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NINETEENTH CENTURY SANDWICH

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What picture did Sandwich present to the visitor in the years before the great Reform Act of 1832? Its population was slowly rising towards the 3,000 level at approximately which it was to stagnate for the rest of the century, but it had become a port only to serve itself and its immediate hinterland, and drew what wealth it had from being the market town of a rich agricultural area. Even the most optimistic burgess would have been hard put to it to describe the town as flourishing. As long ago as 1697 Celia Fiennes had described it as:

'... a sad old town, all timber building. You enter by a gate, and so you go out of it by a gate, but it's so run to decay that except one or two good houses, it's just like to drop down, the whole town'.¹

and nearly a century later in 1776 John Wesley called it:

'... poor dead dry Sandwich.'²

Whilst admiring the land, William Cobbett had little to say for the town. Using one of his favourite adjectives he observed that:

'Sandwich ... is a rotten borough ... This place ... is as villainous hole as you would wish to see ...'³

which goes along well with Defoe's equally unflattering comments of a hundred years earlier:

'Sandwich is ... an old decay'd poor miserable town, of which when I have said that it is an ancient town, one of the Cinque Ports, and sends two

¹ (Ed.) Christopher Morris, *The journeys of Celia Fiennes* (1949), 129.

² John Wesley, *Collected Works* (1810), Vol. V: journal entry for 16 December, 1776.

³ William Cobbett, *Rural Rides*, entry for 3 September 1823, quoted in (Ed.) John Derry, *Cobbett's England* (1968), 226-7.

members to Parliament, I have said all that I think can be worthy any bodies reading of the town of Sandwich.⁴

Rather kinder accounts can be found in Hasted and the 1835 Municipal Corporation Report, but even these produce a gloomy picture. Writing in 1797 Hasted said:

'The town cannot possibly be healthy, or even a desirable place of habitation ... The houses are old fashioned and ill-built and the streets ... are in general but narrow and ill convenient lanes, ill adapted for carriages or even horses ... The town is not well supplied with good water ... The exports at the Haven are now confined to the produce of the neighbouring country for a few miles round, and the imports most to shop goods and other necessary articles for the town and the adjoining country.'⁵

The 1835 report observed briefly:

'The town is very dull, and has little or no trade of any kind. The best houses let for about £35, and many of them are uninhabited.⁶ There are two or three tan-yards in full employ, and in the course of the year a great deal of wool is sorted and sent off to various parts. A project has long been entertained of making a harbour near the mouth of the river and shortening the navigation to Canterbury by means of canals. This would benefit Sandwich greatly, but there seems no probability of its being carried into execution.'⁷

In fact by 1835 the canal proposal was already obsolete: the opening of the Canterbury and Whitstable Railway in 1830 (itself a clear indication of how unsatisfactory communication with Sandwich was) meant that Canterbury now looked northwards for bulk supplies, and no longer to the east and to Sandwich.

Thus was Sandwich in the 1830s – old, confined within its walls and ramparts, its very buildings dropping to pieces,⁸ but for all that, its economic situation deserves a closer examination.

Population

Sandwich's population at the beginning of the nineteenth century was

⁴ Daniel Defoe, *A tour through England and Wales* (Everyman edition, 1962), Vol I, 120.

⁵ E. Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent* Vol IV (Canterbury, 1797), 256-9.

⁶ The 1831 census report shows 33 houses vacant out of a total of 628, some 5.25%.

⁷ *Municipal Corporations Report*, 1055.

⁸ The tower of St. Peter's church had collapsed in 1661 and that of St. Mary's in 1667 (Hasted, *op. cit.*, 278, 281. Neither church was ever fully rebuilt.

just over 2,500; by 1821 it was nearly 3,000, but by the end of the century it had grown hardly at all, standing at 3,170. During this time Deal's population, also stagnant between 1811 and 1861 had nearly doubled from just over 5,000 to over 10,000, and Walmer's had multiplied seven-fold, from under 1,000 to over 5,000. Over this period the population of the Thanet towns, swollen by the holiday industry, increased five or six times over (Table 1) and Kent's population, taken as a whole, increased fourfold, a slightly greater increase than the population of England and Wales.

Why was the population of Sandwich so stagnant? The population of the Parliamentary constituency (Sandwich, plus after 1832 Deal and Walmer) more than doubled in population during the century, but that of Sandwich only advanced by 20 per cent, and that all in the first three decades. Something can be learnt from the Registrar-General's abstract, and from the detailed census enumerators' returns,⁹ but in the first Sandwich is included within the Eastry sub-district area, which also comprises a number of very small villages, and though Sandwich's population in each year is almost exactly one-third of the sub-district, this source is far less precise than is desirable. Equally, detailed census information is only available from 1841 when the returns begin to show the desired information until 1991, the last series of figures which have so far been made public. All the same, it is possible to suggest some tentative conclusions based on the material at hand. Firstly, the Registrar-General's figures show a total excess of births over deaths in the period 1841-81 of 4,423 for the sub-district: the increase of population is given as 106 over the same period so that there are 4,317 'lost' persons, of whom probably one-third were born in Sandwich, about 1,400 (Table 2). Who were they, where did they go, and why?

Between 3.4 per cent and 4.0 per cent were born at Deal or Walmer, another 15.5 per cent to 17.4 per cent within a six-mile radius of Sandwich, 4.3 per cent to 5.0 per cent in Thanet and 14.2 per cent to 16.3 per cent in the rest of Kent; the remaining 10.4 per cent to 13.9 per cent were born elsewhere in the United Kingdom, or in a very few cases, overseas. Thus almost a half were Sandwich born, a fifth from Deal, Walmer and the six-mile radius, another fifth from the rest of Kent and the remaining one tenth from elsewhere. Over the years the amount of extra-Kent immigration was steadily rising, from 10.4 per

⁹ Rubric Record Office series. 1841 - HO 107/94; 1851 - HO 107/1631; 1861 RG 9/540; 1871 RG 10/1000.

TABLE 1: POPULATION OF SANDWICH AND LOCAL AREA ¹⁰

Year	Sandwich	Deal	Walmer	Margate	Ramsgate	Broadstairs	Kent	England/ Wales '000
1801	2,452	5,420	755	4,766	3,110	1,568	308,667	8,893
1811	2,753	7,531	2,154	6,126	4,221	1,943	368,350	10,164
1821	2,912	6,811	1,568	7,843	6,031	2,101	426,016	12,000
1831	3,136	7,268	1,779	10,339	7,985	2,342	478,028	13,897
1841	2,913	6,688	2,170	11,050	10,909	2,978	548,177	15,914
1851	3,027	7,067	2,616	10,099	11,838	2,975	615,766	17,928
1861	2,944	7,531	3,275	10,019	11,865	2,855	733,887	20,066
1871	3,060	8,009	3,816	13,903	14,640	3,847	848,294	22,712
1881	2,846	8,500	4,309	18,226	16,234	4,597	977,706	25,974
1891	2,796	8,891	4,565	21,637	16,253	5,661	1,142,324	29,003
1901	3,170	10,581	5,248	26,734	16,503	7,193	1,348,841	32,528

¹⁰ Figures for Kent: *Victoria County History of Kent*, Vol III (1932), 358-60, 370; England and Wales: B.R. Mitchell and P. Deane, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics* (Cambridge, 1962), 6.

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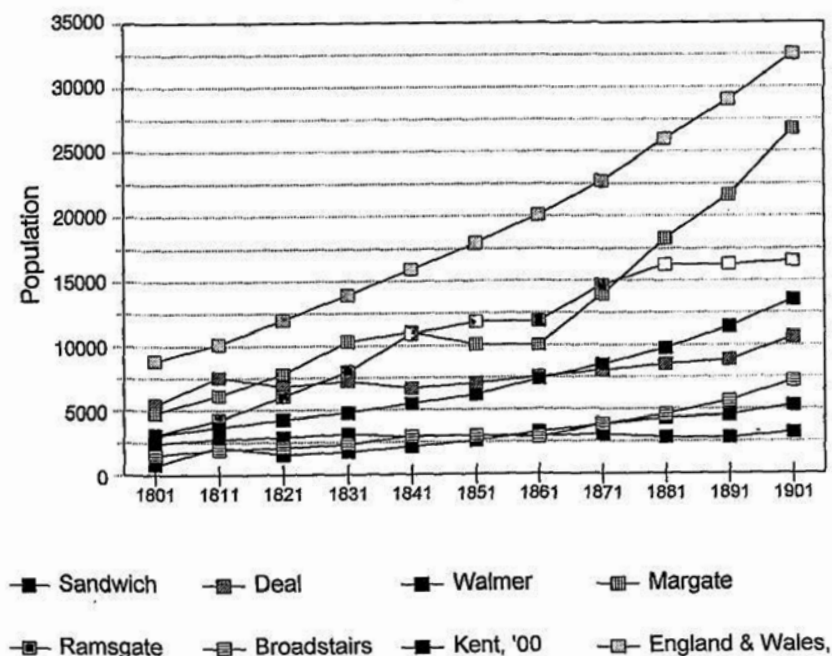


Fig. 1. Graph of nineteenth-century population

cent to 13.9 per cent, for reasons which will be considered below. The general pattern is one of short-distance migration; half the immigrants must have travelled less than a dozen miles from their birthplace, and a further quarter less than sixty miles. This pattern is much as might be expected,¹¹ but in view of the stagnation of Sandwich's population figures and economy in the nineteenth century, the actual *amount* of movement is surprising.

Analysis of the birthplaces of Sandwich's population shows that in 1851, 1861 and 1871 rather less than half the inhabitants of the town were born there (Table 3).

¹¹ A. Redford, *Labour migration in England, 1800-1850* (Second edition, Manchester, 1964), Chapter XI.

TABLE 2: POPULATION INCREASES IN SANDWICH SUB-DISTRICT OF THE EASTRY DISTRICT, 1841-81¹²

A: Relative populations of Sandwich borough and Sandwich sub-district.

Year	Sandwich (a)	Sub district (b)	Percentage (a) of (b)
1841	2,913	8,749	33.3
1851	3,027	9,022	33.6
1861	2,944	8,759	33.6
1871	3,060	9,073	33.8
1881	2,846	8,855	32.2
Average			33.3

B: Births and deaths.

Total excess of births over deaths, 1841-81	3,566
Illegitimate births not included therein	857
TOTAL	4,423
LESS actual increase in population	106
Balance of increase not accounted for	4,317
Sandwich's proportional share of these	1,439

At least half of those born in Sandwich each year moved away from the town in the course of their life, and were replaced by strangers to the town, a much greater degree of fluidity of population movement than might have been expected. If one-third of those born in the sub-district were born in Sandwich, there would be on average some ninety births a year, and on the same calculation some sixty deaths, so the population should have risen by thirty a year. It has been shown

¹² Table A: Official census returns; Table B: Registrar's Annual Abstract of Births and Deaths.

TABLE 3: BIRTHPLACES OF THE POPULATION OF SANDWICH, 1851-71¹³

Year	Sandwich		Deal/Walmer		6-mile radius		Thanet		Other Kent		Other	
1851 Nos. & per cent	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
	700	747	46	68	203	318	63	86	199	257	148	163
	51.4	45.6	3.4	4.2	14.9	19.4	4.6	5.3	14.6	15.7	10.9	9.9
	48.2		3.7		17.4		5.0		15.2		10.4	
1861	716	718	40	59	210	293	55	72	180	236	173	173
	52.1	46.3	2.9	3.8	15.3	18.9	4.0	4.6	13.1	15.2	12.6	11.2
	49.0		3.4		17.3		4.3		14.2		11.8	
1871	695	690	50	73	206	266	59	89	211	285	216	206
	48.4	42.9	3.5	4.5	14.4	16.5	4.1	5.5	14.7	17.7	15.0	12.8
	45.5		4.0		15.5		4.9		16.3		13.9	

¹³ Census enumerators' returns: HO 107/1631; RG 9/540; RG 10/1000.

that it did not: presumably these thirty left the town, accompanied by half the remaining sixty live births – which suggests that two-thirds, not one half of each year's babies left Sandwich in the course of their lives. It is impossible to say where these people went – many, perhaps, to Thanet; far more, probably to London. It is easy enough to suggest *why* they went; as will be shown the town was sufficiently hard put to it to keep what prosperity it had, and it can have offered few attractions to a young man bent on making his fortune. Less obvious are the reasons why so many people – about thirty a year if the previous calculations are a guide – should come to Sandwich. It is evident from Table 3 that more immigrants were female than male, and that more females came from the six-mile radius than any other. Some of this surplus were the wives of Sandwich men who must have gone into the country districts for their brides, and others were domestic servants, which is perhaps how the brides came to Sandwich in the first place. Thus, in 1861 there were, according to the enumerators' returns, 175 more immigrant women living in the town than men (833 as against 658) and of these 103 were domestic servants, ninety-four of them from Kent.¹⁴ For a country girl, the chance of domestic service in the town was a good prospect as an escape from life on the farm or in the village, and the same considerations must have applied to the country boy, to whom Sandwich offered opportunities for trades not available in the rural areas, and a stepping stone to higher economic things. Sandwich thus presents two faces; for the Sandwich man it might have represented an economic full-stop, which many each year left, hopefully to better themselves elsewhere, and for the local countryman it was a town of opportunity – not perhaps a life-time's opportunity, but certainly an important first step on the road to improvement.

Trade.

What were those opportunities available in the town? What was the state of trade in nineteenth-century Sandwich? There was little industry in the borough, and what there was, was on a small scale. The 1839 directory¹⁵ says hopefully that:

'Shipbuilding and rope-making are carried on to a limited extent'

¹⁴ PRO RG 9/540.

¹⁵ *Pigot and Company's Royal National and Commercial Directory* (1839 edition), 356.

but adds sadly that:

'No vestige exists of [the] once famous woollen trade'

though only a few years before the Municipal Corporations Report had noted that:

'There are two or three tan-yards in full employ, and in the course of the year a great deal of wool is sorted and sent off to various parts.'¹⁶

Tanning and wool-sorting are mentioned again in the 1845 directory¹⁷ and in 1855 an iron-foundry and ship-yard are added to the list.¹⁸ The scale of operations is put sharply into perspective in the evidence of the Town Clerk, T.L. Surrage, to the Election Commission enquiry of 1881:

52: Are there any manufactories in Sandwich? No, nothing you can call a manufactory; there is an iron foundry and things of that kind upon a moderate scale.

53: Is there a manufactory in the sense I mean? No, perhaps it could hardly be called that, it makes things for the neighbourhood.¹⁹

Not all ships were intended for purely local traffic though:

'On Tuesday last [4 August, 1868] we had the pleasure of seeing one of the most successful launches that could possibly take place at the Corporation ship-building yard of Mr. F.R. Pain ... the barkantine *Sparkling Foam* ... has been built ... She will carry over 400 tons ... She is ... the largest ship ever built at Sandwich ... She is intended for the South American trade.'²⁰

Further evidence to testify to the small scale of the town's manufacturing industry is available in the census enumerators' returns (Table 4).

¹⁶ *First Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Municipal Corporations in England and Wales*, PP HoC 1835 XXIV, Appendix, Part II, 1055.

¹⁷ *Kelly's Post Office Directory for the Six Home Counties: Kent* (1845), 362.

¹⁸ *Kelly's Post Office Directory for Kent*, (1855) 481.

¹⁹ *Report of the Commissioners to enquire into the existence of corrupt practices in the Borough of Sandwich*. PP 1881, XLV: Minutes of evidence, qns. 52-3. (Henceforth *Election Commission*).

²⁰ *Deal, Walmer, Dover and Kentish Telegram*, 8 August 1868, 7c.

TABLE 4: NUMBERS OF THOSE SHOWN AS EMPLOYING LABOUR AND THE NUMBER OF THEIR EMPLOYEES AS SHOWN IN THE CENSUS ENUMERATORS' RETURNS, 1851-71.²¹

Year	Number of employers	Total of employees	Average number of employees
1851	23	147	6.37
1861	24	151	6.29
1871	23	198	8.61

The ship-yard was the largest single employer of labour; in 1871, it employed more than any other two units, but farming took up the bulk of the employees – between a quarter (1851) and a third (1861 and 1871). The fragmentary nature of the material, however, makes any firm conclusion about the rise and fall of Sandwich industry impossible. Shipbuilding was not quoted in 1861, or tanning in 1871. Obviously, there are many men who are not covered by the figures; in 1851, for example, 578 men were listed as being between 20 and 59 years of age, but in Table 4 only 170 are considered, leaving over 400 of the work-force unaccounted for. Clearly not all these were self-employed; there were 168 described as labourers in the census for example, and the implication is that they were employed only on a casual basis, or in ones and twos. Assessing how large-scale employers of labour the farmers were is complicated by its being impossible to know just how many of the 48 labourers described as 'farm labourers' worked for farmers living in Sandwich, and how many for farmers living outside the town and so not covered by the census returns, or conversely how many labourers lived outside the borough and came in to work for Sandwich farmers.²² The real key to the importance of Sandwich in local economics lays in the last remark of Mr Surrage, the 1881 witness quoted above:

'... it makes things for the neighbourhood.'

What prosperity there was in the town lay, to begin with at least, in

²¹ Census enumerators' returns: HO 107/1631; RG 9/540; RG 10/1000.

²² All 1851 figures derived from PRO HO 107/1631.

the market. The Municipal Corporations Report of 1835 refers to a general market once a week, and to a large fortnightly cattle market,²³ the general, corn, market on Monday and the cattle market on Wednesdays. The value of the cattle market seems to have fallen off, as the lease for the tolls in 1831 had stood at £17 11s. 6d. but in 1832 was reduced to £10 10s. There is reference to another market on Saturdays in the 1832 and 1837 directory entries for Sandwich²⁴ but no reference is made to these in the Commissioners' Report. During the hearing of evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the proposed Minister to Deal branch of the South-Eastern Railway in 1845 Henry Keen, tanner, Councillor and sometime Mayor of Sandwich bore witness to the importance of the markets:

Q: Is there a large weekly corn-market in Sandwich? – Very large, in fact it is the second in that division in the county; there is only Canterbury larger.

Q: Is there also every fortnight a large stock market? – Very large, in fact Margate and Ramsgate are nearly all supplied from that market with their meat.²⁵

He added later that goods were sent up the Stour, but significantly made no mention of Canterbury as their destination.²⁶ Markets

²³ *Municipal Corporations Report*, as above, 1053.

²⁴ The directories used in this paper are:

Pigot and Company's National and Commercial directory (1832-34), 864-66;

Pigot and Company's Royal national and Commercial directory (1839 and 1840 editions, which are identical for Sandwich, 356-8;

Kelly's Post Office directory for the Six Home Counties (1845), 362;

Bagshaw, Samuel, *History, Gazetteer and Directory of the County of Kent* (Sheffield, nd, but 1847), 293-309.

Kelly's Post Office Directory (1855), 481-4;

Meville and Company's Directory and Gazetteer of Kent (1858), 151-5;

Kelly's Post Office Directory of Kent (1867), 1107-11;

Kelly's Directory of Kent, Surrey and Sussex (1887), 510-4.

²⁵ House of Lords Record Office: Select Committee on Railway Bills (South Eastern); Branch to Deal and extension of the South Eastern Canterbury, Ramsgate and Margate Railway Bill. Committee Office evidence, 1845, vol 77, 100. (Henceforth 'Railway Committee evidence'),

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 117.

continued to find a place in the directories (in 1855 the corn market was described as 'excellent') but the lack of reference to any markets in the 1881 Election Commission evidence suggests that Sandwich's markets may have dwindled to a more immediately local importance by that time: the 1887 directory called Sandwich a 'market town' and left it at that.

As for fairs, at the beginning of the century there had been a ten-day fair each year, starting on 4 December for drapery, haberdashery, shoes and hardware, and Hasted refers to two other fairs for cattle in April and October, each of two days, which have declined to being:

'... several fairs of a minor character ...'

by 1832.²⁷ In 1847, the December fair still lasted a week, and covered drapery, skins, hardware and pedlery, but by 1855 it had declined to being '... a pleasure fair'²⁸ and in 1875 was abolished entirely.²⁹ There is no indication whether any of these fairs were hiring fairs.

The decline of Sandwich's markets and the disappearance of the fair is a further symptom of Sandwich's dwindling local importance. Markets which had supplied large areas of east Kent at the beginning of the century had apparently dwindled to cover only Sandwich's immediate hinterland by the end of it; the railway seems to have taken trade from Sandwich rather than added to it,³⁰ and Ashford's new cattle market of 1858, with its direct rail access, seems to have become increasingly important as the years passed by.³¹ This decline of market importance must have contributed very considerably to the stagnation of Sandwich's population total: a stagnant town with collapsing markets was unlikely to attract or retain many pushing newcomers. Fairs such as Sandwich's were suffering an eclipse on the arrival of railways in their vicinity on a national scale,³² and all over England the stalls were being replaced by a wide range of service shops, from grocer to gunsmith, from seedsman to staymaker, and

²⁷ G.A. Cooke, *Topography of Great Britain* (1810), vol vi, 27; E. Hasted, *The Historical and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, vol iv (Canterbury, 1797),

²⁸ 1855 Directory, 481-2.

²⁹ Helen M. Bentwich, *History of Sandwich* (Deal, 1971), 121.

³⁰ For a detailed examination of the effect of the railway on east Kent, see F.W.G. Andrews, 'The effect of the coming of the railway on the towns and villages of East Kent, 1841-1914' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Kent at Canterbury, 1993); for Sandwich, see *ibid.*, Ch. IX.

³¹ Andrews, *loc. cit.*, 218.

³² Harold Perkins, *The Age of the Railway* (1970), 210-11.

from tailors to tallow-chandlers.³³ An examination of Sandwich's entry in the 1839 directory for example gives a vivid picture of the numerous, competing and presumably very small service trades of the town.

Assuming that your parents could have afforded their services, they could have chosen between three doctors to oversee your birth, and when you were old enough they had a choice of nine schools to which to send you. 12 bakers, 8 butchers and 12 grocers and cheesemongers existed to feed you, and 5 tailors and 15 boot and shoemakers stood ready and waiting to keep you clothed and shod. There were three barbers to shave you and (if you felt unwell) a couple of chemists would sell you medicine. Four cabinet makers would furnish your house, newly built by one of the town's two builders, and 26 public houses offered to quench your thirst, selling beer probably brewed in one of the town's three breweries, which no doubt used some of the malt produced by the four local malthouses. If you sat on the quay to smoke your pipe (custom-made by Edward Spain) and to watch the two rival firms of hoymen at work, you could have passed the time by debating from which of the five ladies who made them you would buy your wife a new straw bonnet. If your felt your end was approaching, three firms of lawyers would draw up your will (assuming you had anything to leave) and one of the three Ministers could conduct your funeral – and if you had wanted to arrange it, no doubt Henry Spelt, Monumental Mason, would have been delighted to make you a gravestone. As in the industries, though, it is obvious that the scale of operations of all these people must have been small. Many of the shopkeepers doubled up in several trades: in 1845, Frederick Famariss describes himself as 'Cabinet maker, upholsterer, auctioneer, ironmonger, appraiser, house agent and undertaker'. Henry Nethersole was a coal merchant, a brewer and a maltster, and at various times and in various combinations, Thomas Pearson was a shop owner, an innkeeper and victualler, coal merchant and salt merchant. With 26 public houses in a population of about 3,000 there were only about 112 customers to each, even if every man, woman and child turned out to bear a hand in the drinking. Casual market-day trade and shipping and traders coming to the town will have brought in casual drinkers, but for many publicans a secondary occupation was not so much a precaution as a lifeline. Between the 1840s and the

³³ The whole question of the change in the pattern of shopping habits in the nineteenth century is considered by Alison Adbugham, *Shops and shopping* (second edition, 1981), and W. Hamish Fraser, *The coming of the mass market, 1850-1914* (1981).

late 1860s Thomas Seath ran a tailor's shop from his 'Bull's Head' in Bowling Street, and in the 1840s John Marsh seems to have left his wife to run their 'Green Posts' in King Street whilst he worked as a pilot. In about 1850, Peter Matthews made baskets in his spare time from his beer-house in Harnet Street.³⁴

The existence of a series of trade directories, 26 in all, spanning the years 1827 to 1899 makes a comparison of the numbers of trades listed in each edition possible. This suggests the possibility of discussion of the rise and fall of the town's service trade, but there are certain limitations to this. Three of the directories (1847, 1858 and 1867) are less comprehensive compilations than the series published by Pigot or Kelly, and comparison of those figures with others of the series must be made with some caution. The compilers' own possible lack of local knowledge, a possible demand for cash for a directory entry to be made, long delay between compilation and publication,³⁵ all these mean that care must be exercised in drawing conclusions. Within these limitations however one obvious conclusion is evident from any analysis, that the trade pattern of the town did not alter very much, if at all, in the 72 years the directories span (Table 5). Bakers varied between ten and thirteen, grocers between seven and sixteen, butchers between five and nine. Straw bonnet makers varied from one to five, and were normally in competition with one or two milliners – though in 1847 no less than eight are recorded. Wine merchants varied from two to four and tailors from four to six. Hoymen, having been three in number in 1847 were gone by 1867 though three hoys were still in operation, and that year saw the first entry for a railway station master. The largest single group were always innkeepers – between 22 and 30.

Raw figures are one thing, but their relationship to the size of the population is more significant, and in Sandwich the point of interest is that that relationship did not change a great deal over the years.

Food and drink both continued to occupy a very large part of Sandwich's commerce: the number of outlets involved in the food industry – which included millers and major producers as well as grocers and bakers – remained constant at rather over 30 in each year analysed; drink (brewers and maltsters as well as beer-sellers and

³⁴ Details in this paragraph have been taken from a combination of various directories, census returns and poll books.

³⁵ Discussed at length in Jane E. Norton, *Guide to the National and Provincial Directories of England and Wales* (1950): Introduction, Part ii, 'Authorship, methods of compilation and tests of reliability.'

publicans) also showed a steady level, at about 30 outlets in each year. The surprise is that there were so many, and that there continued to be so many. With something like eleven or twelve outlets per thousand of the population, so that (for example) each public house had only about 100 potential clients in the town, which included women, children and babes in arms, it is difficult to see how the various publicans made a living. Food outlets would include bakers, butchers and grocers, but all the same, each baker could only expect to serve at best some 300 people. Shopkeepers (presumably the local 'corner shop') were less numerous, but they too must largely have existed on food sales, and figures for London small shopkeepers in the eighteenth century suggest that a potential client-base of little more than 200 was unlikely to provide anything but the barest minimum level of economic survival.³⁶ The implication is that these (and indeed many, if not most) of Sandwich's commercial establishments were on the permanent edge of economic survival, and perhaps were only able to do so if there was another source of income within the family unit. Most of the establishments seem to have been one-man concerns, or at best with the services of an errand-boy or the like. However, society at large appears to have been increasingly sophisticated as the century passed by. The number of people engaged on 'public administration', even in its loosest interpretation to include (for example) the Secretary of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society (1882) rose steadily as local government became increasingly complex and centrally driven, and suppliers of household goods – watchmakers, fancy goods repositories, etc. – steadily increased in number. Transport by sea gradually declined as the Haven became less and less significant, and inland transport tended to rise in importance. The professions tended not to change in representation – lawyers, schoolteachers and the clergy all were more or less constant in number over the period. There was after all a limit to the potential demand for such services but many of the solicitors tended to wear other, administrative, hats. All in all, it is clear that Sandwich was self-sufficient in almost everything, although perhaps only to the extent that many traders barely made a living, and could apparently only do so if their wives and/or daughters ran another little business on the side – dressmaking, milliner, etc. Present-day evidence suggests that this remained substantially the case until just after the Second World War.

³⁶ H. and L.H. Mui, *Shops and shopkeeping in eighteenth century England* (Montreal, 1989), Chapt. 6, *passim*.

TABLE 5: OCCUPATIONAL ANALYSIS OF SANDWICH.³⁷

Class	Occupational Group	1839	1847	1851	1858	1874	1882	1889
	Population*	2,958	2,981	3,027	2,994	2,996	2,841	3,095
I	Land	0	16	20	15	16	24	19
II	Sea	0	4	5	5	4	2	4
III	Building	13	18	12	10	13	16	15
IV	Other Industries	19	13	15	13	13	18	10
V	Transport by sea	5	4	8	1	4	3	1
VI	Inland transport	3	5	5	2	8	3	11
VII	Service at domestic level	3	4	2	4	7	9	16
VIII	Coal	4	7	7	6	3	5	3
IX	Clothing	35	33	25	17	25	36	27
X	Food	30	34	34	35	29	26	33
XI	Tobacco	1	1	2	1	3	2	3
XII	Drink	33	35	37	34	37	35	34
XIII	Lodging & dining facilities	3	1	1	0	3	2	23
XIV	Furniture	4	5	5	8	4	3	8
XV	Stationery	3	2	3	3	2	2	5
XVI	Household goods	5	8	8	10	9	19	8
XVII	Shopkeeper	2	5	3	0	9	8	7
XVIII	Industrial & commercial service	9	21	28	4	30	9	11
XIX	Public administration	3	9	4	4	5	12	18
XX	Uniformed services	1	4	1	1	3	5	4
XXI	Law	3	9	4	4	6	7	8
XXII	Education	9	5	7	4	9	5	8
XXIII	Medicine	5	7	6	3	3	3	8
XXIV	Religion	3	3	4	5	5	5	5
XXV	Private residents	51	47	41	28	77	118	100

* Population figures are interpolated from the nearest census year's returns.

³⁷ Based on Tables 9.4 and A9.4 in Andrews, *op. cit.*, and additional material from further directories.

TABLE 5 (CONTINUED)

Class	Occupational Group	1839	1847	1851	1858	1874	1882	1889
		Units per thousand of the population						
I	Land	0.00	5.37	6.61	5.01	5.34	8.45	6.14
II	Sea	0.00	1.34	1.65	1.67	1.34	0.70	1.29
III	Building	4.39	6.04	3.96	3.34	4.34	5.63	4.85
IV	Other Industries	6.42	4.36	4.96	4.34	4.34	6.34	3.23
V	Transport by sea	1.69	1.34	2.64	0.33	1.34	1.06	0.32
VI	Inland transport	1.01	1.68	1.65	0.67	2.67	1.06	3.55
VII	Service at domestic level	1.01	1.34	0.66	1.34	2.34	3.17	5.17
VIII	Coal	1.35	2.35	2.31	2.00	1.00	1.76	0.97
IX	Clothing	11.83	11.07	8.26	5.68	8.34	12.67	8.72
X	Food	10.14	11.41	11.23	11.69	9.68	9.15	10.66
XI	Tobacco	0.34	0.34	0.66	0.33	1.00	0.70	0.97
XII	Drink	11.16	11.74	12.22	11.36	12.35	12.32	10.99
XIII	Lodging & dining facilities	1.01	0.34	0.33	0.00	1.00	0.70	7.43
XIV	Furniture	1.35	1.68	1.65	2.67	1.34	1.06	2.58
XV	Stationery	1.01	0.67	0.99	1.00	0.67	0.70	1.62
XVI	Household goods	1.69	2.68	2.64	3.34	3.00	6.69	2.58
XVII	Shopkeeper	0.68	1.68	0.99	0.00	3.00	2.82	2.26
XVIII	Industrial & commercial service	3.04	7.04	9.25	1.34	10.01	3.17	3.55
XIX	Public administration	1.01	3.02	1.32	1.34	1.67	4.22	5.82
XX	Uniformed services	0.34	1.34	0.33	0.33	1.00	1.76	1.29
XXI	Law	1.01	3.02	1.32	1.34	2.00	2.46	2.58
XXII	Education	3.04	1.68	2.31	1.34	3.00	1.76	2.58
XXIII	Medicine	1.69	2.35	1.98	1.00	1.00	1.06	2.58
XXIV	Religion	1.01	1.01	1.32	1.67	1.67	1.76	1.62
XXV	Private residents	17.24	15.77	13.64	9.35	25.70	41.53	32.31

Sandwich's original reason for its existence lay in the Haven – what remained of port traffic and trade in the nineteenth century? According to the evidence presented in 1845 at the enquiry into the proposal to build a branch railway from Minster to Deal, with an intermediate station at Sandwich, the Haven was doing quite well. 12,000 tons of coal, 1,600 tons of merchandise and 750 tons of timber entered the Haven annually, and 3,900 tons of flour and 1,100 tons of potatoes left it, but as long ago as 1822 the status of head port had been moved to Ramsgate, and Sandwich Haven relegated to the status of a creek, a clear indication of the collapse of its former trading importance. This had the effect that all future figures for Sandwich Haven's traffic are inextricably mixed with those of Ramsgate and other creeks of that port, so that only very fragmentary information provided by the copy letters and copy returns sent by the collector at Sandwich to his superiors at Ramsgate or Deal survives to give any statistics on Sandwich's nineteenth-century trade.³⁸ These figures are unfortunately very scrappy; the letters often refer to returns which have been made, but only rarely are the figures themselves transcribed into the letter book; after 1889, no letter books, and hence no figures for Sandwich survive. The first point is that the ships were small – they had to be, to fit into the Stour – and the products of the boatyard in general measure between 60 and 80 tons, in effect, a sailing barge. Ships entering or leaving the Haven were usually recorded as being between 60 and 90 tons. The quay, which was Corporation property and manned only by a Harbourmaster (though not always under that title, and often with other duties) seems to have had no regular staff, as none are shown in the census enumerators' returns: it was in the shape of a truncated triangle, pointing downstream, with a river frontage of some 110 yards, and some 40 yards wide at its greatest extent. Merchants receiving or despatching consignments were responsible for loading or unloading their own cargoes. These cargoes were dominated by coal (11,000 tons in 1848, falling to 3,460 tons by 1888: see Table 6), grain and timber, though in 1869 it was recorded that of 28 ships as having been boarded by the Customs officers, 22 were carrying cereal of some sort. Most of the ships were engaged in the coastwise trade: between 1854 and 1857, only six ships were shown as entering the port on foreign trade, while 453 coasters came in; 282 coastal sailings are recorded but only one foreign. A record of movements for the periods 1847-65 and 1869-78

³⁸ H.M. Customs Office Records, Customs 51/31 and 51/32 (Collector to Board) covering 1847-65 and 1867-89, from which the majority of the figures in this section are derived.

is given in Table 7 where coastwise traffic is seen to dominate throughout. Many of the ships were on something of a milk run; even in the scrappy evidence provided by the casual entries in the letter books, the *Two Sisters*, the *Gudenaar* and the *Renoble* each appear twice between March 1867 and February 1868, each time with a cargo of grain. Foreign trade as recorded was almost all in Dutch or Scandinavian bottoms. Most of the timber was handled by J.C. Drayson, the builder, but there is no indication who handled the bulk of the coal.

What happened to all these things coming into or going from the Haven? Some of the grain became flour which went out again, and more must have formed part of the breweries' products, but the coal and timber imports were greater than Sandwich itself could use. Some of the coal might have gone to Deal, but after the coming of the railway Deal could have been supplied by rail from the pit-heads, and to unload coal at Sandwich into carts and then reload it into railway wagons for the short trip to Deal for unloading again would seem to have been a very laborious process. Such traffic did exist, or at least was contemplated: in 1853, a proposal was made to put in a rail spur from the station to save the trouble of transshipment, but nothing came of it,³⁹ suggesting that the volume of trade did not warrant the expense involved. In any case when the Deal branch had been proposed in 1845, and the argument put forward that it would make it possible:

'... [to] always ensure us [i.e., Deal] a supply of coals, and give us a harbour from which we are at present prohibited in consequence of the heavy cost of land carriage.'⁴⁰

it had only been rather half-hearted:

'... This line would open to us the port of Ramsgate which at present we cannot get, and also Sandwich – we should be able to get our coals from Ramsgate and also Sandwich at a moderate price. It would ensure us coals through the winter.

Q: You would get your coals either from Ramsgate or from Sandwich? – No doubt a portion of them.

Q: In the winter? – In the winter.'⁴¹

³⁹ Sandwich Corporation minutes, 5 July, 1853. Deal, of course, had no harbour facilities, and still does not. Coal would have had to be landed on the beach, if it were to go straight to Deal by sea.

⁴⁰ Railway Committee evidence, evidence of Richard Christian.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Thanet was presumably supplied by its own rail and port services – the South Eastern railway had arrived there in 1846, and was joined in 1863 by the London, Chatham and Dover railway, and can have had little call for Sandwich coal. Canterbury, too, was reached by rail from London in 1846 (South Eastern railway) and in any case had had rail links with the port of Whitstable since 1830; Sandwich coal can hardly have gone to Canterbury. The probability is that it went overland over the catchment area for which Sandwich was a local market town (a point made in the 1867 directory) and the same arguments must apply to timber imports. Here again is evidence of Sandwich's local importance as a market and a commercial centre for the surrounding area, even if that area was getting steadily smaller. From Table 6 it can be seen that the volume of coal entering Sandwich fell from about 10,000 tons a year 1848-52 to just over 3,000 tons by 1883-88. Presumably the *demand* for coal in Sandwich and its hinterland must have been more or less constant over the period, which suggests that the coal was coming into the area by a different route – which must have been the railway.

The size and shape of this catchment area can only be guessed. As the distance to Canterbury is 13 miles and that to Dover 12, the same 6-mile radius used in the analysis of population movement is likely to be a reasonable assumption. From this must be excluded the Thanet

TABLE 6: COAL IMPORTS INTO SANDWICH

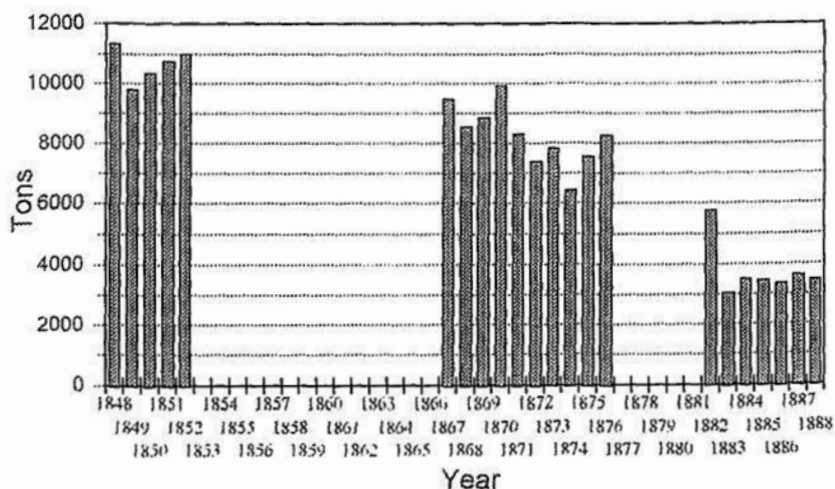
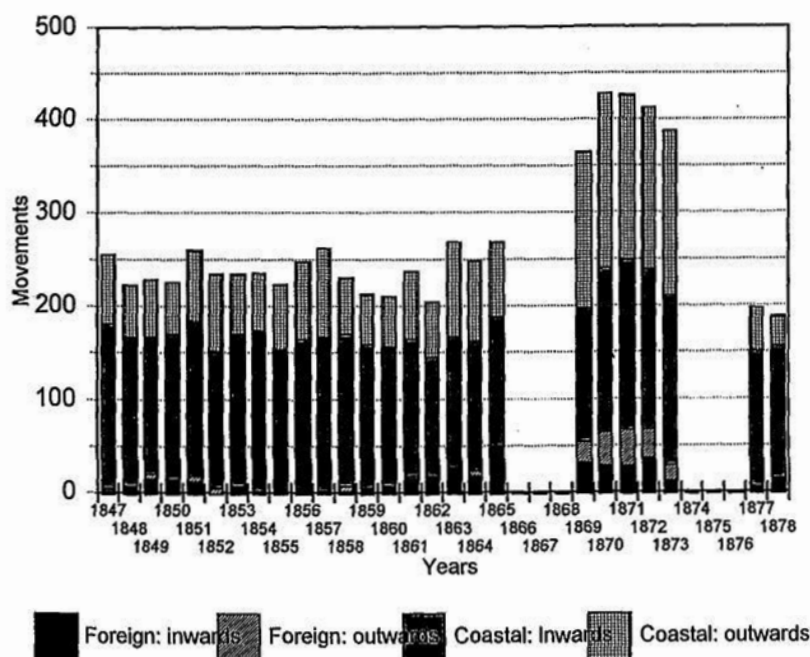


TABLE 7: SHIPPING MOVEMENTS AT SANDWICH



area, and Deal and Walmer. Within the limited and wholly agricultural area that remains there were and are only three settlements of any size. Ash-next-Sandwich, whose 7,000 acres made it just ten times as large as the three Sandwich parishes combined, had about 2,000 inhabitants in the period; Eastry, the site of the Union workhouse, about 1,500, and lastly Wingham with about 1,100 inhabitants. The various other parishes in the area only had a few hundred inhabitants each, so that the total population of the catchment area was in the order of 10,000, about one-sixtieth part of the population of Kent as a whole, and rather more than thrice the population of Sandwich itself. The population of this area, like that of Sandwich, was much the same in 1881 as it had been in 1831.⁴²

⁴² All figures derived from *The Victoria County History of Kent*, Vol. iii (1932), Tables of Population, 356-70.

The destination of goods leaving Sandwich by sea is impossible to trace, though almost certainly by coastal routes, probably for other south-east England ports. Some ships put in with cargoes for sale on speculation – in 1863 the brig *Marianne* arrived with a cargo of potatoes, but finding no buyers had to take them away again⁴³ – and others discharged part cargoes before continuing their voyage – in 1862 the *Louise* discharged part of her cargo of barley before continuing to Newcastle.⁴⁴ The ships were small, as has been stated, and where the size of the crew is mentioned, it appears to average about four.

Was the Haven traffic in decline or on the increase in the period? Evidence on this point is contained in Table 7, above.⁴⁵ Though Sandwich Corporation bought a steam tug in 1848, the number of foreign ship movements fell fairly steadily 1847-60. The purchase of a tug in the year after the railway came suggests a desperate attempt to encourage Haven traffic; the tortuous Stour passage, even though kept as clear and deep as possible by the Corporation 'blow boat' (apparently some sort of dredger) would deter masters of sailing ships unless there was promise of good trade at the end of it – or enough assistance along it to make the trip worthwhile. The tug cost £755 all told, but as it was only expected to earn £165 a year in towage fees (boosted, in the event, by pleasure trips at threepence for children and sixpence for adults), with annual working expenses estimated at £430, its role as a last resort stands clearly revealed.⁴⁶ It does not seem to have been a good bargain either: in 1854, it had to have a new funnel, and later that same year a new boiler which, with other repairs, cost £627 14s. 9d.⁴⁷ Not surprisingly, the Haven Committee tried to save money in every way they could – in 1856, one crew was considered sufficient to man both the tug and the blow boat, and even that was to be reduced from four men to three.⁴⁸ Trade continued to

⁴³ PRO Customs 51/31, 21 October 1863.

⁴⁴ PRO Customs 51/31, 19 August 1862.

⁴⁵ The figures on which this table is based are drawn from PRO Customs 51/31 and 51/32. They may not be wholly reliable: figures for some years – for example 1856 – are quoted differently in the 1857 and 1858 entries. It is not always clear if the ships referred to were only those carrying cargo, or whether ships in ballast were included as well. The higher figure for 1869-73 may arise for this reason, that they included ships in ballast when earlier figures did not. The figures were not submitted as returns, they are copies of figures submitted, and it seems that they may not always have been copied consistently.

⁴⁶ Sandwich Corporation Minutes, 17 December, 1847, 22 April and 17 May, 1848.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 6 July, 8 August and 8 November, 1854.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 4 April, 1856.

decline, however, until 1860: there were about half as many foreign ship movements in 1857-60 as there had been in 1847-50, but thereafter it took an unexpected and unexplained upward turn. Though coasting vessels entering inwards decreased in 1862 to an all-time low of 128 ships, their numbers rose steadily thereafter to an all-time high of 182 ships in 1871, though it never quite reached the record tonnage of 1851 (12,099 tons). Coasters cleared outwards display the same pattern; the record figure of 185 in 1870 is nearly twice the figure for the period 1847-65, and the tonnage for that year is nearly two-and-a-half times the previous best, 1864. Foreign trade figures are even more extraordinary. Over the years 1861-65 and 1869-73, three times as many ships entered Sandwich from foreign ports as did in the fourteen years 1847-60. Though the number of ships clearing for foreign ports remained negligible until after 1865, in the five years 1869-73 140 movements were recorded; 1871 saw almost as many movements as did the years 1847-65 combined. It is, however, easy to overstate the case for a revival of the Haven – even in the best year for foreign ship movements (1872) having a total of 69 movements (38 inward, 31 outward), the average size of each ship was still only about 80 tons, in effect a large sailing barge. It is at least feasible for 62 of these movements to represent 31 round voyages by one ship, each taking about eight days – one ship on a ‘milk run’ to Antwerp, for example. Coastal trade expansion is subject to the same deflating calculation: here the ship sizes were smaller, just over 60 tons, and in the best year (1870) the 362 movements (177 inward, 185 outward) could represent the activities of only four or five barges on week-long round voyages to London or two or three on voyages to the Medway ports. The three hoys which made a weekly run to London in 1867 could account for most of this coastal traffic between them and probably do. Another point of interest is that up to 1865 Sandwich was an importing port rather than exporting: in 1869-73 the balance was about even between the two.

Why did these changes occur? What was coming into and going out of Sandwich? Unhappily no answer is possible. The cargo does not seem to have been coal, which was in decline as a sea-borne cargo into Sandwich (see Table 6 above), but the customs figures give no breakdown. Most incidental references are to timber and grain cargoes inward bound (of the 28 ships which were recorded as having been boarded in 1869, 22 were carrying grain of some sort), but whether it was these that suddenly increased is not known. Equally uncertain is why the change came about at all. Why were goods shipped along the coast in such quantities rather than sent by rail? Possibly because the sea journey was easier than via land – for

example, goods coming from south Essex would avoid London – or because freight rates were lower, or the cargoes more bulky. For agricultural produce in particular cheaper bulk carriage by sea must have been an attractive alternative to rail. Why the increase in foreign traffic? Perhaps because one barge-skipper was given a good grain or timber contract, but the facts are not known. Equally the source, nature and destination of the exported goods, coastwise or overseas, are unknown. The only large-scale local product was market garden produce, but this would surely benefit from the speedier carriage by rail. It may be significant that the increase in Haven traffic coincides with the closure of the Admiralty yard at Deal in 1864, and the same decade sees the beginning of the big rise of population on the Thanet resorts already noted in Table 1: perhaps this Haven traffic represents an overflow from the ports of Ramsgate and Margate. Certainly it was the only really bright star in Sandwich's commercial firmament.

Whatever its causes, the increase was real enough for the Customs collector to call for a new boat and more assistance in his work:

'I beg to state that as the trade of this creek has increased so much of late and the vessels with officers on board frequently lay in the stream for some days without being able to alongside the quays ...'⁴⁹

though as there were only 160 inward and 88 outward movements in that year (1864), a total of 224, two in every three days, his case may have been rather overstated. In April 1864, the Collector had reported to Ramsgate that on average 185 vessels entered the Stour each year. Certainly, he wore out his measuring tape and had to write a number of letters in an attempt to get a new one. In July 1864, he appealed for a new boat to help him in his work, and went so far as to say what size he wanted – 16 ft. overall, 5 ft. 3 in. in beam and 2 ft. 3 in. – presumably keel to gunwale, and in August asked for some new tools – an axe, a saw, two hammers, two crow-bars, two screwdrivers and some other small items: the correspondence does not indicate whether either of these requests were granted, but the list is interesting. Had he worn out the other items, or did he now need a couple of crowbars for the first time?

Further evidence for an increase is shown in the Corporation's purchase of a replacement tug at a cost of £1,631 15s. 4d. in 1872, selling the old one with a reserve price of £50,⁵⁰ but on the other side

⁴⁹ Customs 51/31, 2 July, 1864.

⁵⁰ Sandwich Corporation minutes, 29 May, 1872.

of the coin the hoy service to London declined. In 1840, there had been a weekly hoy to London, and by 1845 there was a second hoy, making the trip every other week. By 1855, the service was only weekly again, but though three craft were employed in 1867, 20 years later the hoys had gone entirely.

What of the road services? In 1832, the directory quoted three daily services to London, the Royal Mail coach, plus the *Defiance* and the *Wonder*; the *Swallow* and *Phoenix* coaches passed through twice on their way to and from Margate and Dover: there were also vans operating between Deal, Canterbury and Margate which passed through the borough two or three times a week.⁵¹ In 1836, the service was rather more intense; no less than twelve coaches made return trips through the town daily, and another made a single trip, coaches which had a maximum capacity for 44 inside and 63 outside⁵² but with the exception of a coach from Margate with a capacity of four inside passengers, all these were passing *through* the town. In 1844, according to the evidence given at the Minster-Deal branch line Select Committee of the House of Commons, there were 16 coaches on roads which passed through Sandwich, making 6,736 journeys a year, on average about one and a third each in every working day, carrying an average 27 passengers each trip between them so that about 36 passengers passed daily through Sandwich, though only one, the sole passenger on the Margate-Sandwich coach can certainly be said to have been bound for Sandwich,⁵³ a point hammered home by the railway bill's opposing counsel:

'Q: Did you ever know a passenger to Sandwich by any accident?'

to which question Henry Cosland, coach proprietor of Ramsgate, could find no answer. Private traffic along the local roads does not seem to have been very heavy. Only some 1,310 private carriages were calculated to have passed through the town in a year, carrying just under 4,000 passengers between them, though a further 100,000 were calculated to travel in:

'... one horse private carriages, flies, gigs and chaise carts ...'⁵⁴

⁵¹ 1832 directory, 864-66.

⁵² Alan Bates, *Directory of stage-coach services, 1836* (Newton Abbot, 1969), tables 2a and 3.

⁵³ Railway Committee evidence, Appendix A.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, Appendix C.

between Canterbury, Deal and Walmer and the Thanet towns annually, all of whom must have passed through Sandwich, but in modern terms this would require only some six buses to carry all the daily traffic at once. The roads themselves were in a bad state of repair: in 1837 no less a person than the Archbishop of Canterbury was upset in the town, and the *Kent Herald* observed:

'We think it high time that the authorities in Sandwich should look into the state of public thoroughfares as there is scarcely a street but is actually dangerous for a carriage to travel on through the sad repair they are kept in; and in almost all parts of the town may be seen lumps of mortar, bricks and other rubbish lying for nights together, to the imminent risk of travellers. What can the street surveyor be about?'⁵⁵

No wonder that:

'Q: In Sandwich, grass is growing in the streets, is it not? – Yes'⁵⁶

The coming of the railway took its toll of the coach services: the 1845 directory listed a service similar to that of 1832, but by 1855 there were only once-daily services to Canterbury and Dover, and twice daily to Thanet, four trips instead of the previous twelve, plus the daily services of a van on its way to and from Dover and Ramsgate. By 1867, only the van to Dover survived, but of course Dover was not directly connected by rail with Sandwich until 1881, up to which time the through South Eastern Railway (SER) route lay via Minster (change), Canterbury and Ashford (change again). A shorter route, which involved a walk across Canterbury from the South Eastern station (Canterbury West) to the London, Chatham and Dover Railway (LCDR) station (Canterbury East) and re-booking from there was available only from 1860. By 1887, the only road transport mentioned was a daily omnibus to Canterbury.⁵⁷

Lastly, the South Eastern railway. Opened in July 1847 the Deal branch had originally connected with London via Minster, Canterbury, Ashford and Redhill, a journey of some 99 miles. The 1855 directory said that trains stopped at the station 8 or 9 times a day, but by 1867 this figure was reduced to 5 a day, though a timetable published in July 1865 showed seven down and six up

⁵⁵ *Kent Herald*, 13 July, 1837, 3c.

⁵⁶ Railway Committee evidence, evidence of Henry Cosland, 134.

⁵⁷ The effect of the railways on local carrier and van services in east Kent is considered in length in Andrews, *op. cit.*

trains a day, the fastest taking 2 hours and 35 minutes to reach London, and the slowest three minutes short of four hours,⁵⁸ but even this last made the trip in less than half the time the fastest stage coach had needed in 1836. One first-class carriage could have carried 18 passengers and a third-class at least twice as many, so that the potential capacity of even a four-carriage train would have been ample for a *day's* stage-coach passengers. Small wonder that the *Phoenix*, the *Swallow*, the *Wonder* and the *Defiance* vanished into the pages of the romantic novel. The amount of freight expected by rail through Sandwich alone in each year was assessed as 20,000 tons, of which 12,000 was to be coal from the north, and 5,000 tons of corn, flour and potatoes going to London.⁵⁹ Certainly coal coming in by water fell from over 11,000 tons in 1848 to only 3,460 tons by 1888 (Table 6), and presumably the difference was made up by railway-borne coal, but the railway company did not expect freight to contribute more than one eleventh part of the gross receipts of the line.⁶⁰ However, it seems that Sandwich, being the market centre for the area became the railhead also after 1847; no wayside station on the only possible rival line, the South Eastern main line from Canterbury to Thanet, had the same extensive freight yard that Sandwich was given, except perhaps Minster.

Until 1881, Sandwich could only be reached by rail via the branch from Minster (on the Ashford, Canterbury and Margate branch of the SER to Deal) but in that year the line from Deal was extended in a joint venture by the SER and the LCDR to Kearnsey on the LCDR's main London-Dover line, making it possible for people from Sandwich to travel by rail to Dover without going via Canterbury. Both railways were determined to get their money's worth from the new line, and a service was provided between Walmer (the first station on the extension) and Dover out of all proportion to the traffic which could be expected. Thus, by August 1887 Sandwich was served by nine daily trains to London (plus a Mondays only service), plus a further eight running between Walmer and Margate, and by ten from London and another nine between Margate and Walmer. In 1899, the number of down trains had decreased to six, but the local service had increased to 13, with seven trains to London and fourteen on the local service. In 1850, single fares between London and Sandwich had ranged between 22s. (express trains) through 10s. (third class) to 7s.

⁵⁸ *Kent Herald*, 20 July, 1865.

⁵⁹ Railway Committee evidence, Appendix D.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Appendix I.

6d. ('Government'). Though there were already cheap excursions, even these prices were well out of the reach of the ordinary labourer, for whom a weekly wage of perhaps a pound a week, or less, was normal. Journeys between Sandwich and the Thanet towns would have cost pence rather than shillings, but were still too dear to be indulged in with any frequency by those whose weekly wages were still measured in shillings rather than in pounds.⁶¹

The overall effect of the railway upon Sandwich was thus probably marginal.⁶² The fairs disappeared entirely, though the markets survived, with Sandwich as local railhead, the catchment area probably shrinking in later years as ground was lost to Canterbury and other markets geographically more convenient than Sandwich which is at the extreme east of Kent, and better served by rail, hence the less frequent markets and (probably) a diminution in size. The Haven traffic, having generally declined since the coming of the railway, enjoyed an Indian summer in the period 1864 to 1873, and possibly later, but this could have been in rivalry with the railway – cheaper carriage of bulk loads – or an extension of it, a sea-rail service via Sandwich to replace an earlier link via the now defunct naval yards at Deal, sold for building plots in 1864. The railway must have had an effect on the mobility of the population: it is notable that by 1871 13.9 per cent of Sandwich's population was born *outside* Kent, and 16.3 per cent in parts of Kent other than the immediate vicinity of Sandwich: in 1851, the comparative figures had been 10.4 per cent and 15.2 per cent, overall totals of 30.2 per cent and 25.6 per cent respectively (Table 3). It must have enlarged social horizons too: Deal was now within ten minutes' reach and Canterbury within an hour, and the expanding Thanet resorts within half-an-hour or so. Even London was no more than four hours distant in 1848.⁶³

THE STATE OF SOCIETY

If Sandwich's economy was generally static, or even in decline, what was the state of society at large? How well-off and well-served were

⁶¹ Figures in this paragraph are derived from *Bradshaw's Guide* for March 1850, *Bradshaw's Guide* for August 1887 and from the *South Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways' Management Committee General Service Timetable* for Summer, 1899. Information on fares is not readily available for later years, but they are unlikely to have decreased very much before 1914.

⁶² The effect of the railway on Sandwich is covered in detail in Andrews, *op. cit.*, Chapter IX.

⁶³ *Kentish Gazette*, 3 October, 1848, 4a, 4b.

TABLE 8: NUMBERS OF RESIDENT FEMALE DOMESTIC SERVANTS AND OF HOUSEHOLDS IN SANDWICH.⁶⁴

Year	Resident female servants	Number of households	Servants per 100 households	Pelling's category
1851	162	661	24.5	A/B
1861	141	684	20.6	B
1871	122	757	16.1	B

its inhabitants? One yardstick of prosperity can be found in the number of resident female domestic servants per family.

It is clear that Sandwich was steadily losing ground; the number of servants had fallen by a quarter in the years 1851-71 whilst the number of households had increased by fifteen per cent. Possibly domestic servants were increasingly difficult to find, but in a district like rural east Kent and Sandwich this seems unlikely; the slow decline of the markets suggests that there was less money in the town, so fewer people who could afford resident servants.

Religion was an important element in the politics and society of nineteenth century English communities. As regards Sandwich, however, evidence about the inhabitants' religious affiliations is hard to come by. The 1851 religious census did not sub-divide the Eastry district at all, even into sub-districts as is done to the Registrar-General's figures, so that Sandwich is lumped in with Deal and all the surrounding area. Locally non-conformity was strong; there were 22 various non-conformist chapels to the 34 Church of England churches, though only 5,787 attended service on the test day, whilst 11,825 Anglicans did so.

Sandwich itself was divided into three parishes: St. Clement (within which was counted the extra-parochial hospital of St. Bartholomew), St. Peter and St. Mary, each with its own church, but by 1855 these were being operated by only two incumbents, the two small parishes (in population, though not in gross area), of St. Clement and St. Mary being held in plurality. The directory entry for 1839 refers to the chapels of the Baptists and the Wesleyans; those of 1845, 1855 and 1858 to these and to the Independent chapel, also.

⁶⁴ Henry Pelling, *Social Geography of Elections* (1967), 22.

TABLE 9: STRUCTURE OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP, EASTRY DISTRICT, 1851.⁶⁵

Number of places of worship		Number of sittings			Numbers at public worship Sunday, 30 March 1851 (includes Sunday scholars)		
Total 57		Free	Taken	Total	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
		8,175	5,652	16,567	6,810	6,445	4,563
PROTESTANT CHURCHES							
Anglican	34	5,488	3,299	11,527	4,830	4,902	2,093
Independent	6	796	948	1,744	802	490	1,040
Baptist	4	654	698	1,352	650	440	368
Wesleyan Methodists	7	435	629	1,064	445	263	683
Primitive Methodists	1	102	28	130	36	38	78
Undefined	4	400	50	450	47	106	301
OTHER CHRISTIAN CHURCHES							
Roman Catholic	1	300		300		206	

In 1867, there was a Primitive Methodist chapel as well. In 1887, the Congregational chapel, very long-established in Sandwich, was shown as having 430 places, the Primitive Methodist (built in 1862) 150, and the 1874 Wesleyan chapel 380, a clear total of 906 places, enough for one quarter of Sandwich's population. The district population was 25,000; the total non-conformist sittings shown at 4,470, rather less than one fifth of the population, so Sandwich was possibly more non-conformist than the rest of the district, unless it was the centre of local non-conformist worship. That two chapels had been built (or rebuilt) in twelve years suggests the strength of the movement, a strength earlier suggested by John Wesley's journal entry for 26 November, 1788:

'Our room at Sandwich being small, both the Dissenting Ministers sent to me the use of their chapels. I willingly accepted one of them, which was far larger than ours, and very commodious.'

and nearly a century later by a question directed at Mr Edwin Hughes,

⁶⁵ *Religious Census, 1851: PP HoC 1852-53 LXXXIX, 15, Table H.*

the Conservative agent, at the trial of the election petition in 1880:

'[Q. 1837] The Wesleyans are very strong here, are they not? – I believe they are.'⁶⁶

Sandwich may well, therefore, have been the religious centre for the non-conformists as well as the market centre; local non-conformists may have come in from the countryside for spiritual comfort as well as financial advantage.

Closely linked with the provision of religion was the provision of education. Pride of place was accorded to the Free Grammar School of Sir Roger Manwood, but for most of the century this existed in name only, having had only six pupils in 1818, and apparently none since the last headmaster (who also acted as chaplain to the gaol) was appointed in 1830: it was finally closed in 1858.⁶⁷ In 1890, the Charity Commissioners presented the Trustees with an ultimatum: either re-start the school, or hand over the endowments to a fund for general educational purposes. A newly constituted governing body was accordingly set up in September 1892, which eventually sold the school's original buildings for £450, and built a new school on a new site to the south of the town. This opened in 1895, but it was only made possible by the generosity of Alderman Thomas Dorman, who contributed a total of £4,000 to the re-building funds. School numbers rose from sixteen in 1895 to over 50 by 1900.⁶⁸

A charity school was founded in 1711 which later appeared as the National School, and this continued its work until it was taken over by the School Board in 1877.⁶⁹ The National School had 121 pupils (83 boys and 38 girls) on its books in 1851,⁷⁰ but there were also twelve private schools, which had 303 pupils between them, almost equally divided between 151 boys and 152 girls. These are the sort of schools listed in the early directories as run by Sarah Stone of King Street, or the Misses Jones of Strand Street. No indication is given of their age-range, academic standard or size, though as these ladies kept boarding schools they can hardly have been dame schools.

⁶⁶ *Minutes of evidence taken at the trial of the Sandwich election petition*, PP HoC 1880, LVIII, 615-77.

⁶⁷ J. Cavell and B. Kennett, *A history of Sir Roger Manwood's School* (1963), 63-4.

⁶⁸ Cavell and Kennett, *op. cit.*, 68-74.

⁶⁹ Dorothy Gardiner, *Historic haven* (Derby, 1954), 310-11.

⁷⁰ Taught on the 'Madras system'; Samuel Bagshaw, *History, Gazetteer and Directory of Kent* (Sheffield, 1847), Vol. II, 301-2. Bagshaw stated that 80 boys and 60 girls attended the school.

Elizabeth Lipscombe had three pupil boarders in 1851, as had Jane Famariss, ranging in age from eleven to fourteen, with a single seven-year-old.⁷¹ The 1861 Education Report suggested that most children got what elementary schooling they ever had for about four years between the ages of six and twelve;⁷² the 1851 census returns showed 427 children between six and twelve years old in Sandwich, and the education census showed 424 in school. Not all those 424 fell within the six/twelve age range of course; there are children in the census of five and under, or thirteen or more, who are described as 'scholar' or 'pupil', but the implication is clear enough that a large proportion of Sandwich's elementary school age children were actually registered in school – though in fact only about two-thirds of the National School children were *present* on the check day. The private schools did better, of course, with well over 90 per cent attendance. These figures agree fairly well with the 1861 Commissioners' Report, which expected about 75 per cent attendance on any one day at public schools, but it is notable that only about half the children on the books had as much as 50 per cent attendance records. Sandwich then was probably better off so far as schools were concerned than many other towns, in the private sector at least, and on paper a high proportion of children were registered on school books. The 1861 Commissioners' figures showed that 68,021 children were on the school books in Kent from a population estimated at 666,000, just over 10 per cent; in Sandwich there were 424 in 3,027, almost 14 per cent.⁷³ However, Sandwich as the centre for so much of the local rural life may well have been the centre for the more education-conscious parents in the neighbourhood: it is impossible to say what percentage of those 424 children on the books came from Sandwich and how many from the catchment area around.

In 1877, the School Board erected a new building on what had been St. Jacob's Churchyard, bringing together boys from their school in Harnet Street, and girls whose school had been established in the original Sir Roger Manwood's school building. In 1877, overall numbers in the new school were much what they had been in 1851, with about 420 children on the roll, though this figure had increased to an average of about 470 in the following year. Few children were

⁷¹ Census enumerators' returns for 1851, PRO HO 107/1631, St. Peter's parish, 45 and 46.

⁷² *Report of the Commissioners on Popular Education*, PP HoC (1861) XXI, Part 1, 171 and 172.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 603.

in school past their twelfth birthdays – only 29 of the 486 names recorded in 1877, and 67 of the 609 in 1878, 5.96 per cent and 11.00 per cent, respectively: in 1878 two pupils were aged 15 and 16, and were presumably pupil-teachers. By modern standards attendance levels remained low; 79 per cent in 1877 and just under 72 per cent in 1878; today schools expect attendance in the order of 91 per cent or better. All the children came from the town itself, with the minor exceptions of those living in isolated farms to the north and east of Sandwich, and along the shore of Sandwich Bay.⁷⁴ By 1899, the school was reported to have 214 boys and 214 girls on the roll, plus 184 infants, but attendance was still only in the order of 76 per cent.⁷⁵

Private schools continued to flourish in the town into the twentieth century, some day schools and others with a boarding element; for the boys, the most important was probably the Sandwich School for Boys, and for girls Stonar House School, which survived to be evacuated in 1940 to the west country (from which it did not return to Sandwich), and to celebrate its centenary in 1995.

The bodily welfare of the burghesses of Sandwich seems to have but scant consideration in the period. The Council sub-committee report of January 1849 on public health and sewers assumed that the normal method of sewage disposal would be by the open ditches which ran through and round the town, and thought that if these were cleaned and deepened, and some taken under rather than across streets, this would effectively provide all the sanitation that could be required. Since these same ditches provided the town's water supply, this ostrich-like attitude provoked a petition from the town in July 1852 that the Council should adopt the Public Health Act of 1848, but in common with most areas, nothing happened. Eventually, prodded by the Town Clerk, the Council appointed a Sanitary Inspector in November 1855, but he does not appear to have made much of an impression on his task, as in August 1857 the Council received a deputation on the subject of the bad state of the Delf Stream, the artificial watercourse that still runs through the middle of the town, and was at that time the town's main water supply. This plea also fell on deaf ears, and not until September 1874 was a Medical Officer of Health appointed, partly it appears as a result of a rather pointed letter about fever deaths in Sandwich, received from the Local Government Board the previous May. He seems to have been much encumbered by

⁷⁴ All the figures in this paragraph are derived from two volumes of the registers of attendance at the Sandwich Board School, currently in the Sandwich Guildhall archives, at 371.219.

⁷⁵ *Kelly's Directory of Kent* (1899), 502.

red tape to judge from his unavailing efforts to help a sick family in the winter of 1874-75. The Council successfully fended off a Local Government Board query about food analysis in 1882, and in the same year settled down with some enthusiasm to a war with the Board to avoid having to do anything about the town's water supply, despite the frightening report of the Medical Officer of Health which came into their hands at the next meeting. In another report later in the year he pointed out that it was often not possible to see the bottom of the bucket in which the sample water was collected as it was so dirty. Not until 1894 did the Council admit defeat and begin the construction of a water works. Many other boroughs were, of course, as reluctant as Sandwich to incur municipal expense, but the wonder is that there was any population left alive in Sandwich to complain.

CONCLUSION

What picture emerges then of Sandwich as a whole? Stagnant in size and population, its markets in slow decline, the Haven enjoying an Indian summer of prosperity only in the late sixties, it was nevertheless a marketing centre for heavy goods and of service trades for what was probably a shrinking local market area. The young people appear to have been leaving for pastures new; those who remained seem to have contented themselves with a way of life whose principal needs were supplied by the community's own resources.⁷⁶ Their lives were largely encompassed by the still standing medieval walls and ramparts of a town where:

'Many of the houses are ancient and irregularly built, and the streets are narrow and incommensurable ... There is a Mechanic's Institution, also a small theatre, [and] a market place where the grass springs freshly.'⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Oral history evidence suggests that Sandwich was still essentially self-sufficient in almost all service trades at least until 1939.

⁷⁷ G. Measom, *Official Illustrated Guide to the South Eastern Railway* (1858), 272.