to the town of the principles they professed, and which were only confraternities who had forgotten the objects of virtue, they were working against true patriotism, and the best interests of the town.

Reverend Barron’s attack highlights distinct linkages between the expectation of respectability and the behaviour of enfranchised members of the working class. Citizenship and patriotism, and by extension, imperialism, were thus tied to notions respectability.

As a concept “respectability” was flexible and would have been reflected most essentially outside the Dockyard in their recreational habits and society memberships. The notion of respectability in this context, therefore, must be identified as distinctly working class and developed from an assertion of independence which was negotiated through the experiences and expectations of the working class by themselves and others in society. Certainly, by the mid-Victorian period some friendly societies had moved toward a rejection of patronage which was coupled with a search for social approval; highlighting how working class notions of independence and respectability were both inward looking

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802 See Chapter Three. MacTavish was a shipwright. Muir Allen was recorded as being a Patternmaker, HT, 14th February 1913.
803 PEN, 2nd September 1901.
and projected out towards the rest of the community. These practices stood as a potent marker of the desire for working class men to establish independence on their own terms, but also the crucial importance of collective security within working-class life. It will be argued therefore, that the clubs and societies patronised by the Royal Dockyard worker, like many other working-class men, were a complex and highly subjective articulation of the many concepts of leisure and recreation available to them. Specific choices denoted a negotiation of these concepts based on personal and collective experiences and notions of identity over time and social, political and economic change.

**Patterns of Dockyard Work Relations in Leisure**

**Trades Societies and Trade Unionism**

Certainly, Portsmouth’s working class was stratified and the hierarchical nature of the Dockyard fostered notions of elitism and distinction between its trades. Coupled with the prevailing workplace situation, this environment was a catalyst for the increasing numbers of Dockyard workmen who were attracted to the trades society or trades union movement. Distinction was complex as trades associations were split many ways, with potential members able to belong to several simultaneously. In addition some would invite others to their events and promote a shared fraternity, whereas others would not in order to set themselves apart and promote their agendas over others. It seemed that at all turns, men were included or excluded due to their status as employees due to trade or skill level, age, rank, experience and whether they were established or hired workers. Many of the Dockyard clubs and societies mirrored those outside the Dockyard walls and indicated the strong presence of working-class values in leisure distinct from middle-class rational recreationalist reform. Many were organised along similar lines to other working-class institutions such as friendly societies; and just as membership of friendly societies demarked social status, fraternal bonds and distinction, so did membership to trades

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807 For example they could belong to apprentice, ex-apprentice, general trade (e.g. Boilermakers Association), skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled, hired and established trade associations (Established Boilermakers Association).
associations by the way they conducted themselves as institutions, strove for financial independence, self-improvement and education, excluded those who were not a part of their “set”, and celebrated their place in the social fabric of the local community.

By the early 1890s seventeen trade union organisations are recorded to have represented around 4,000 employees of the Royal Dockyards. The Edwardian period in particular saw a marked increase in trade union activity in the Royal Dockyards due to the undermining of the principals of civil service employment by the creation of state welfare provisions such as the Workman’s Compensation Act (1906), the Old Age Pensions Act (1908) and the National Insurance Act (1911). Previous to this the benefits of state employment that established Dockyard workers received, or those aspiring to become established coveted, such as financial stability and pensions, meant that the majority of the workforce would be careful in the ways they raised employment grievances and would be dissuaded from antagonistic activity. However, enraged at demarcation disputes and low wages in comparison with their private dockyard counterparts, and exacerbated by the ineffectiveness of the Admiralty grievance system, increasingly workers in the Royal Dockyards sought to employ influential advocates to settle their grievances and protect their trades.

Historians have tended to focus on the history of trade union movements in terms of labour rights and parliamentary gains. This focus has overlooked the valuable impact the pursuit of trade rights had on the leisure patterns of the working classes. Aside from the gains and set backs of working class labour agitation, the dedication of time outside work to organise associations and attend meetings, the convivial aspect of forming a brotherhood of tradesmen with similar aims and goals, and the raising of capital for the trades union movement by the use of entertainment was an essential part of the social

810 Galliver, ‘Trade Unionism’; pp.102-103. This is also highlighted in the evidence given at the Royal Commission by the various Dockyard representatives giving evidence. A. Anderson remarked how “it would be futile to strike against such a powerful arm of the Government and a striker would be certainly removed from the establishment and forfeit the pension to which he had already contributed ...” Royal Commission on Labour, Evidence of A. Anderson, ‘Workers in the Government Dockyards and Arsenals’; p.58.
life of the industrialised working class male. Membership of such societies transcended the realm of the workplace as time dedicated to meetings and delegations encroached on leisure time. The fact that Royal Dockyard workers thought that this was a prudent way to occupy themselves illustrates the level of importance placed on work-based issues, if not always on the labour movement as a whole.

The nature of Admiralty employment tacitly forbade trade union activity. Therefore, membership to a trade association or a trade union by a Royal Dockyard worker denoted particular positions on the trade union movement. This, however, changed over time and circumstance with the rise in employment of Hired workmen and continued disputes over the demarcation of jobs and tasks in Dockyard practices. Unions with a semi-skilled or unskilled membership base were harder to establish. Local trade unions of Drillers, a semi-skilled trade in the Dockyard, were established and dissolved multiple times during the Edwardian period. However, the Government Workers’ Union (GLU), formed in Portsmouth in 1894 and, encompassing both unskilled and semi-skilled labourers, went from strength to strength growing from 115 members by 1899 to 1,616 at the end of 1913. For the elite of the Dockyard, the Shipwrights, a Portsmouth branch of the Ship Constructive Association (SCA) was established in July 1883 due to the challenges to their trade from the transition of wood to iron shipbuilding. The SCA already had branches in Chatham and Pembroke and were distinctly a trades association, rather than a trades union. Its members were aware of their role in the defence of the realm and the distain felt from the Admiralty over militant action, preferring to further their cause by self-

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812 Portsmouth Dockyard Hand Drillers Association was created in the 1890s with a peak membership of 165 in 1893, but had slumped to 20 and dissolved by 1900. The Portsmouth United Drillers' Society was then established in 1900, dissolved in 1903 and re-established in 1910 before being dissolved again in 1912 with just 10 members. Chief Registrar of the Friendly Societies, Reports of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, 1899 to 1912. House of Commons Parliamentary Papers http://parlipapers.chadwyck.co.uk, last accessed 19/11/2012 ; Smethurst and Carter, (eds). Historical Directory; pp.581-582.

813 Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council, 27th Annual Report and Statement of Reports, for the year ending 1913; p.29. Portsmouth History Centre, accession number 643A/2/6. Chief Registrar of the Friendly Societies, Reports of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, 1899 to 1912.

814 HT 28th July 1883. Reference is made to recent discussions by trade unionist and MP of Stoke on Trent, Mr Henry Broadhurst. Mr Broadhurst was vociferous on the role of the Fitter in ship construction and felt that shipwrights were ill qualified to manage and do the type of work that a Ship Fitter was supposed to do. See House of Commons Debate, “Navy—Fitters in Her Majesty's Dockyards—Resolution.” 14th March 1882, vol 267, cc898-915. Hansard, http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1882/mar/14/navy-fitters-in-her-majesty-shipyards, last accessed 28/01/2013.

improvement, respectable conduct and exerting influence on the Dockyard hierarchy through offering honorary membership. However, from the years 1893 to 1907 falling numbers among the SCA prompted amalgamation with the national shipbuilding trade union the Associated Shipwrights Society (ASS). Indeed, by 1900 some 68% of the Shipwrights in Portsmouth Dockyard were ASS members and in the Edwardian period the respectability of trade unionists and the trade union movement was increasingly recognised. Membership to a particular trade union or trades association, then, would have denoted one’s position on the labour movement. If a Shipwright was a member of the SCA then it meant that he was largely against agitation and sought solutions to workplace grievances through traditional protocols and the emulation of respectability through self-improvement. ASS members, on the other hand signalled recognition that the wider trade union movement could provide them with the clout they needed in the workplace.

Picture 21. A. G. Gourd, GLU. “‘Gourdie’ likes a ‘grievance.’ If he hasn’t something to worry about, he isn’t happy.” Portsmouth History Centre

Picture 22. Jack Williams, Secretary of A Branch, Portsmouth ASS, a“...dour, imperturbable son of Cambria ... A man who seldom speaks, and only when necessary.” Portsmouth History Centre

816 Due to the Dockyard system, all officers of the Dockyard at this time were promoted shipwrights. Thus the Dockyard hierarchy would have been keen to support their fellow Shipwrights. Galliver, The Portsmouth Dockyard Workforce; p.71.
817 Galliver, The Portsmouth Dockyard Workforce; p.98.
In addition to trade representation the use of the trade union or trade association as a friendly society must also have been an attraction for many Dockyard workers, who were innately cautious of the precariousness of their employment situation and the need to insure themselves against unemployment or illness.\footnote{Galliver, The Portsmouth Dockyard Workforce; p.98. The ASS amended their subscription tariffs to accommodate workers from the Royal Dockyards who could opt out of strike and unemployment benefit, which though desirable in the private yards, was not viewed as necessary to the Royal Dockyard Shipwright. Galliver found that Royal Dockyardmen preferred the option of paying 9d. per week with high friendly benefit payments compared to private yard workers who preferred full benefit. Scales: Full benefit (1s. per week); Trade, Low Friendly, unemployment (9d. per week); Trade, low friendly (6d. per week); Trade (3d. per week); Apprentice (3d. per week). Galliver’s research is based on the ASS Annual Report, 1904.} Indeed at the Fifth Trades Union Congress in 1873, Robert Knight, General Secretary of the Boilermakers’ Union, praised the ability of the trade unions to offer unemployment insurance and to advise members about the conditions of the labour market in contrast to the friendly societies which could supply neither unemployment funds nor expertise.\footnote{Cordery, British Friendly Societies; p.135. Knight was a Boilermaker at Portsmouth Dockyard.} The ASS and large trade unions, such as the ASE also offered benefits to their members if injured and unable to work.\footnote{HT, 13\textsuperscript{th} April 1895. A Mr George Rogers was presented with £100 from the Amalgamated Society of Engineers Portsmouth No.2 Branch after being injured at work in the Dockyard so badly that he could not “follow his occupation”. In 1913 members of the Gosport Branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers visited the home of John O’Hare, North Street, Portsea to make a presentation of £100 accident benefit. O’Hare was a fitter in the Dockyard Factory for 13 years but had been on the sick list for some months, eventually having to have his leg amputated from the hip. PEN, 18\textsuperscript{th} June 1913.} More locally, the Portsmouth-based GLU blamed their “satisfactory” financial position in 1899 due to increased expenditure on sick pay and assistance given to other societies.\footnote{PEN, 11\textsuperscript{th} January 1899.}

While not obligatory, giving one’s time by the attendance of the branch meetings and mass meetings infringed on leisure time. Branch officers would also attend executive meetings as representatives and would furthermore be expected to attend as delegates to a number of conferences, both locally and throughout the country. The Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council included six branches of “Shipwrights” (ASS) and seven branches of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE), Coppersmiths, Boilermakers and two branches of Steam Engine Makers. Ship Riggers, Patternmakers, Drillers and the GLU were also represented.\footnote{Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council, 27\textsuperscript{th} Annual Report, p.17. Shipwrights Branches A, B, C, Naval, Auxiliary and Gosport; ASE Branches No 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and Gosport.} Most affiliated trade unions conducted meetings on a
fortnightly, monthly or quarterly basis. In addition delegates to the Trades and Labour Council would be asked to attend some of the 26 meetings conducted annually.

Attendance of the Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council meetings by the delegates from each union were published in their Annual Reports, most likely for the purposes of showing who was being diligent in their duties and who was not. The Council Executive and subsequent committees also required members to attend local and national Labour Representation Council (LRC) meetings and take part in initiatives such as the “Distress Committee”, “Pensions Committee” and the “Dockyard Grievance Committee” where delegates would work with the Town Council, or attend conferences based on collective labour issues such as the Labour Party Conference.

However, although united in the common cause of the trade union and Labour movement, these relationships were not always harmonious and members always ardent. In 1909 Arthur Hatcher of the Executive Committee called for more regular and punctual attendance “to enable delegates to keep in touch and take an intelligent interest in the work of the Council, and to take a share of that work, which, if it is not glorious, is absolutely necessary.” He also called for unity and to help in building up a strong organisation “and leave the bickering to our opponents.”

Although there were attempts at bringing more cohesiveness to the Dockyard workforce with the creation of a “Dockyard Grievance Committee” (DGC) within the Portsmouth, Chatham and Devonport Trades and Labour Councils in 1911, it was announced at the end of 1913 that

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825 See Pictures 21 and 22. In 1913 Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council profiled prominent trade unionists such as A. G. Gourd, secretary of the GLU whose association with the Trades and Labour Council dated back 18 years and who had been “involved in numerous delegations” and was largely responsible for raising membership from 350 to 2000. Similarly, “Jack” Williams of the ASE is described as a “dour, imperturbable son of Cambria” always in request for deputations, who in the 15 years of being the District Secretary of his union attended Admiralty deputations every year on their behalf. His duties have included three general revisions of rules and Dockyard conferences. Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council, 27th Annual Report, pp.29-33.

relationships had broken down and the DGC had not “fulfilled the functions hoped for.”

Indeed continuing Dockyard unrest by some sections of the workforce would point to the lingering continuance of grievance disputes over demarcation, and thus the continuing importance of the trade unions in the lives of the Royal Dockyard workers.

Many trades associations and unions also had a convivial or educational aspect to them and were places where bonds of brotherhood were actively encouraged through contemporary forms of leisure and self-improvement. Key to the attainment of labour rights then, was the assertion that the members were active and respectable members of society. Public comment at the beginning of the period highlighted the ingrained stereotype of the unskilled and semi-skilled members of the Dockyard workforce as course, uneducated and a hindrance to the labour movement. In 1890 when the Dockyard Labourers announced a mass meeting to unite and discuss their grievances, Liberal middle class broadsheet, the Hampshire Telegraph effectively advised the Dockyard Labourers to “know their place.” They tried to dissuade the men on joining a labourers’ union and cautioned them to refrain from using:

“...intemperate language either against the Admiralty or the officers of the Yard under whom they immediately serve; feeling sure that inflammatory remarks by men who are not fully acquainted with the real circumstances will only have the effect of spoiling the movement.”

Distinction in the discourse of respectability was therefore important and can also be seen in the venues in which societies held their meetings. While the Shipwrights’ branch meetings occurred in such places as Church Street Council School, St Phillip’s Mission, Blake’s Academy and the Masonic Hall; the Smiths and Hammermen, GLU and the Ship Riggers held their meetings in the Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council. Conversely, the Engineers of the ASE held theirs in public houses, as did the Coppersmiths, Ironfounders,

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828 See Chapters Two and Five for examples.
829 HT, 25th January 1890.
Riveters and Boilermakers. Arguably, whereas the Shipwrights were making a definite statement based on their notions of respectability reflected by their trade, the use of Trades and Labour Council rooms by others signal the aspiration for respectability and a business-like attitude, albeit without the funds or independent infrastructure which afforded it. The utilisation of public houses by the skilled workers such as the Coppersmiths, Boilermakers and Engineers of the Dockyard on the other hand, signalled reconciliation with their respectability and their roots in working-class culture, whereas semi-skilled workers such as the Riveters who also met in public houses probably did so as it was the best facility available to them as a meeting place.

Local philanthropy via affiliation with local charitable causes placed the emphasis on a group’s status and respectability. The notion of local philanthropy amongst the Dockyard clubs and societies was a recurring issue and signalled a deep-felt need to help their fellow workers and to assert their respectability and right to citizenship. Royal Dockyard workers via their gangs, shops or departments were acknowledged in the local press for their subscription to the Hospital Saturday Fund or the Portsmouth Eye and Ear Infirmary and this tradition continued throughout the period. During the Edwardian period the Labourers and Skilled Labourers of the Dockyard were also eager to engage in the community in this way, mirroring the ethic of the “artisan elite.” This can be seen in the Government Labourers’ Union’s prominent place in a friendly society town parade to raise money for the Albert Cottages Alms Houses Extension Fund in 1910. The entertainment was also employed as a way of raising funds and looking after each other. In 1906 the local branch of the Boilermakers’ Society held a concert in aid of the unemployed of the Boiler Department in which £46 10s. was raised for distribution, whilst the Dockyard Ship Joiners Association used the surplus from their second annual smoking concert, a sum of £6 10s., "to be spent for the benefit of the apprentices". The idea of self-improvement was also prevalent amongst the Dockyard trades associations. This is most vividly illustrated by the SCA who aimed to consolidate the

830 Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council, 25th Annual Report; p.34.
831 HT, 23rd September 1910.
832 PEN, 14th March 1906; PEN, 12th March 1906.
position of Royal Dockyard Shipwrights through mutual improvement, practical help and
defence of its members through collective security. In addition to the opening of an
office, reading rooms were also instituted. The chairman for the inaugural meeting,
former Chief Constructor at Portsmouth, Mr W. B. Robinson, acknowledged the social
advantages of the formation of the Association and the benefits of literacy and
teetotalism to their cause, which he hoped would make them respected and a model for
others to emulate. SCA member, Mr Crocker, hoped that the new association would
“assist in making its members worthy of the professional and social position which they
claimed for themselves.”

Mirroring the ideals of the SCA, groups such as the
Portsmouth Dockyard Boilermakers and Ex-Apprentices Association used self-
 improvement as a way to gain concessions in the workplace by expanding their technical
knowledge. On a Monday evening in 1913 Mr J. H. Russell of London, gave a lecture on
the “History of mechanical stokers, forced draught versus induced draught, and the
economics of using heated air for combustion.” However, the Boilermakers were less
exclusive, recognising the symbiosis of their trade with others by inviting members of the
Dockyard Electrical Fitters and Ex-Apprentices Association and members of the
Engineering Department.

The role of socialising and entertainment within the trades association and trades union
movement proved useful to creating a sense of cohesiveness and contributed to
enhancing the bonds of commonality and brotherhood. Reports in the local press and
photographs in the surviving albums of dockyard departments show participation in
outings and dinners under various guises of trade associations and trade unions were
widespread throughout the period. Smoking concerts were also popular ways of
socialising, with many Dockyardmen showing their talents as singers, musicians, orators,

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833 HT 28th July 1883.
834 PEN, 6th May 1913.
835 Portsmouth Dockyard Manager Electrical Engineers’ Department (EEM), EEM Department Photograph
Album 1910-1936, and Portsmouth Dockyard Manager Engineers’ Department (MED), MED Drawing Office
Staff Outings Album c.1895-1914, Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Historical Trust collection. The EEM album
and MED albums both show pictures of the United Draughtsmen’s Association First Annual Outing to
Seaview, August 28th 1909 and the MED album shows the First Annual Dinner of the Draughtsmen’s
Association in London, 1909 and a second trip to Seaview in 1910. The EEM album also shows the
Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Electrical Fitter Apprentices First Annual Outing, Rowland’s Castle, 6th July
1912. See Chapter Six for more information on the albums and Dockyard works’ outings.
actors or humourists. This sociability was not isolated locally and was used nationally to enhance the bonds of trade commonalities, such as the Royal Dockyard Joiners’ Conference in Pembroke, 1899, which concluded with the delegates paying a visit to the dockyard and places of interest followed by a tea and a concert. As previously mentioned even the SCA, who prided themselves on their emphasis on respectability and self-improvement held an annual entertainment performed by “a number of well-known amateurs”, which was open to invited guests only, and of course attended by prominent officials in the Dockyard.

The creation of the Portsmouth Branch of the Royal Dockyard Ex-Apprentices’ Association in 1907 served as a means for Shipwrights of the Dockyard to protect their interests in a convivial way and its membership was “open to ex-apprentices who have served their time in the Yard - officials as well as the ordinary working shipwright.” This relationship was also cultivated across the country with the other Royal Dockyards. Similar to the SCA, the association sought approval from the Dockyard hierarchy, which was made up of ex-Shipwright apprentices. Mr J. Apsey, Manager of the Constructive Department, was made president of the Portsmouth Branch and all Constructors and Assistant Constructors were made honorary members. The inaugural dinner in 1907 was boasted as the “first gathering of its kind in the modern history of the Dockyard” with over 200 people in attendance. Similar to the SCA, the association re-iterated that the aims of the association were non-agitational. Tied to this notion was a sense of pride in their role in the construction of the Royal Navy’s ships. During his speech to the new association Honorary Secretary Mr H. W. Ballard tried to legitimise the position of the Shipwrights by aligning the importance of their work with concepts of imperial national efficiency. He stressed

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836 PEN, 4th September 1899. The association was exclusively for shipwrights as in later reports the association is referred to as the Ex-Shipwright Apprentices Association.
837 HT, 1st February, 1890.
838 PEN, 9th December 1907.
839 In 1910 Devonport Branch of the association travelled to Portsmouth via the Plymouth Dockyard Excursion Committee to indulge in bonding with their Portsmouth-based brethren. The party left at 11.30pm the night before, arriving at 05.30am before being taken on a tour of the Dockyard, HMS Victory and the Isle of Wight with entertainments in the evening all arranged by the Portsmouth Branch. They finally left at 11.30pm in order that “the merrymakers should have an opportunity of visiting Portsmouth.” HT, 19th August 1910.
that the Association was not a trade union, but a society for “promoting the spirit de corps ... on which efficiency depended.” He further argued that:

England possessed the finest fleet of warships in the world, and it was no idle boast to say that the high standard of warship design and building that had been attained was almost entirely down to the skill of the ex-shipwright apprentice (Applause).\footnote{PEN, 9\textsuperscript{th} December 1907.}

However, it is arguable to suggest that the rhetoric of this pride and position was less entrenched in patriotic and imperialistic fervour and deployed much as the SCA did twenty-four years previously; in response to the increased threat to their superior position by other shipbuilding trades such as engineers and metal workers. The notion of efficiency in the Dockyard and wider notions of national efficiency were thus juxtaposed to impose a sense of national emergency in the shipbuilding industry.

Some Dockyard trade society gatherings showed reference to wider concepts of patriotism and citizenship such as the meeting and smoking concert of the Established Boilermakers Association at which a toast was made to the King.\footnote{PEN, 6\textsuperscript{th} January 1913.} Indeed all ex-Dockyard apprentices would have been educated on the history of Britain and the British Empire in the Dockyard School.\footnote{HMSO, \textit{HM Dockyard Schools Upper School Syllabus}, (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1914); p.3; p.6. In the first year there was a history module on “The outlines of British History from 1485-1748” and in the second year “Outlines of British History from 1748, tracing the social and constitutional advance of the Nation and the growth of the British Empire.” Admiralty Papers, Portsmouth Station, Dockyard Correspondence, National Archives, ADM 179/68.} However, many social gatherings terminated with the singing of “Auld Lang Syne,” highlighting the importance of the notion of maintaining friendships, and mirroring the conviviality of many contemporary friendly society gatherings.\footnote{For example, the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Electrical Fitter Apprentices Association at the Congregational Hall, Queen’s Road, Buckland, \textit{PEN}, 11\textsuperscript{th} October 1906, and the Second Annual Dinner of the Established Boilermakers’ Association. \textit{PEN}, 9\textsuperscript{th} December 1907.} In the case of the Royal Dockyard Ex-Apprentices’ Association the wide membership of all Dockyard Shipwright apprentices, former or serving, was contrived to show strength in numbers, the anti-trades union stance exhibited the prevalence of the
notion of effecting change through informal structures of influence. It must also have been important for those who were not established or out of work as it gave them the opportunity of networking with those who were in, and those who could offer them, work in times of recruitment.

Demarcations in age were also prominent factors of trade society membership in some cases. The Electrical Fitters Apprentice Association was particularly socially active during the Edwardian period. Indeed it was the young working-class males without the financial ties of providing for a family which would have benefitted most from the expansion of leisure. Pictures 23 and 24 show examples of the activities undertaken by Dockyard Apprentices during the Edwardian period and exhibit the conventions and camaraderie on which their socialising was based on. In March 1906 they took the opportunity to socialise with other apprentices in the Dockyard during a social held at Buckland Congregational Hall where 140 guests sat down to supper, played games and were entertained on the piano by one of the members of the Association’s sister.844 This occasion was repeated again in October where representatives of the Engine Fitter Apprentices and Joiner Apprentices Associations were amongst the guests.845 The names of key personalities also appeared in the photograph album of the Electrical Engineer’s Department (EEM), where they featured in pictures of an apprentice football team, 1905, and various annual outings.846 The significance of apprentices forming themselves into societies may have stemmed from the artisan ethic which was propagated in the Dockyard schools to create a line of influence spanning school, the workplace and the community.847 Reverend P. T. B. Clayton attributed the imitative and impressionable nature of young men in Portsmouth transplanted into a workplace situation as formative to their general attitudes and outlook to society.848 Young men keen to enter the associational culture of the artisan, therefore, may have used this opportunity to carve

844 PEN, 22nd March 1906.
845 PEN, 11th October 1906.
846 EEM, Photo Album, PRDHT. Some pictures also feature the “EFAA” football team of 1907/1908, which stood for the Electrical Fitters Apprentice Association.
847 Casey, “Class Rule”; p.81.
out their own distinct mark on artisan life, with an eye on impressing their superiors and influencing chances of future employment by the skills they showcased. These skills would have included, organisation, independence, respectability and, through sports, physicality and efficiency; all of which would have been desirable in a Dockyard employee. As a group the apprentices also tended to mix more with the opposite sex, distinguishing their associational activities with those of older men. The Portsmouth Dockyard Fitter Apprentices’ Association’s social at the King’s Hall, Arundel Street in March 1906 saw guests sharing a “genial evening with lady friends, a long programme of dances having been arranged.” The apprentices, then, used their associational activities as an appropriate forum to attract or court potential mates with whom they could establish their respectable family unit.

Picture 23. EEM Apprentices Annual Outing, c.1913. Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Historical Trust

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849 [PEN, 8th March 1906.](#)
Sporting and Arts Societies

The Royal Dockyard workers were also involved in establishing sports and leisure-based clubs and events, which was characteristic of many other artisan-run clubs flourishing throughout the country during the period. Members of the Dockyard workforce were heavily involved in sporting clubs and there is scattered evidence of their participation in athletics, football and cricket teams in the local press either playing one another, or taking part in competitions in the wider community. For some activities participation in

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850 Richard Holt argued that the independent nature of artisan-run clubs were characterised by the way that they were established with little or no support from the management and such ventures were best seen as a development of artisan traditions of good-fellowship and community rather than part of a capitalist welfare system. Richard Holt, Sport and the British. A Modern History, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p.152.

851 For example Portsmouth Dockyard Harriers athletics competition at Kingston. HT, 20th December 1890. References to the Albion Cricket Club, made up of Shipwrights and Fitters from HM Dockyard, on their fifth annual outing. HT, 25th July 1891. Local Football Association match results such as Dockyard FC, Dockyard AFC or Royal Dockyard. HT, 12th August 1899, a Mechanical Engineers Cycling Club is mentioned in the “Sport and Pastime” section. PEN, Portsmouth Dockyard Electrical Fitter Apprentices crop up in a local league throughout September 1906. Teams such as Clarence Swimming Club, for example was formed in 1901 with a membership largely of Dockyard employees and took part in its first swimming gala in 1903 at the Municipal Swimming Baths against other local and district swimming teams. PEN, 30th July 1903. Individuals were also sometimes recognised. Mr J. H. Ward, on his promotion to Assistant Electrical Engineer at Chatham Dockyard was reported as a well-known local sportsman, playing rugby for the town and county and for his talents as a sprinter and cricketer. PEN, 19th May 1913.
sport and other recreational activities was related to age, gender and lifecycle. Younger men tended to participate in sporting activities while the older men were involved in management of the team or secretarial duties. As the transition from trades to factories and workshops progressed, new lines of work/leisure-based relationships were articulated based on the physical relationships of the Dockyard’s workspaces. In 1913 an inter-shop sports competition was held at Alexandra Park which included members of the Electrical Engineer’s Department, the Gunmounting Department and the Dockyard Factory and their families. Entrants were requested to pay a 1s. fee for each race to help defray expenses for the purchase of medals. The winning department, the Electrical Engineers, won the “Clark Cup” and it was again hoped that in future the venture could be extended to every department in the Dockyard.

In 1913 a Dockyard Athletics Club was formed with the objective of encouraging sport through the Dockyard and creating recreational provisions for themselves. By 1914 the Club held an annual sports day, ran Dockyard Football and Cricket Leagues, had a male voice choir and dramatics section and a Club band. Admiral Superintendent of Portsmouth Dockyard, Admiral H. L. Heath, was asked to be the patron. As with some other Dockyard societies, official patronage by the naval or Dockyard hierarchy has often led to the assumption that Royal Dockyardmen were deferential and servile to the Admiralty and accepting of the Dockyard structures. Indeed, the process of petitioning was convoluted and based on established lines of address and protocol with petitioners addressing “My Lords”, while describing themselves as “Obedient Servants.” However, for the Dockyardmen, patronage by high-ranking members of the naval establishment not

853 The “Dockyard Rovers” advertised for local matches stating that their average age was 14 ½. Other prominent sports teams included the Dockyard Fitter Apprentices Association football team, who formed in 1900 and wished to arrange matches with teams of “medium strength.” PEN, 23rd July 1900. Another team name which arises in the local press is the Portsmouth Dockyard Apprentices Athletics Association. HT, 1st July 1899. A team named PDAAA are frequently mentioned in the First Division of the Portsmouth Cricket League playing against such teams as Alverstoke Rovers, Portsmouth Hornets, Annerley, Orleans, Wanderers, Spartans and St John’s Gosport.
854 Galliver, The Portsmouth Dockyard Workforce; p.203.
855 PEN, 24th April 1913.
856 PEN, 31st July 1912.
857 Admiralty Papers, Portsmouth Station, ADM 179/68; HT, 31st July 1914.
only ensured credibility, and thus respectability, but also served to smooth the process of requests through the chain of command and endorse claims to leisure provisions. It is clear from examining the Admiralty petitions that the Dockyardmen expected to ‘pay their way’ and remain independent; looking to strike deals with the Admiralty in order to gain better rates of venue and ground hire that they would not achieve elsewhere. The frivolity of leisure and pleasure were deflected by appealing to contemporary notions of the benefits of these activities to the general health, efficiency and cohesiveness of the workforce and were tempered with arguments of their worthiness with the guarantee that the profits made would go to charitable causes, such as the Dockyard Orphanage Fund. Dockyardmen were thus able to enjoy specially tailored programmes of leisure at discounted rates whilst retaining their independence and providing for the less fortunate members of their community.

The Dockyard Athletics Club petitioned in 1913 to procure Admiralty grounds at Haslar and Bedenham. The Club wished to use the grounds to train and play football and cricket on as there was no available land for the exclusive use to Dockyard League clubs and pointed out the inequity of the many recreation grounds which were provided for the use of men in the Royal Navy and the Marines. The request was not straight-forward however. It was proposed that, in return for the ground and fencing securing the area at the public’s expense, the men would pay for the rent and upkeep at an agreed fee. In addition the Dockyard League would have to pay for extra policing on days when large groups of spectators would be present on the ground. The Admiralty also proposed that the Dockyardmen pay towards rolling and levelling the ground, the upkeep of the

859 The value of sport and cohesiveness in the Dockyard workforce was recognised by Admiral Heath who supported the Club on several occasions, arguing to the Lords of the Admiralty that he believed in the value of exercise to the individual and the benefits to the Dockyard if they were able to compete in “friendly rivalry.” ‘Letter submitted to the Lords of the Admiralty from Admiral H L Heath, Admiral Superintendent of Portsmouth Dockyard, re: Dockyard Football League’s request for grounds,’ dated 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1914. No 2350. Admiralty Papers, Portsmouth Station, ADM 179/68. Another reason for Admiralty support would have revolved around the idea of national efficiency. Indeed historians have noted a growing paranoia of national efficiency under the perceived threat of international competition in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; this would have been especially pertinent for the builders of His Majesty’s warships. See Beaven, Leisure, Citizenship; p.28.
861 ‘D. Sewell, Acting Supt, Police, February 23<sup>rd</sup> 1914.’ Admiralty Papers, Portsmouth Station, ADM 179/68.
fencing and for the employment of a groundsman to maintain the ground. However, the Club’s Secretary, Mr W. O’Brien, stated that while the Club were willing to pay a groundsman, they could not afford the outlay for the preparation of the grounds, stressing that the profits from the venture would be going towards the Dockyard Orphanage Fund. Unfortunately no more correspondence exists on this issue; although it is recorded that the Portsmouth Dockyard Football League was playing from September 1913, and although the outbreak of the Great War halted all fixtures, the League resumed again in June 1919.

By 1914 a dramatics and choral section had formed under the banner of the Dockyard Athletics Club. Although they requested official patronage from the Admiral Superintendent and his Secretary, rather than being as a point of deference, it was more likely to have been a way to extend their rights and freedoms under the auspices of official sanction. The Club aimed to stage a revue in aid of the local hospital’s Radium Fund. Indeed, the Honorary Secretary of the Dramatic Musical and Variety section, A. C. Milne, was forthcoming in using his connections to ensure the success of the venture. He wrote to the Secretary of the Admiral Superintendent, Mr M. E. Pescott Frost, to help him obtain the patronage of the Admiral Superintendent Heath, adding that he hoped that Frost would “recognise in me an old shipmate, ... [with] whom I have to thank for my

862 ‘Letter from C-in-C Portsmouth, W Graham Greene,’ no date, and ‘Letter from J. Brookes Hunt, Superintending Civil Engineer, to Admiral Superintendent re: costs, dated June 10th 1914.” Admiralty Papers, Portsmouth Station, ADM 179/68.
863 ‘Letter from O’Brien to Admiral Supt Heath re: costs of ground,’ dated June 1st 1914. Admiralty Papers, Portsmouth Station, ADM 179/68.
865 ‘Letter from D Fraser, Chargeman of Riggers and Hon Treasurer of the Dockyard Athletic Club, to Captain J. E. T. (?) Harper, Ass Capt of DY,’ dated 3rd March 1914. Permission was granted, but only on the condition of payment of the caretaker to be in attendance as well as cleaning and lighting costs. The club was also prohibited to serve refreshments, strictly adhere to closing times and give up the hall if needed by the Admiralty. ‘Response by Admiral Superintendent of Portsmouth Dockyard’, dated 12th March 1914. Admiralty Papers, Portsmouth Station, ADM 179/68.
866 ‘Letter to Secretary to the Admiral Superintendent, M. E. Pescott Frost from A. C. Milne, Honorary Secretary of the Dramatic Musical and Variety Section of the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Athletic Club,’ dated 20th March 1914. Admiralty Papers, Portsmouth Station, ADM 179/68.
entrance into the Dockyard.” Through official patronage, they were able to add credibility to their endeavours; Pescott Frost, appealed to the Town Clerk to make representatives available to facilitate the Club in holding an entertainment at the Kings Theatre, adding in his correspondence that “the Admiral Superintendent takes much interest in the Dockyard Athletic Club.” The performance subsequently gained support from local MPs Lord Charles Beresford and Bertram Falle, the Mayor of Portsmouth, the Admiral Superintendent and the Commander-in-Chief of Portsmouth Dockyard. A committee was formed with two town council representatives and the entertainment was finally arranged for the afternoon of Saturday 30th May 1914 with proceeds going to the Dockyard Orphanage Fund. The local philanthropic elements within these activities showed that the Dockyard workers were keen to extend their self-help to benefit other workers and create collective security across the Dockyard workforce. While this fitted into a wider pattern mirroring the civic elite, the insularity of a “Dockyard Orphanage” venture showed that the Royal Dockyard workers wished deflect from “their own” the stigma of the local Poor Relief and to fit into civic culture on their own terms.

Indeed, local culture remained important to the Royal Dockyard worker, however, other working-class movements began to become increasingly nationalised, if not trans-nationalised, to reflect the growing need for collective security on a large scale. While this can been seen in the expansion of trade union and trades association membership and conviviality, it was also witnessed in other non-industrial organisations, to which we now turn.

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867 ‘Letter to Secretary to the Admiral Superintendent, M. E. Pescott Frost from A. C. Milne, Honorary Secretary of the Dramatic Musical and Variety Section of the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Athletic Club,’ dated 20th March 1914. Admiralty Papers, Portsmouth Station, ADM 179/68. The charity that the proceeds were going to go to eventually changed to the Dockyard Orphanage Fund, but correspondence does not exist to account for why this happened.

868 ‘Letter from the Secretary to the Admiral Superintendent, M E Pescott Frost, to the Town Clerk,’ dated 27th March 1914. Admiralty Papers, Portsmouth Station, ADM 179/68.

869 ‘Letter from A. C. Milne, Honorary Secretary of Dramatic Musical and Variety Society branch of the PRDY Athletic Club,’ dated 16th April 1914; ‘Letter from the Mayor of Portsmouth, to Secretary to the Admiral Superintendent, M. E. Pescott Frost,’ dated 16th April 1914; and handwritten notes on the progress of the plans of the Dramatic Musical and Variety Society branch of the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Athletic Club, dated 20th April 1914. Admiralty Papers, Portsmouth Station, ADM 179/68.
Non-Dockyard Organisations

Friendly Societies

During the late Victorian and Edwardian period Portsmouth witnessed a boom in affiliated friendly societies. Many, such as the Oddfellows (both Manchester and Kent Unity), the Ancient Order of Druids, the Ancient Order of Foresters and the Independent Order of Rechabites were already established in the town prior to 1880. However, between 1880 and 1914 the Oddfellows (MU) opened 13 new lodges on Portsea Island alone and had over 9,000 members by 1911. The largest rise during the same period, however, was the Independent Order of Rechabites (Salford Unity) which opened 16 new tents on Portsea Island, and gained an overall district membership of 3,732 between 1906 and 1911. So strong was the friendly society movement in Portsmouth that a Council of Friendly Socialites was formed in 1890 with the aim to represent all such societies in Portsmouth and to encourage education “by promoting the reading of papers of matters of mutual benefit”. The first secretary of the council was Mr S. Pridham, District Secretary of the Foresters, and a Writer in the Expense Accounts Department of Portsmouth Royal Dockyard, showing how central Royal Dockyard workers were to associational culture in the town.

The social life of the friendly societies was central to their role in artisan life. Indeed, the friendly societies have been historically regarded as a signal of working-class self-help and respectability. Furthermore, their social element enabled members to interact and form bonds with similar persons within their locality. By the turn of the twentieth century, however, regulation and the concentration on insurance and the spread of other forms of leisure had caused the convivial element of the friendly society movement to

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870 Chief Registrar of the Friendly Societies, Reports of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, 1900-1914.
871 This district gain included women but not the four tents of the Royal Naval District in the Portsmouth and Gosport area. Chief Registrar of the Friendly Societies, Reports of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, 1900-1914.
872 HT, 18th January 1890.
873 HT, 21st March 1891. The venture was modelled on similar organisations in towns such as Leeds and part of this representation was to provide a united front to lobby to support the interests of the friendly society movement and included affiliated friendly societies, insurance, and other local societies, such as the Dockyard Medical Society.
874 Crossick, An Artisan Elite in Victorian Society; p.177.
875 Cordery, British Friendly Societies; p.5.
wane as they competed with other forms of commercial entertainment and increasing numbers turned to insurance societies such as Hearts of Oak. However, evidence from the minute book of the King Edward Lodge of the AIO Oddfellows (KU) noted small attendance figures to lodge meetings where solely financial business was discussed; suggesting that only the most dedicated were interested in the finer points of the financial dealings of their lodge.

Friendly societies presented opportunities for social mixing. Although not a wide amount of data exists from the local branches of the friendly societies, some patterns of membership do occur. Male workers would join the same clubs as their work colleagues if they were eligible and once inducted would nominate others, which sometimes earned them a fee. At the King Edward Lodge of Oddfellows (KU), established in 1907, the Dockyard members who joined were for the most part unskilled-to-semi skilled such as Labourers, Riveters and Drillers. Some Coppersmiths are also recorded to have joined, but the minute books of the Lodge only record one Shipwright. Often men of the same trade would join around the same time, and men who were already in the Order would nominate colleagues to join their ranks. An ambitious man could rise through the organisation quite quickly. Charles M. Parris, a 23 year-old Driller in the Dockyard was nominated for membership on 11th May 1909 and rose to the rank of Vice Grand within 14 months, nominating many skilled labourers, including his brother, during that time.

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877 Ancient Independent Order of Oddfellows (Kent Unity), Minute book of King Edward Lodge, Portsea, October 1907-January 1912, 11th and 25th February, and 7th April 1908. Portsmouth History Centre, accession no 294A/3/2.
878 Cordery, British Friendly Societies; p.73.
879 It was decided on 5th October 1907 that 1s would be given to every member who introduced a new candidate. In June 1908 Brother W. Briggs was given 10s. for having made the first six new members since entering the new lodge. Minute book of King Edward Lodge, Portsea, October 1907-January 1912.
880 The names of the founding officers of the Lodge do not yield sufficient information to discern their occupational status. However, all new members enrolled are recorded by name, age, marital status and title of employment. Ancient Independent Order of Oddfellows (Kent Unity), Minute book of King Edward Lodge, Portsea, October 1907-January 1912, 11th and 25th February, and 7th April 1908. Portsmouth History Centre, accession no 294A/3/2. 8th August 1911, Lance Faithwaite nominated. Dockyard Employee Database – Lancelot Dowbiggin Faithwaite 21/8/1887 – Shipwright 1908-1918 and separate entry 1902-1947.
881 Ancient Independent Order of Oddfellows (Kent Unity), Minute book of King Edward Lodge, Portsea, October 1907-January 1912.
Despite the decline in conviviality the friendly societies maintained a strongly projected image of solidarity and fraternity towards the outside world through the continued celebration of their branches, lodges or the movement as a whole in the form of banquets, fetes and processions throughout the period. Certainly this show of strength was increasingly important to protect the movement as the debate surrounding government social welfare legislation came to the fore in the early 1890s. At a banquet in Portsmouth, 1891, The High Chief Ranger of the Foresters, Mr C. J. Radley argued for the preservation of their independence, citing the self-respect, happiness and freedom of the working classes as synonymous with prosperity of the nation.\textsuperscript{882} What can be seen is that during the years before 1911 especially, the friendly societies mounted an increased offensive to ensure their survival and highlighted the key importance of the friendly societies to national life and wellbeing.\textsuperscript{883} This effort was grounded in the context of respectability and social involvement in the mid-Victorian era, but was imbued with the assertion of independence, sound financial judgment and national usefulness as the friendly societies sought to influence the terms of their survival in the face of a changing view of social security.

As a result of the conduct of the friendly societies in Portsmouth members would have been brought into a discourse of national pride within a local context, which would have been especially pertinent to them due to their financial ties with the movement. This can be seen in the way that the friendly societies played a large role in civic life from their philanthropic work to their presence in parades of civic and national importance. Cordery has noted the importance of ritual in the social life of the friendly societies, arguing that public ceremonies such as feast-day processions and funeral marches advertised the existence and reinforced the legitimacy of the club.\textsuperscript{884} Indeed, the inclusion of the friendly societies in the opening ceremony of the Town Hall in 1890 and the Town’s celebrations for Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee in 1897 highlighted the importance of the

\textsuperscript{882} HT. 21\textsuperscript{st} March 1891.  
\textsuperscript{883} Cordery, \textit{British Friendly Societies}; p.97. Cordery has noted that from 1880 the Friendly Societies became more politically active working to ‘persuade from without’ by creating favourable public opinion and operated inside by hiring parliamentary agents to influence members of parliament.  
\textsuperscript{884} Cordery, \textit{British Friendly Societies}; p.33.
movement as part of civic life. In 1899 Mayor T. Scott Foster declared that he hoped that the annual parades of the friendly societies would continue, not just because they raised funds for local charities, “but tended to promote that brotherly good feeling which ought to exist ... among the members of the community at large.” This continuation did occur in the Edwardian period, most notably with their inclusion in the civic coronation celebrations of King Edward VII in 1902 and King George V in 1911 which was punctuated with a distinct pride in empire through the filter of local patriotism. This local patriotism was envisioned internationally as reports of orders abroad brought fraternal unity, rivalry and comparison across the English-speaking world. At the first anniversary of the Northern Light Lodge Mr Gardiner, Provincial Lodge Druid, spoke of the successful installation of the society in Australia. Thus the concept of an imperial citizen was mediated through local experiences and imperatives, augmenting the overriding notions of respectability, independence and citizenship, rather than subsuming them.

County Societies

Other societies, which were symptomatic of the alienating affects of industrialisation in the Edwardian period, were the County Associations. The expansion of operations in Portsmouth Dockyard catalysed the influx of migrant workers to the town. The proliferation of such societies underscored the necessity felt by this migratory workforce to forge a feeling of identity and belonging and substitute familial support networks. Evidence in local newspapers and local county society archives highlighted associations from regions such as Caledonia, Killarney, East Anglia, Devon, Yorkshire, Cornwall, Lancashire, Pembrokeshire, Cambria, Kent and even the Isle of Wight, all of which were formed in the late nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries and continued to grow in popularity throughout the period. By the first annual dinner of the Portsmouth Devonian

885 HT, 26th June 1897.
886 HT, 30th September 1899.
889 HT, 5th December 1891. He boasted that the funds of the Australian lodges amounted to only £10,000 less than those in England and how the “great enthusiasm” of the lodges of the Colony of Victoria had organised a fete which sold nearly 120,000 tickets and made a profit of over £2,500.
Society in 1906 over 200 members had been enrolled and included “practically every Devonian of note who has migrated to these parts ...” By 1912 the Devonians boasted that they had received a 65 per cent increase on membership from the following year.

For most, membership was based on having been born, having parents originating from, or having lived in that particular county for a set number of years. Although not all male members worked in the Dockyard, most importantly, what the county societies represented were the needs of men to preserve their regional identities and bond with those who had similar life experiences to them. For the Dockyard workers specifically, established men could be sent to other Royal Dockyards at home and throughout the world. Moreover, due to the hiring system the migratory patterns of skilled workers meant that many would travel the country in search for work. Therefore the need of these men to find similarities and common ground and to quickly make connections in a new town was vital.

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890 PEN, 4th April 1906.
891 PEN, 26th January 1912.
892 The Devonians set their domicile clause at 10 years, five to become an honorary member with no voting rights, while the Lancastrians opted for five years. PEN, 9th February 1906 and Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen, Annual Meetings Minutes From March 1907-March 1925, 13th March 1907. Portsmouth History Centre, unaccessioned item. Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen, Committee Meetings from July 1910 to September 1914, First Annual General Meeting, 21st February 1908. Portsmouth History Centre, unaccessioned item.
893 For example, the secretary of the Portsmouth and District Lancastrian Society, William Henry Lowther, born in Barrow-in-Furness, was on the employment books at Portsmouth Dockyard as a Coppersmith from 1896 until 1916. PEN, 11th February 1899; PRDHT, Portsmouth Dockyard Employment Database: 1911 Census. Membership of the societies is hard to determine with the lack of many records of such societies. The local news coverage is helpful. A report from a smoking concert held by the Lancastrian Society is able to provide surnames of some who played a key role in the night’s entertainment - Messrs Lowther, Gill, Swallow, Fidler, Love, Geary, Benton, Watkins and Beard. PEN, 15th May 1899. Cross-referencing these names with the Portsmouth Dockyard Employment Database and the 1891 and 1901 Censuses helps to provide some possible profiles of some, but not all, of these men. For Lowther see above. Other names: Gill - Portsmouth Dockyard Employment Database - possibly John Gill, born 12/10/1871, Fitter 1898-1914; 1901 Census - John Gill, born Liverpool (recorded as Lancashire) about 1872. Steam Engine Fitter living at 36 Carlisle Road. Fidler - Hudson Fidler, born 12/05/1873, Coppersmith, 1898-1903; 1901 Census - living at 23 Whitworth Road, Coppersmith. Beard - Percy Beard, born 1866, Fitter 1890-1926. 1891 Census - boarder at 11 Herbert Terrace, Engine Fitter born Ashton-under-Lyne. Cross-referencing with the Portsmouth Dockyard Employment Database also provides candidates for Messrs. Swallow, Geary and Watkins, but corroborating evidence from the Censuses cannot be found to make a more positive identification.
894 This has proved difficult from a research point of view. Many may have come and gone from the area in between Censuses or by the time it was recorded again and without more information providing definite answers is very difficult, especially when the surnames are more common. This has been the case of the Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen, whose minute books of the period still survive, but do not always provide details of their members. What can be seen is that in most cases the men who can be more definitely identified were tradesmen that would have served an apprenticeship. An example of the transience of workers in the Royal Dockyard is a Mr Frankland who appears in the April 7th 1909 Committee Minutes of the Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen. The only “Frankland” who appears on a search of the
The outlay for such membership also would have been a factor for some. Annual subscriptions for membership to the Yorkshiremen were initially set as 5s. for members, 2s. 6d. for ladies and 10s. 6d. for honorary members, although the fee for members was later amended to 2s. 6d. The Devonians charged a 5s. subscription in 1906. These subscriptions and the additional charges sought for social functions and outings may have prevented the poorest from joining. Similarly, rules were instituted that expressed the respectability of the organisation. The Yorkshiremen specified that “the committee may expel or remove any member if it is satisfied that his conduct or character is inconsistent with the object of well-being of the society, or that he is making use of the society for business purposes, or that he has been elected under incorrect information.”

The societies were based on convivial terms and the programmes for the county associations were punctuated with day trips, dances and lectures. Rule two of the Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen stated categorically that the society was to be “entirely unsectarian and non-political.” The annual and committee meeting minute books of the society show their socialising was based on a series of balls and ‘at homes’ with whist tournaments in the winter and cricket matches and outings in the summer. The association also established a dance group, the White Rose Dance Circle, in 1911. Whereas trade organisations and sectional outings tended to exclude women, organisations like the Yorkshiremen promoted socialising with women and spousal relationships. The Yorkshiremen allowed women to become “associate members”;

Portsmouth Dockyard Employment Database is a John Sowden Frankland, a Fitter who worked in the Dockyard from 1907-1909. A search of the 1911 Census located him as being born in Bramley, Yorkshire, and now living in York as a Tool and Engine Fitter. In the 1901 Census he is living in Bramley working as an Engine Fitter. Thus Mr Frankland’s contribution to the social life of Portsmouth was brief, but in this case, noted. This would have been a similar situation for many migrant workers in Portsmouth who settled for a few years depending on available work and then left again.

996 PEN, 9th February 1906.
997 Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen, Annual Meetings Minutes From March 1907-March 1925, 13th March 1907.
998 Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen, Annual Meetings, 13th March 1907. Portsmouth History Centre, unaccessioned item.
999 Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen, Annual Meetings Minutes From March 1907-March 1925, 13th March 1907. Portsmouth History Centre, unaccessioned item. Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen, Committee Meetings from July 1910 to Sept 1914, 14th September 1911. Portsmouth History Centre, unaccessioned item.
1000 Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen, Committee Meetings, 14th September 1911.
qualified via their husband’s membership. They also attended functions and there was a dedicated body of these female members who were instrumental in organising dances and functions.  

This convivial aspect was similar to the aims of all the county societies and the Yorkshiremen took pains when setting up their association that they would enquire how other societies operated. Indeed, committee minutes show how the Yorkshiremen actively liaised with the East Anglian and Devonian Associations on models for programming their sports seasons and outings, and they also liaised with the Inter-counties Association for the arrangements of competitions, eventually joining an Inter-County Cricket League. County societies also interacted with other sections of the community through sports competitions with workplaces such as Cornishmen versus Shipwrights, or the Yorkshiremen versus the Lunatic Asylum workers or Poor Law Officers at cricket. Explicit links with the Dockyard workforce can be seen in the uptake of the offers provided to “friends” of Dockyard Excursion Committee by the Yorkshiremen for some of their outings.

However, membership to the County Associations were not exclusively working class and illustrate the way in which social mixing was also affected in convivial circles. The Lancastrians boasted Town Councillor Hemmingway among their ranks who served as president from 1907 to 1909, and again from 1913 to 1920. Membership to the county associations, therefore, was less a consideration of class and more about forging loyalties along geographical lines which articulated a kind of mirrored local patriotism by tying the region of one’s birth with their successful establishment in another region. At a meeting to discuss the establishment of a society of Yorkshiremen Councillor Hemmingway spoke of the pride of the county with prominent men in arts, science, literature and trade and

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901 Husbands of women who qualified for membership were also regarded as associate members, denoting distinction between those who could be elected as officers, vote and effect changes within the society and those who were only able to participate in a social capacity.

902 Unknown newspaper cutting c.1907. Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen archives, Portsmouth History Centre, unaccessioned item.

903 Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen, Committee Meetings from July 1910, 6th November 1912, HT, 12th August 1910 and Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen, Committee Meetings, 7th April 1909.

904 Using the Dockyard Excursion Committee enabled the Yorkshiremen to make savings and even rebate 6d off the ticket price for non-members on a trip to Arundel in 1911. The Excursion Committee were used again the following year. Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen, Committee Meetings, 19th July 1911 and 30th August 1912.

905 Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen, List of Presidents, Portsmouth History Centre, unaccessioned item
argued that other areas such as Devonians, East Anglians, Scotch and Welsh all have their societies in Portsmouth “surely the Yorkshiremen of the town could also form an organisation for themselves.”

One of the most effective ways of reminding members of home was through regional foods. The first annual dinner of the Portsmouth Devonian Society featured Devonshire specialities on the menu such as “real” Devonshire clotted cream and Devonshire dumplings, whilst the Yorkshiremen presented similar regional fare at their dinners such as Yorkshire pudding and spice cake and cheese and the Lancastrian Society held annual “Hotpot” suppers. The associations celebrated their homeland heroes as a source of regional pride. At the first organisational meeting of the Devonians the chairman expressed the wish for the Society to induce General Buller, "Devon’s greatest soldier", to attend. The Yorkshiremen, on the other hand, sought prestige and recognition by entertaining the county cricket team with a banquet and boat trip, which was successfully executed in August 1910. A signal of their dual loyalties can be found in the invitations sent out to the Deputy Mayor of Portsmouth, the Secretary of the Hampshire County Cricket Team and also to reporters from the Sheffield Telegraph and the Yorkshire Evening Post. Many associations also held their annual dinners in the Town Hall thus enforcing links with their new locality and legitimising their place in the fabric of local society.

This concept of citizenship in turn naturally led to the consideration of the place of their birth as part of the wider issue of nation state and empire. The Portsmouth Caledonian Society, founded in 1898, displayed a striking awareness of patriotic and imperial issues. During their outings a Scottish band always accompanied them and Highland Games

907 Unknown newspaper cutting c.1907. Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen archives, Portsmouth History Centre, unaccessioned item.  
908 PEN, 4th April 1906; PEN, 10th May 1913; PEN, 9th March 1900. 
909 PEN, 9th February 1906. 
910 Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen, Committee Meetings from July 1910, 16th August 1910. 
911 Devonian Society’s first annual dinner, PEN, 4th April 1906; Caledonian Society’s 10th Annual Grand Scotch Concert, PEN, 20th November 1907; Yorkshiremen’s Celebration at winning the Inter-counties Whist Trophy, PEN, 10th May 1913. 
912 Unfortunately the records dating from the establishment of the Portsmouth and District Caledonian Society until 1933/34 were destroyed during the Second World War. Portsmouth Caledonian Society, St
were often played. The Portsmouth Evening News noted how the society was working hard to retain their national ties:

What a fine body of enthusiasts are the members of the Portsmouth and District Caledonian Society! Patriots every one, their love for the land of the heather shows itself in a deep interest in its numerous historical associations, and an activity in singing the praises of the prowess of its sons, at which the less ardent Southron never ceases to wonder. Every Thursday these Caledonians foregather and by means of essay and lecture, song and story keep their accent "pairfect" and their patriotism in a proper pitch.

Their programme of lectures dealt with sources of Scottish history and pride, such as “Scotland after the Union” or literary figures such as Sir Walter Scott or Robert Louis Stevenson. There were also more explicitly imperial lectures such as "To, In and From South Africa" by Reverend Riddell Morrison, Chaplain to the Forces at Gosport. English county associations too conceived of their place in kingdom and empire. The Lancastrian Society were recorded to have raised 5s 6d during a smoking concert for a recital of the “Absent-Minded Beggar” during the height of the Boer War and during one of their Hotpot suppers at the Cobden Arms, the Lancastrian Society toasted the “Loyal Soldiers and Sailors Fighting in South Africa”, with special reference to the heroism of the Lancashire Regiment. Following King Edward’s ascendency to the throne in 1901 they toasted “the King and the rest of the Royal Family.” Long after the Boer War in 1906 the Devonians made toasts to the King, the Imperial Forces and to Devon at their annual dinner at the Mayor’s Banqueting Hall where they also enthusiastically sang “Glorious


PEN, 17th March 1899.

Interestingly, the lecture argued that both England and Scotland benefited from the union in 1717 but documented the friction between them until "the bitter hatred" of the Scots towards the British "began to decline, until the present good fellowship was arrived at." It was reported that an "Interesting and merry" discussion followed in which one member argued that "England was the partner which benefited most from the Union, inasmuch as at the present time her affairs were in the main conducted by Scotchmen." PEN, 24th February 1899. Walter Scott lecture, PEN, 20th April 1899. Stevenson lecture, PEN, 17th March 1900.

PEN, 19th May 1899.

PEN, 26th May 1900; PEN, 9th March 1900.

PEN, 16th February 1901.
Devon.919 The Great War affected the membership of the County Associations and most decided to suspend their activities until the conflict had ceased. Like most in Britain the Yorkshiremen rather optimistically decided to suspend their winter programme until after Christmas “out of sympathy for those at war.”920 By the end of January 1915 the association were limited to raising funds for the war through their social activities but subscription fees and elections for committee officers were suspended, thus illustrating that in times of national or imperial crisis, many would rally to support the causes.921

Volunteer and the Territorial Forces

Another aspect of leisure outside the Dockyard walls was membership of the Volunteer, and later, the Territorial Forces. Volunteering was a popular pastime among British working class men and with 70 per cent of the rank and file being working class by 1904.922 Indeed, Portsmouth Dockyard workers, and especially Dockyard apprentices, fit the national profile of the Army Volunteer which by 1913 were aged between 17 and 25 and lived in the crowded industrial areas of the south-east.923 Although military in character, the Volunteer Movement’s convivial aspect has been noted as a reason for many enlisting.924 However, the attitude towards the Volunteer Movement during the Edwardian era was one of re-assessment and re-organisation mixed with the rhetoric of national efficiency, patriotism and imperial pride.925 The involvement of the Volunteer

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919 PEN, 4th April 1906.
920 Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen, Committee Meetings from July 1910 to September 1914, 22nd September 1914. Portsmouth History Centre, unaccessioned item
921 Portsmouth Society of Yorkshiremen, Committee Meetings from July 1910 to September 1914, 29th January 1915.
922 Cunningham, The Volunteer Force; p.34.
923 Cunningham deduced that as many were listed as skilled workers, they may have been teenage apprentices; men acquiring skills which would ensure them a place in the upper-working class. Cunningham, The Volunteer Force; pp.46 and 50.
924 Hugh Cunningham has argued that it was the social aspect and recreational facilities that were more of an attraction than the patriotic element. Cunningham, The Volunteer Force; p.104. More recently Sonya O. Rose has noted that participating in the Volunteers was akin to belonging to a men’s club or civic association. Sonya O. Rose, ‘Fit to Fight but Not to Vote? Masculinity and Citizenship in Britain, 1832-1918’ in Stephan Dudnik, Karen Hagemann and Anna Clark (eds.), Representing Masculinity. Male Citizenship in Modern Western Culture, (Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), pp.131-150; p.139-140.
Forces in the Boer War raised questions about the organisation’s efficiency and their role as an overseas service for future engagements; culminating in the formation of the Territorial Force under the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act, 1907. Indeed, a culture of militarism had formed in Britain by the beginning of the period and serving in the military was understood as a crucial duty of citizenship, especially when Britain’s role as an imperial power became increasingly central to metropolitan political culture.

During the Boer War, the role of the Volunteer was highlighted and revered in Britain as in no other time in the history of the movement. In Portsmouth the local press was keen to advertise the town’s particular military connections and affinity with all things martial, highlighting the “alacrity and enthusiasm” of the response from the local Volunteer battalions to go on active service. Recent study has cited patriotism and low-risk adventure as the reason for the upsurge in enlistment for the Volunteer Forces during the outbreak of the Boer War. However, this explosion of patriotic fervour at the beginning of the period does not go far enough to explain fluctuations in recruitment figures or sustained involvement in the Volunteer movement. Moreover, public support for Volunteers or military conscription could manifest themselves for “entirely defensive reasons.” Indeed, other studies have stressed the importance of the local community and the expression of working-class male identity as factors in enlistment and popular support. Certainly the roots of Dockyard Volunteerism stemmed from a need for home training and unreadiness for conflict, although these findings were based on a domestic invasion rather than war abroad.

926 Hugh Cunningham, The Volunteer Force; p.127 and Miller, Volunteers on the Veldt; p.162.
927 J. M. MacKenzie has argued that increased militarism in leisure, schools, workplaces and youth movements led a large proportion of the British population to come into contact with military and paramilitary organisations. J. M. MacKenzie, Propaganda and Empire, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984); p.6; Rose, ‘Fit to Fight but Not to Vote?’, p.131.
928 HT, 23 December 1899.
929 Using personal diaries from the Boer War Miller suggested that volunteers joined for the love of adventure, which he asserted was inherently linked to patriotism. Miller argued that serving as a Volunteer was a more attractive and less disruptive choice than joining the regular Army as it liberated men from Victorian domestic society by providing them with the opportunity to fulfil their responsibility to home and hearth. Stephen M. Miller, Volunteers on the Veldt; p.75.
931 Cunningham has suggested that the Volunteers were “fired not so much by love of Britain as by pride in and a sense of belonging to their local community.” Cunningham, The Volunteer Force; pp.69-72. More recently Beaven has argued that it was the articulation of working-class male identity and locality which were key to the nature of imperial support and the citizen-soldier. Brad Beaven, ‘The Provincial Press, Civic
defence mixed with local and workplace patriotism. Picture 25 shows an illustration of the uniform and accoutrements of a member of the Dockyard Battalion circa 1850. The Royal Dockyard workforce raised their first Dockyard battalions in 1847 for the defence of the port and were organised under the hierarchical system of Dockyard management structures and consisted of 12 infantry and 10 artillery companies, each numbering 85 men who gave up three evenings a week to drill. The nascent Volunteer movement led to the formation of several Hampshire Volunteer Battalions, amongst them was the Third Volunteer Battalion Hampshire Regiment (the 3rd Hants), which was made up solely of Dockyardmen, formed on 28th August 1860 with around 250 men in its ranks. However, by 1865 it had begun to admit others into its ranks and in 1871 amalgamated with the 2nd Hants due to difficulties "in keep(ing) both corps up in an efficient condition." 

![Picture 25. A Dockyard Volunteer, c.1850.](image)

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*Ceremony and the Citizen-Soldier During the Boer War, 1899-1902: A Study of Local Patriotism, * The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, 37, 2, pp.207-228; p.224.

932 HT, 11th June 1910.
933 HT, 25th November 1899.
934 HT, 25th November 1899.
Evidence of local patriotism can be seen by the multiple subscriptions to war relief funds by various Dockyard departments throughout the Boer War.\textsuperscript{935} The importance of local factors may explain why imperial support was often uneven.\textsuperscript{936} An event which threatened the empire, such as the Boer War, naturally affected the Dockyard workforce as some were naval or army pensioners still on the Reserve List, although the Hampshire Telegraph reported in October 1899 that only around 30 men had been affected by the call up of the First Class Army Reserve.\textsuperscript{937} Volunteers from the Dockyard also enlisted for the front such as Trooper Ponsford of the 50\textsuperscript{th} Company Imperial Yeomanry who was a Dockyard Joiner from North End and E. A. Hookey, member of Third Volunteer Battalion Hampshire Regiment, who went to South Africa as part of the Volunteer Cyclist Corps.\textsuperscript{938}

On leaving for the front Corporal Hookey was presented with a pair of field glasses, a tobacco pouch and tobacco as a token of esteem by members of the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Engine Fitter Apprentices’ Association at the Workingmen’s Liberal Union. He was wished God-speed and a safe return.\textsuperscript{939} Under these personal circumstances it is easy to make links with local patriotism and the war effort. As previously seen, the idea of local philanthropy and providing for Dockyard families in need was very important to many members of the Dockyard workforce.

However, the creation of the Territorial Force in 1908 highlighted a shift in the relationship between the Royal Dockyard worker and the Volunteer movement. As early

\textsuperscript{935} PEN, 26\textsuperscript{th} May 1900. No. 1, No. 3 and No. 4 Smithery were recorded as this being their 25\textsuperscript{th} collections; Mast and Boat Houses, 26\textsuperscript{th} collection; Dockyard Shipwrights per the ASS, 23\textsuperscript{rd} collection; No 2. Shipfitting Shop, 28\textsuperscript{th} collection; and the Chief Engineer’s Drawing Office, 28\textsuperscript{th} collection.

\textsuperscript{936} Beaven, ‘The Provincial Press’; p.224.

\textsuperscript{937} HT, 21\textsuperscript{st} October 1899.

\textsuperscript{938} PEN, 5\textsuperscript{th} February 1901; PEN, 7\textsuperscript{th} May 1901. Ponsford is reported to have been a member of the 1st Hants Engineer Volunteers and “was the first man of the Corps to join the Imperial Yeomanry.” Daniel J. Ponsford, no 4759, of the 50\textsuperscript{th} Company (Hants) Imperial Yeomanry received the South Africa Medal with clasps for the Cape Colony, Orange Free State, Transvaal and Rhodesia. UK, Military Campaign Medal and Award Rolls, 1793-1949, found at Ancestry.co.uk, http://search.ancestry.co.uk/ixec2?htx=View&r=5538&dbid=1686&iid=31794_221454-00052&fn=D+j&ln=Ponsford&st=r&ssrc=&pid=1103143 last accessed 03/03/2013.


\textsuperscript{939} PEN, 7\textsuperscript{th} May 1901.
as 1906 the Admiralty had put a ban on established men enrolling for the Royal Fleet Reserve of the Royal Naval Reserves.\(^940\) In 1910 the Admiralty capped the number of employees able to join the Reserve and Territorial Forces to two per cent of established men and 15 per cent of hired men.\(^941\) The consequence of this in Portsmouth, according to many contemporaries, was that the Territorial forces in the area were "far short of their authorised strength".\(^942\) There was vociferous opposition to the Admiralty’s attitude towards Dockyardmen joining the Territorial Force and the establishment of a Dockyard Corps – a revival of the scheme adopted in the 1840s – was mooted.\(^943\) In 1910 Chatham and Devonport town councillors appealed on behalf of the local Dockyardmen, but were told by the Admiralty that they were not able to authorise the lifting of any restrictions.\(^944\) Similarly, it was reported how the “hard-hearted” Superintendent of Sheerness Dockyard had not allowed leave for the Territorial soldiers to go on their annual training due to an influx of ships and subsequently the War Office had banned the Dockyardmen from joining the Territorial Army.\(^945\) Actions such as these prompted the worry that those on the waiting list to be employed in the Royal Dockyards would be put off from signing up to the Territorials for fear it may scupper their chances of employment.\(^946\) Indeed, it was the War Office rather than the Admiralty who made concessions for the Royal Dockyard worker to exit the service. In 1912 the Chairman of the Hampshire County Territorial Association stated that free discharges would be granted to men serving in the Territorial Force on obtaining employment in the Dockyard. In addition, rather than it being a bar from Dockyard employment the Admiralty had directed that, if qualification be equal, preference should be given to a candidate who has served in the Territorial Forces.\(^947\)

\(^940\) HT. 13\(^{th}\) July 1906.
\(^941\) HT. 11\(^{th}\) June 1910.
\(^942\) HT. 11\(^{th}\) June 1910.
\(^943\) HT. 11\(^{th}\) June 1910.
\(^944\) HT. 15\(^{th}\) July 1910. Although it was thought that Portsmouth may put forward representatives to represent their Dockyardmen, this does not seem to have happened.
\(^945\) HT. 19\(^{th}\) January 1912.
\(^946\) HT. 11\(^{th}\) June 1910.
\(^947\) HT. 23\(^{rd}\) February 1912.
Admiralty correspondence in 1911 suggests, however, that numbers for the total force allowed was far below the numbers sanctioned.\(^\text{948}\) Figures calculated using the December 1910 returns for Portsmouth Royal Dockyard show that, if the total workforce numbered 13,589, under the terms of the 15 per cent allowance, the reserve force was limited to 2037 men. However, the number of reservists actually totalled 1558; leaving a deficit of 479 men. What is also striking was the low number of Territorials in the Dockyard. The Reserve for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines totalled 1126; Army Reserve, 152; but the Territorial Force only totalled 280, which showed that only two per cent of the total Dockyard workforce were enrolled by the time the cap on their numbers was introduced. This raises the question of why Territorial Force membership in the Dockyard was so low. Certainly many lamented the fall of the Volunteer movement. On its establishment as a Territorial Force Colour Sergeant Radcliffe told his Non-Commissioned Officers in the Sergeants' Mess of the 3rd Hants that “no matter what their individual opinion might be, their plain duty was to accept the scheme as laid down, and not to lose sight of the fact that beyond everything else the general welfare of their country must be their first consideration.”\(^\text{949}\) However, in 1912 the Conservative \textit{Portsmouth Times} blamed the “strange embargo” on the Dockyard and Gunwharf employees on a “crazy socialism which runs rampant in all Government establishments”; hinting that the reason for such low numbers was due to the political make-up of the majority workforce.\(^\text{950}\)

Indeed, although membership of Volunteer and Territorial battalions served as a marker of respectability, its decline may indicate that other forms of associational and popular culture were better able to serve the outward projection of respectable citizenship.\(^\text{951}\) It is clear that Royal Dockyardmen were not as engaged with the Volunteer movement and the examples from some of the other societies above (which did not require drill practice, camps away and the outlay of expenses such as uniforms) may have been an attraction. The apprentice artisans who would have typically fitted the profile of the Volunteer had

\(^{948}\) Letter to the Commander in Chief, Portsmouth Dockyard from the Admiral Superintendent, Portsmouth Dockyard, dated 3rd February 1911. ADM 179/65.

\(^{949}\) \textit{PEN}, 1st April 1908.

\(^{950}\) \textit{PT}, 26th October 1912.

become actively engaged in their own artisan culture, which was increasingly joined with the Labour movement. This, coupled with the ever more expanding opportunities for ‘respectable’ informal leisure among young men, may have also been reasons for this phenomenon.\textsuperscript{952}

**Conclusion**

The expansion of leisure and recreation meant that the range of clubs and societies competing for the attentions of the Royal Dockyard workers at the turn of the twentieth century were broad and in many cases reflected wider trends in society. What Dockyard leisure culture consistently displayed was values which favoured the observance of conventions of independence, respectability and status within a broad framework of working-class male socialisation. However, this chapter has also illustrated how the associational culture of the Royal Dockyard worker was complex. As a consequence of the system of Admiralty employment, it produced many different lines of loyalties at different times and highlighted fault lines in the cohesiveness of the Dockyard workforce. The thousands of men, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled, were continually brought together and set apart from one another as imperatives in their personal and professional lives altered over time and circumstance.

Membership to societies was a rite of passage and enabled working-class socialisation within many different identities such as trade, gender, spousal or family in addition to class, locality and geographical origin. What can be seen is that working-class associational culture broadened out during the Edwardian era to encompass wider notions of collective security such as the affiliated friendly society movement and trade unionism. Some forms of socialising were also less class-distinct, such as the County Associations, but for the Royal Dockyard worker membership still reflected a need to make connections under the conditions of a migratory industrialised society. The growth of conviviality and mutuality across regions shows that in the Edwardian era more national, and transnational, forms of associational culture were beginning to impact on

\textsuperscript{952} Cunningham, *The Volunteer Force*; p.46.
the lives of the Royal Dockyard worker and provincial towns in general. For the Royal Dockyard worker, whose culture was largely based on status-ridden artisanal principles, the era marked an amalgamation of traditional forms of collective security with newer, national and transnational forms in order to ensure resilience in the modern industrial era. The Royal Dockyard worker thus took a dual-pronged approach which saw both national and local strategies. Local forms of socialisation and citizenship remained important to this goal and while many Royal Dockyard workers were anxious to insert themselves into civic life, it was on their own terms with their occupation and status as an important element to their civic identity. For example, many clubs and societies displayed an element of philanthropy with their goals and the money raised for the Dockyard Orphanage Fund showed a desire to keep families of Dockyardmen away from the Poor Law Guardians and retain the independence and respectability of Dockyard workers.

Caution must be exercised, however, over the presence of imperialism and patriotism in the clubs and societies of the working class male. It can be seen that for the Royal Dockyard worker generally, membership to clubs and societies had less to do with empire and was more about forming bonds of identity and distinction, fraternity and protection in a climate of an industrialised society. Respectability and independence were still highly valued, but perceptions of what they entailed changed over time. Indeed, the growth of other forms of ‘respectable’ commercial leisure meant that Royal Dockyard workers had become less involved in the Volunteer and Territorial movements. Moreover, set against a context of imperial peaks and troughs, the boundaries of civic inclusion and imperial citizenship were highlighted or subsumed by other imperatives. In times of relative imperial security higher level identifiers such as patriotism and imperialism were assumed as formalities and rarely analysed in a meaningful way, whereas during a time of national crisis or celebration they were then imbued with the rhetoric of nation and empire. The discourse of empire and patriotism could also be utilised as reasons to legitimise claims to independence and collective security and to leisure and recreational privileges rather than as signifiers of the presence of imperialism or patriotism itself.
Conclusion

Using the Royal Dockyard worker as an example this thesis has sought to articulate the ways in which imperial discourses influenced the everyday lives of the working classes. It has built upon new approaches to the study of imperialism called for by Bernard Porter and Andrew S. Thompson which have questioned the impact of a model of monolithic imperialism by shifting the focus away from top-down influences towards a detailed case study of a working-class group. 953 While the thesis does not discount the influence of the propaganda of popular imperialism, it argues that the model for a monolithic imperialism does not successfully articulate how popular imperialism was received by its intended audience. One of the functions of the thesis, therefore, was to bridge the gap between academics who argued that there was no consistent or direct support for empire and those who have argued that there was an over-arching imperial hegemony. 954

Research by social historians in the 1960s and 1970s noted an inconsistency amongst the actions of working-class men who vigorously celebrated the Relief of Mafeking but at the same time did not exhibit any direct or continuous support for the British Empire in their day-to-day lives; leading to the assumption that the working classes were largely ignorant of imperial matters. 955 Conversely, the overt presence of imperial propaganda from the late-nineteenth century onwards led cultural historians of the “linguistic turn” to conclude that imperialism was a ubiquitous and hegemonic tool of subjugation. 956 This study has offered a unique perspective on the study of imperialism by illustrating, not just how the working classes were subjected to imperialism from ‘above’, but how they were able to mediate concepts of empire to their own advantage. Rather than being

subservient, deferential and economically predisposed to being ‘imperialists’ the thesis has argued that the workforce of the Royal Dockyard were active in their approaches to British imperial thought.

This study has utilised new understandings of the creation of class and identity to further the debate on working-class British imperialism by demonstrating that concepts of empire were negotiated through more specific experiences based on existing structures of work, class and locality. Certainly, ‘top down’ expectations of the Royal Dockyard worker and their role in the imperial mission were mediated through many avenues of popular culture. Historians such as J. M. MacKenzie have shown that the discourse of imperialism in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries could at times be interchangeable with, often gendered, notions of “Englishness”, patriotism, militarism and monarchism. However, this was understood most effectively on a local level. The Royal Dockyard worker was seen as an important component of the imperial mission through their work building and maintaining the Royal Navy’s fleet which ensured the defence of realm and the British Empire. They were critical to the civic pride of the town, where their work, dedication and skill was lauded in defence of competition from private shipyards elsewhere in the country which would sap Portsmouth of its industry. The civic elites of the town were keen to ensure that members the Royal Dockyard workforce were incorporated into the town’s civic ideal to ensure autonomy from the Admiralty and progress their aspirations to mould Portsmouth into a borough worthy of its imperial “duty.” This could also be seen in the reports of the local press which represented the Royal Dockyard worker as a valuable asset to the town and local community and publicised and legitimised their exploits in a through a variety of outings, excursions and associational activities. Tangible linkages to the civic-imperial role of Portsmouth were imbedded in the fabric of the town’s theatres and music halls, on celluloid and personified in the town football club’s ‘Pompey’ sailor mascot, all of which helped to cultivate a local patriotism.

However, the study has sought to articulate the agency of the working classes than hitherto presented by highlighting examples of how concepts of empire and imperial citizenship were practically applied and used to create meaning and identities. Thompson
has rightly argued that historians need to take more seriously the idea that working people embraced empire on their own terms. The thesis outlined a stratified social structure in the everyday lives of the Royal Dockyard worker which was transposed from their workplace practices. Understanding the importance of workplace hierarchies and status and how the values of respectability, independence and collective security manifested themselves outside the Dockyard walls was critical in identifying the agency of the Royal Dockyard worker. However, rather than becoming atomised individuals Portsmouth Dockyard workers comprehended their identities within class structures, and social mobility and differentiation was sought within the working class rather than as an escape from it. Susan Barton argued that working-class leisure should be seen in the context of the quest for free time as an element of labour history in an industrialised society. Indeed, the persistence and prevalence of trade and sectional activity in the leisure time of the Royal Dockyard workers indicated that industrial relations and the projection of working-class values of respectability and collective independence from their employers and the state in general was highly important. Thus concepts of imperial citizenship afforded protection from threats to trades and industry. This process was not static and changed over time and circumstance. While there is little overt evidence of how Royal Dockyard workers received the imperial message through commercial entertainment, its practical application to their identity-making processes demonstrates that the imperial message was present. Discourses on empire were viewed by the working classes as part of a vocabulary of identity-making. Thus, as a concept, imperialism was not a static structure, but an articulation of a “variety of imperialisms” based on other subjective experiences. Rather than a culture of consolation, the leisure time of the Royal Dockyard worker was a culture of articulation. Royal Dockyard workers could be patriotic patrons of films and plays while at other times top-down expectations of imperial behaviour could be dismissed or subverted to augment arguments to strengthen their own material and ideological position in a modern industrial society. This could also be seen in the Portsmouth Trades and Labour Council’s attempt to push the agenda of better standards of working-class dwellings in the formation of the Housing Committee.

957 Andrew S. Thompson, The Empire Strikes Back? The Impact of Imperialism on Britain from the Mid-Nineteenth Century. (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2005); p.43
958 Barton, Working-class Organisations; p.9.
959 Porter, Absent-minded; p.10.
after the Boer War, which capitalised on fears of racial degeneration. Conversely, while the election victory of Admiral Beresford and Bertram Falle in January 1910 showed that Portsmouth had a navalist current running through its imperial politics, the derision of Frederick Jane and the Unionist borough candidates showed that ‘bread and butter’ politics remained a salient argument in the everyday considerations of the Royal Dockyard worker. Similarly, while working-class organisations marched in the civic processions of the town and stood united with the civic elite, they did so as much to be considered as respectable imperial citizens, which would aid them when they fought against intervention from the state or local authorities in such matters as friendly society operations or other matters of everyday life. Another apt example of this was the Dockyard Excursion Committee’s appeal as “Loyal Employés” to the Admiralty and railway authorities to be allowed to run excursions on the King’s Birthday holiday during the First World War rail travel embargo.\footnote{Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, \textit{Letter from Milne to the Railway Executive Committee}, dated 9th June 1915. Portsmouth History Centre, Kemp collection, unaccessioned item.} Indeed, for many Dockyard employees time off during ship launches, election days and monarchistic and imperially-imbued holidays were more often seen as an opportunity to enjoy themselves and spend time with their family and friends.

Overall, the thesis has demonstrated that the study of working-class imperialism needs to be interrogated in a way which acknowledges the complexities and subjectivities of everyday life. By the late-Victorian era leisure was an important component within the lives of many working people and possessed inherent power as a cultural signifier which could articulate meaning and identity by the way it was used, not just in the way that it was imposed. The thesis has underlined the need in future studies to investigate the underlying motivations of the working-class in their everyday activities and be conscious of the ways in which these concepts were used in order to reveal more about the way working people conceived of their identities within the British Empire.
Appendices

Appendix A – Maps of Portsea

(Left) Map 2. Portsea with sample area circled c.1909.

(Below) Map 3. Sample roads highlighted, Portsea c.1909.

961 Roads sampled were Half Moon Street, Clock Street, Wickham Street, Hawke Street, Havant Street, Camden Alley, Union Street, White’s Row, Southampton Row and Kings Bench Alley, plus courts leading from those places. It was the small, cramped and insanitary thoroughfares of (east to west) Kings Bench Alley, Albion Street, White’s Row and Southampton Row which were condemned in the 1900s and subsequently re-developed into Curzon Howe Road, the Town Council’s first attempt at creating model artisan dwellings (see Map 3).
Appendix A (continued) – Maps of Portsea

Map 4. Detail of slum area, Portsea, c.1909.
Appendix B – Maps of North End

Map 5. North End, c.1898.

The North End sample area is taken from the area east of London Road with borders of Stubbington Avenue to the north, Copnor Road to the east and Powerscourt Road to the south. The roads examined are Laburnum Grove, Chichester, Havant, Emsworth, Drayton, Beresford and Balfour Roads and in 1901, and those roads again in 1911 with the addition of Preston, Bedhampton, Wallace, Westbourne, Funtington and Bosham Roads which were new developments.
Map 9. North End sample area highlighted on 1930s urban formation.\textsuperscript{963}

\textsuperscript{963} The roads examined in the sample are highlighted in red for 1901 and 1911 and orange for those roads featuring in the 1911 Census only.
Appendix C – Maps of East Southsea


Map 11. East Southsea, c.1898.  


964 The sample taken from Orchard Road, Telephone Road, Manners Road, Percy Road, Jessie Road, Fawcett Road (until Delamere Road), Talbot Road and Frances Avenue (until Jessie Road). Most of the houses were built in the late 1890s and building work continued throughout the next decade as can be seen by maps 10 and 11.
### Appendix D – Table 3. Dockyard Workers Living in Portsea Slum Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street</th>
<th>Dockyard Workers</th>
<th>Co-habitants</th>
<th>Number of inhabitants</th>
<th>Number of Rooms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Kings Bench Alley</strong></td>
<td>William Ward, 57, Blacksmith’s Labourer</td>
<td>Wife and six children of school age</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 Kings Bench Alley</strong></td>
<td>Henry A Roberts (Head), 23, and Thomas Shires (Brother-in-law), 16. Both Shipwrights’ Labourers</td>
<td>Roberts’ wife and two children</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12 Kings Bench Alley</strong></td>
<td>James W Elgar, 42, Plate Layer</td>
<td>Boarder</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13 Kings Bench Alley</strong></td>
<td>William McFarlane, 55, Skilled Labourer</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Albion Street</strong></td>
<td>Edward McFarlane, 33, Skilled Labourer</td>
<td>Housekeeper and her young daughter</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11 Albion Street</strong></td>
<td>James Henry Spencer, 35, Labourer</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>35 Albion Street</strong></td>
<td>Charles Morgan, 39, Skilled Labourer</td>
<td>Married but no wife listed. Three sons, the eldest working</td>
<td>4, possibly 5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 White’s Row</strong></td>
<td>Jack Ryan, 48, Labourer</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 White’s Row</strong></td>
<td>George Barrett, 48, Labourer</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 White’s Row</strong></td>
<td>Edward Meas, 24, Labourer</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>51 Southampton Row</strong></td>
<td>William Sweet, 44, Labourer</td>
<td>Wife and six children aged between 16 and 2 years</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

965 The 1901 Census only recorded the number of rooms in a dwelling if less than “average”, this number seems to be lower than six.

966 4 White’s Row had four returns, three of which were Dockyard workers, the other was a Shoemaker.
Appendix E - Portsmouth Dockyard Workers’ Places of Birth, 1911.

Figure 1. Portsea.⁹⁶⁷

Areas covered by groupings: Portsmouth and Hants – including Gosport and Isle of Wight; South East – Sussex and Surrey; South West – Dorset, Wiltshire, Somerset, Devon, Cornwall (including the Scilly Isles); London &c – London suburbs, Kent, Berkshire, Hertfordshire; Midlands – Warwickshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire; East Anglia – Norfolk; North East – Yorkshire, Durham, Northumberland; North West – Lancashire, Cheshire, Greater Manchester; Channel Islands – Jersey and Guernsey; Ireland – including Northern Ireland; Foreign-born British – India and Bermuda.
Areas covered by groupings: Portsmouth and Hants – including Gosport and Isle of Wight; South East – Sussex and Surrey; South West – Dorset, Wiltshire, Somerset, Devon, Cornwall (including the Scilly Isles) and Gloucestershire; London &c – London suburbs, Kent, Berkshire, Hertfordshire, Essex and Buckinghamshire; Midlands – Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Worcestershire; East Anglia – Norfolk; North East – Yorkshire, Durham, Lincolnshire, Northumberland; North West – Lancashire, Cheshire, Greater Manchester; Ireland – including Northern Ireland; Foreign-born British – Bermuda, Malta, Gibraltar and India
Areas covered by groupings: Portsmouth and Hants – including Gosport and Isle of Wight; South East – Sussex and Surrey; South West – Dorset, Wiltshire, Somerset, Devon, Cornwall (including the Scilly Isles) and Gloucestershire; London &c – London suburbs, Kent, Berkshire, Hertfordshire, Essex and Buckinghamshire; Midlands – Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire. Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Worcestershire; East Anglia – Norfolk; North East – Yorkshire, Durham, Northumberland; North West – Lancashire, Cheshire, Greater Manchester; Ireland – including Northern Ireland; Foreign-born British – Bermuda, Malta, Gibraltar and India
Appendix F.

Letters to the Editor, Portsmouth Evening News, re: “Dockyard Concessions”

Sir, - Although there is much satisfaction expressed by the men of certain branches of the Dockyard re the recent Admiralty concessions, at the same time, as is generally the case, they seem to have started at the wrong end. If these rises have been granted, as we are led to believe, in consequence of the increased cost of living, why give the Labourers on 22s. a 1s. increase, and the mechanic on 36s. a 2s. rise? Do the Admiralty officials think that the Labourer gets a reduction on his purchases by mentioning the fact that he is a labourer, or is he expected to live on the scraps that the mechanic won't buy? But that is not the only grievance that the Labourer has, for he looks around him and sees hundreds of men in the Yard who in June will be getting 38s. per week for doing exactly the same work that he has to perform on 23s. Surely if a man is worth 38s. per week for pushing a handcart about or loading up wagons with iron (as dozens are continually doing) because he calls himself a Shipwright, then a man who calls himself by his proper name must be worth more than 23s. for doing the same job. I would earnestly advise any man who thinks of entering the dockyard to do so as a shipwright, as I believe there is an open entry for them, and a man may just as well have 38s. for labouring as 23s. What's in a name?

“E E H (Skilled Labourer)”, 14th May 1913.

... Let it be distinctly understood that a Shipwright has to serve six or seven years at his trade on a low wage before he becomes a journeyman. A Skilled Labourer, what is he! The majority enter the yard as Ordinary Labourers, and gaining their practical knowledge from the mechanic, become skilled. No doubt some get an excited idea about their abilities, but they could no more do a Shipwright's work, than a newsboy could fly an aeroplane ... No one wants the labourer to live on the "mechanic's scraps", but to decry a shipwright and attempt to ridicule him because he is above the labourer socially, by juggling with the facts is "not British". A Shipwright is and always will be, one of the premier trades of the Dockyard, and as regards "what's in a name" 15s.

“Ex-Apprentice”, 15th May 1913.
... Mechanics generally, the organised ones, anyway, are deploring the paltry response to the labourer knowing full well the cost of living is more generally emphasised in the labourer's case; in fact it is high time that the purchasing power of wages was great enough to allow every worker to live decently, whatever the price of commodities. That the worker and his dependents should be properly housed, fed, clothed and leisured should be the first essential of a well-ordered society; by complete unity of the workers industrially and politically this would be easier to achieve, but decidedly not through sectional abuse ... Labourers are as necessary as mechanics, and vice versa, then join for one common end, the social welfare of all.

W. J. Gauntlett, Southsea, 15th May 1913.

Sir - Some of us think that it would have been a good thing if "EEH's" letter had never been written; but all, I think, will wish that "Ex-Apprentice" had not "hastened to reply to it". We might then have been spared his ideas as to whether shipwrights are or are not "one above the labourers socially". It is a most unfortunate statement. Thank goodness position in the social scale is not now, among intelligent men, a matter of 23s. or 38s. per week, and if "Ex-Apprentice", standing on the two thicknesses of paper on which his indentures are printed, imagines he is "one above the Labourers socially" because of this, no one will begrudge him this consolation. Whether he is or not we think depends upon other than £. s. d. What is certain is that those who rightfully occupy positions of respect in the social scale scorn to make comparisons.

"Skilled Labourer", 16th May 1913.

... Instead of being prejudiced against shipwrights he should feel very thankful to them for ever having existed: not that he owes them very much seeing that without shipwrights the whole of the shipbuilding industry would fall flat, as witnessed in the north of England strike only two or three years ago, for when this section of the working classes dropped their tools, thousands of mechanics of other trades, as well as labourers, drillers, riveters, etc., were thrown out of work for months. I think the skilled labourers in the Dockyard are fairly well off, considering that they have to serve no apprenticeship, and that they can rise to 31s. per week. I do not say that they should not have more, but I consider that in
comparison with the Labour outside the Yards they are not at all badly treated. He cannot surly expect the same pay as a mechanic or else it would pay us all to be broom-pushers.

"Shipwright", 17\textsuperscript{th} May 1913.
### Table 4: Theatres and Music Halls in Portsmouth 1890-1914

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theatre</th>
<th>Where/When</th>
<th>Type of venue</th>
<th>Owners</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theatre Royal</td>
<td>Landport, 1856</td>
<td>Theatre</td>
<td>Portsmouth Theatres Ltd. J. W. Boughton, Director</td>
<td>Substantially re-fitted in 1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarence Pier</td>
<td>Southsea seafront, 1882</td>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>Joint stock company who included Alderman Emanuel Emanuel</td>
<td>Addition of a pavilion to the existing pier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vento’s Palace of Varieties</td>
<td>Landport, 1886</td>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>Henry Vento, then Frank Pearce (1892-1920)</td>
<td>Burned down in 1892 on the opening night after its re-build</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince’s Theatre</td>
<td>Landport, 1891</td>
<td>Theatre</td>
<td>Portsmouth Theatres Ltd</td>
<td>Rebuilt after being destroyed by fire in 1882. Known especially for melodrama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empire Palace of Varieties</td>
<td>Landport, 1891</td>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>Empire Palace Company</td>
<td>Closed in 1911 and re-opened as the Coliseum in 1913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People’s Popular Palace</td>
<td>Landport, c.1891</td>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>Frederick Fordham</td>
<td>Went out of business due to strong competition. Only lasted two to three years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St James Concert &amp; Variety Hall</td>
<td>Landport, 1901</td>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>Frank Pearce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King’s Theatre</td>
<td>Southsea, 1907</td>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>Portsmouth Theatres Ltd</td>
<td>Began as a theatre for melodrama, but switched to variety in 1908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hippodrome</td>
<td>Landport, 1907</td>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>Portsmouth Hippodrome Ltd</td>
<td>Part of the Walter de Freece circuit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Parade Pier</td>
<td>Southsea seafront, 1908</td>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>Portsmouth Corporation</td>
<td>Burned down in 1904 – bought and rebuilt by the Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coliseum</td>
<td>Landport, 1913</td>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>Moss Empires</td>
<td>Formerly the Empire Palace of Varieties</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


---

Footnote: The smaller halls and saloons that would also have staged entertainments have not been included.
Appendix H.

Table 5. Dockyard Trades’ Weekly Rates of Pay, 1905.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade/Skill Level</th>
<th>Weekly rates of pay, 1905</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draughtsman First Class</td>
<td>48s. 0d. - 57s. 0d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draughtsman Second Class</td>
<td>39s. 0d. - 45s. 0d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipwright (Established)</td>
<td>33s. 0d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipwright (Hired)</td>
<td>34s. 6d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boilermaker (Established)</td>
<td>32s. 0d. - 42s. 6d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boilermaker (Hired)</td>
<td>34s. 0d. - 45s. 0d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engine Fitter (Established)</td>
<td>32s. 0d. - 45s. 6d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engine Fitter (Hired)</td>
<td>34s. 0d. - 48s. 0d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical or Ship Fitter (Established)</td>
<td>32s. 0d. - 42s. 0d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical or Ship Fitter (Hired)</td>
<td>34s. 0d. - 42s. 0d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Labourer (Established)</td>
<td>21s. 0d. - 25s. 6d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Labourer (Hired)</td>
<td>21s. 0d. - 27s. 0d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled Labourer (Established)</td>
<td>19s. 0d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled Labourer (Hired)</td>
<td>21s. 0d.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: HMSO, Instructions to Cash Duties, 1905, (London: Eyre and Spotiswoode, 1905); pp.156-157.

Appendix I.

Table 6. Sample of Long-Distance Excursions and Prices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Price for Return</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday 7th February 1903</td>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>First Round English Cup, Portsmouth v. Everton</td>
<td>12s. (day only) or 17s. (two to four days)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Passengers Carried and Cash Paid, 1912

**Table 7. London, Brighton and South Coast Rail**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Run To</th>
<th>No of Passengers</th>
<th>Special Trains</th>
<th>£.s.d.</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 13th</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>366 ½</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>78.10.10</td>
<td>Same day as 1st round English Cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 3rd</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>282 ½</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>64.7.7</td>
<td>Same day as 2nd round English Cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 24th</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>362 ½</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>84.0.4</td>
<td>3rd round English Cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 20th</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>789 ½</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>170.12.0</td>
<td>Cup final Crystal Palace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1st</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>328 ½</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>68.15.3</td>
<td>Wednesday [May Day]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 11th</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>305 ½</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>73.18.1</td>
<td>First of 7/- fares 4 days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 25th, 27th</td>
<td>London &amp; Arundel</td>
<td>959 ½</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>84.4.7</td>
<td>Whitsun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 14th</td>
<td>Various places</td>
<td>3767</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>713.2.3</td>
<td>King’s Birthday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 29th</td>
<td>London* &amp; Arundel</td>
<td>729 ½</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>140.1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 10th</td>
<td>London*</td>
<td>673 ½</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>128.16.11</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 20th</td>
<td>London* &amp; Arundel</td>
<td>797</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>148.3.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 3rd, 5th</td>
<td>London* &amp; Various</td>
<td>2223 ½</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>347.7.8</td>
<td>August Bank Holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 14th</td>
<td>London*</td>
<td>877</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>171.1.1</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>London*</td>
<td>1010</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>205.3.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
24th Aug 29th London* 552 2 111.6.8

Sept 4th London* and Brighton 1794 ½ 2 253.0.7 Southern League – Portsmouth vs Brighton

Sept 14th London* 1321 ½ 2 283.9.1

Sept 28th London 955 ½ 2 200.17.4

Oct 2nd London 399 2 75.4.6 Very wet Wednesday

Oct 12th London 612 ½ 2 135.5.0 Iron Duke launched this day.

Oct 23rd London 686 ½ 2 131.5.8 Brewers Exhibition, Agricultural Hall.

Oct 26th London 455 1 103.8.8

Nov 6th London 412 ½ 1 87.9.0 Shoe and Leather Fair, Agricultural Hall.

Nov 30th London 374 ½ 1 86.0.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Run To</th>
<th>No of Passengers</th>
<th>Special Trains</th>
<th>£.s.d.</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 13th</td>
<td>Swindon Bristol</td>
<td>986 ½</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>286.15.6</td>
<td>1st round English Cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 3rd</td>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>614 ½</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>334.3.10</td>
<td>2nd round English Cup at Bradford.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Various places*</td>
<td>3553</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>725.3.8</td>
<td>King’s Birthday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, Papers of the Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, Portsmouth History Centre, Kemp Collection, uncatologued.

“Average £83 per special & 429 passengers”

† Various places on the LB&SCR line include London, Hastings, Lewes, Brighton, Eastbourne, Worthing, Weymouth, Swanage, Bournemouth, Poole, Guildford, Arundel, New Forest, Midhurst, Ringwood, Aldershot, Andover, Petersfield, Southampton, Winchester and Botley.

* Tickets sold for the Latin-British Exhibition at White City at 9d each for pre-booked tickets, or 15d. each if bought at the station on the day.

Table 8. London and South West Rail
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Passengers</th>
<th>Train No</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 20th</td>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>130.18.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 2nd, 5th</td>
<td>West of England and various</td>
<td>1866</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>499.16.10</td>
<td>August Bank Holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 21st</td>
<td>Waterloo and Hampton Court</td>
<td>625 ½</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>121.17.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 4th</td>
<td>Wrexham and Birmingham</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>72.1.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 28th</td>
<td>Southampton and Reading</td>
<td>1354 ½</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>183.12.6</td>
<td>Southern League: Southampton vs Portsmouth. Temperance Choral Festival, Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>693</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 14th</td>
<td>West of England</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>117.17.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 23rd</td>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>55.2.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9928</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2528.2.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>693</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>106.21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, Papers of the Portsmouth Dockyard Excursion Committee, Portsmouth History Centre, Kemp Collection, uncatalogued.

“Average £109 per special & 445 passengers”

* Various places on the L&SWR line include the West of England, Birmingham, Oxford, Leamington, Worcester and Swindon.
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