THE SOCIOLOGY OF A RECURRENT CEREMONIAL DRAMA:
LEWES GUY FAWKES NIGHT, 1800-1913.

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ABSTRACT

Social phenomena can be best understood through an interdisciplinary approach involving history and the social sciences that brings together structural forces and the human agency. This contention is critically examined in the present thesis by establishing a symbiotic relationship between historical, sociological and anthropological accounts of social custom, ceremony and disturbance through the analysis of the Lewes Guy Fawkes Night celebrations as a recurrent ceremonial drama.

This strategy demonstrates the gradual process of change within Lewes, as reflected in the slowly evolving form of the celebrations, indicating the existence of a relatively stable community touched, but not radically altered, by industrial or urban development. As a consequence, it is argued, the development of class conflict and class consciousness did not occur. Rather, expressions of 'popular conservatism' and community orientation remained the dominant modes of expression throughout the latter half of the century. Empirical evidence both supports this conclusion and proffers an alternative.

Using the social drama model, it is shown how two periods of opposition to the celebrations bring into focus the sources of tension and the contending factions. The analysis of the motives and ideologies expressed at these
times identifies a similarity between those of the working class "bonfire boys" and of their middle class supporters which, while not totally negating class interpretations of conflict surrounding social customs, do undermine it as a single explanation.

From this it is argued that the neighbourhood orientation of the bonfire societies provides an alternative explanation, a sense of community rather than class conflict motivating the participants. The reconstruction of extensive social networks among the "bonfire boys" stresses the relationships upon which community as a social entity arises, the durability of the celebrations being attributable to a desire to reaffirm these relationships. The activities of the bonfire boys are thus expressions of community, rather than class solidarity.
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Introduction

The Lewes Guy Fawkes Night Celebration: The Contemporary Situation.

On the evening of each 5th November the principal streets of Lewes are thronged by thousands of inhabitants and visitors who have come to witness the celebrations held in the town to commemorate the Discovery of the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. Unlike the back-garden family affairs that are more typical of the rest of the country the annual celebration in Lewes is a highly organised event which is carried out in a colourful and elaborate manner. Arranged by local clubs called 'bonfire societies' the celebrations involve large torchlit fancy dress processions accompanied by numerous bands, firework displays and bonfires. Such is the size and pageantry of the occasion that Lewes 'Bonfire Night', as it is known locally, has few parallels(1) and as a consequence has become nationally famous, being featured on both radio and television.

The town in which these celebrations occur is a small market town situated 50 miles south of London and eight miles north-east of the seaside resort of Brighton. Lewes has always been a small town. Originally clustering around the Norman castle with its medieval town walls the town has developed as a compact entity, planning restrictions in
recent years preventing the outward sprawl into adjacent agricultural land. Since the inclusion of the suburbs of

Figure 1.1: Population of East Sussex towns, 1921-1971.

Cliffe and Southover into the municipal borough following the granting of a Charter of Incorporation in 1881 the only house building has been three estates, Landport, Nevill and Malling, on the town's outskirts. The population explosion experienced by many neighbouring towns and villages has as a consequence not been encountered in Lewes as Figures 1.1 and
1.2 indicate. Between 1951 and 1981 the town's population rose from 13,106 to 14,526, an average decennial increase of only 3.5 per cent. The extent of the gradual growth of the town's population is reflected in Figure 1.3, having increased by approximately 4,000 during the last hundred years.

Figure 1.2: Percentage increase of population of East Sussex towns, 1921-1971.

Abbreviations:
BH (Burgess Hill), C (Cuckfield), EG (East Grinstead), L (Lewes), N (Newhaven), R (Rye), S (Seaford).
Source: 1921-1971 Census Reports.
Lewes straddles the River Ouse on a spur of the South Downs which descends down into the river valley. A gap town, it has since Saxon times served as a communication and distribution centre, its road and rail links radiating outwards to the capital and the coast. Until the latter half of the nineteenth century the river route from the harbour at Newhaven was used commercially for both local and sea-going trade. Due to its geographical location Lewes had, by the seventeenth century, become an important market town supplying goods and services to the surrounding area and acting as a distribution centre for local timber, iron, corn, lime and chalk. By the beginning of the nineteenth
century small scale industry had become established including brewing, tanning, paper making and iron founding. As the county town Lewes also provided professional services for the locality and was the legal and administrative centre for East Sussex(2). Today the town's importance as a market and distribution centre has declined, but Lewes remains a focal point for employment, services, and to a lesser extent shopping, for its rural hinterland. The town continues to be the county's administrative centre, East Sussex County Council, Lewes District Council and Sussex Police all having their main offices in the town. Light industry has replaced the more traditional industries and together with services provides the main source of employment. According to the 1966 census 71 per cent of the 6,520 employed residents of Lewes worked in the town, 23 per cent worked elsewhere in the county while only five per cent commuted to London(3).

In common with other small towns in East Sussex, Lewes lost its administrative individuality and self-government with local government reorganization in 1974. With other adjacent local councils Lewes became part of an enlarged Lewes District Council which became responsible for a population at that time of 72,201(4). Although relegated to parish council status Lewes has striven to maintain its civic identity. The retaining of the mayoralty, with all its traditional trappings, reflects the strong sense for history and tradition that the town holds. Dominated by the medieval castle, the town was the site of the Battle of Lewes in 1264, the burning of the Protestant martyrs during the Marian persecutions, the home of Thomas Paine, author of
'The Rights of Man', and Gideon Mantell, the discoverer of the iguanodon. The ruins of the Cluniac monastery, which was destroyed by Henry VIII, are among the more notable places of historical interest in a town which boasts three museums and the headquarters of the Sussex Archaeological Society. The town's historical character is now being promoted in a bid to develop Lewes as a tourist centre. The annual Lewes Guy Fawkes Night celebrations may be set against this backdrop.

The celebrations are in reality seven separate events, each organised by the seven Lewes bonfire societies, Cliffe, Commercial Square, Lewes Borough, Nevill Juvenile, Southover, South Street Juvenile and Waterloo. Independent of each other they carry out their activities on the 5th November in similar manner. Bonfire Night in Lewes commences between 5.00 and 5.30pm with the first processions of the various societies, followed by others which perambulate the High street and adjacent roads at various intervals for the rest of the evening. Each society organizes its own processions in which their members parade wearing fancy dress costumes, carrying paraffin soaked torches and accompanied by bands. Each procession numbers between 300 and 600 bonfire boys and girls (5) depending on the strength of the particular society.

During the early processions various ceremonies are enacted which have over the years have become intrinsic features of what the bonfire boys consider to be the traditions of the 'Fifth'. Each society throws a blazing tar
All the societies lay a wreath at the town's war memorial to pay tribute to the bonfire boys who gave their lives in the two World Wars. The solemnity of the occasion is marked by two minutes silence, the playing of the Last Post and the rendering of a suitable hymn. Small firework displays are also ignited, the majority of which take the shape of Flander's poppies. Various other small setpieces are ignited in the streets during the processions including a miniature replica of the Lewes Martyr's Memorial that overlooks the town from Cliffe Hill. Erected by public subscription in 1901, the memorial is a reminder of the 17 Protestant martyrs who were burnt at the stake outside the Star Inn in the High Street during the Marian persecutions of 1554-57.

The culmination of these processions is the Grand United Procession that starts at the top end of the High street and processes the complete length of the town. All the Lewes societies, except the Cliffe, take part and are joined by many visiting bonfire societies from the surrounding towns and villages who attend the Lewes celebrations supporting the various Lewes societies. Totalling over 2,000 society members and between fifteen and twenty bands, the procession can take over 30 minutes to pass one point, stretching over a mile in length. This is the only occasion when the societies come together and in so doing provide the spectators with the high point of the evening's processions.
The Cliffe society's non-participation in the Grand United Procession arises from a continuing controversy between the societies. The Cliffe has always carried a large banner inscribed 'No Popery' which recalls the days when the celebrations were used as a vehicle for the expression of anti-Catholic sentiments. During recent years the society has been invited to take part in the procession 'provided no banner of religious significance were carried'(8). The Cliffe declined. Further invitations, without the previous precondition, went to Cliffe during the sixties, but the society has maintained its separate identity, the members taking a pride in their independence. 'We are strong enough without them', or 'We maintain the true traditions of Bonfire' are the common responses to any enquiry of why the Cliffe continues to march alone.

The question of what are the true traditions of 'Bonfire' that is raised by the Cliffe's refusal to take part in the Grand United Procession probably generates more dispute and discussion among the societies than any other topic. Today's bonfire boys view their celebrations not as 'Carnival', but as 'Bonfire'. To an outsider the distinction may appear non-existent or a rather circuitous argument about semantics, but among the bonfire boys the difference is hotly disputed. For them 'Bonfire' defines all that is traditional about their celebrations, the burning of a papal effigy, the carrying of 'No Popery' banners and the remembering of past historical events that secured the Protestant religion for this country against Roman Catholicism. To remove such elements, even when such
manifestations no longer reflect anti-Catholic sentiments among the members, is considered by the die-hard traditionalists as a move away from 'Bonfire' and a step towards 'Carnival'. Cliffe is the only society to continue to maintain these traditional elements of the celebrations, the other societies having ceased to do so during the 1920's and 30's. They vigorously refute the Cliffe's accusation that they have become carnival societies masquerading as bonfire societies. Responding, the other societies claim that even without the anti-Catholic element they still maintain the traditions of the 'Fifth'.

The sense of tradition is strongly held by the contemporary bonfire boys. Any innovation that is perceived as not being in keeping with the traditions is roundly criticised. When the Borough Society recently used a loud speaker van to make announcements as the procession proceeded the other societies condemned its introduction. A similar response was provoked when the same society invited a ring of Morris dancers to participate in their processions. However when Cliffe introduced ninety-gallon drums cut in half, mounted on wheels, filled with burning torches and pulled through the streets, calling them 'barrel carts', the other societies quickly adopted them. The dragging of tar barrels had been introduced into the celebrations during the 1830's so this modern imitation was perfectly acceptable. Innovation only meets with the approval of the majority of bonfire boys if it conforms to their notion of Bonfire traditions.
Following the spectacle of the Grand United Procession, each society reverts to their own individual programme by holding their own Grand processions. In these processions the societies bring out all the paraphernalia of their celebrations, banners, effigies, tableaux and tar barrels. The banners include each society's badge, large canvasses inscribed with mottoes and slogans including 'Good Old Cliffe', 'Hold them up Commercial', and the Bonfire Boys' Arms 'True to Each Other', and others portraying the capture of Guy Fawkes and the burning of the Lewes Martyrs, that are equal to any trade union banner. The 'dummy' effigies which are carried aloft with great ceremony are replicas of the effigies of Guy Fawkes and Pope Paul V that are stuffed full of fireworks to be ignited at the firesite. Blazing tar barrels are dragged on iron trolleys through the streets to the firesites. Some of the societies, notably Cliffe, also pull their tableau in the procession on a four wheeled wagon, referred to as the 'tab cart' by the society members. Depicting a topical political subject this tableau is a twice life-size three-dimensional model packed full of fireworks, which, once at the firesite, is exploded to the delight of the crowd.

The societies' Grand Processions progress through the town to their own firesites in fields on the outskirts of the town. As with the processions, the ritual acted out at the firesite follows time honoured traditions. Once there, the members are joined by thousands of spectators gathered to watch the display. Four or five members, dressed in mock clerical regalia and resplendent in the names of 'Archbishop
of the Cliffe', or the 'Archbishop of St Johns' deliver speeches to the awaiting crowd. Until recently the 'clergy', as this group are called among the bonfire boys, were the target for showers of fireworks and 'bangers', but as the availability of such rockets has declined so to has the practice. The speeches denounce unpopular politicians and opponents of Britain before the effigies are condemned to be ignited. The effigies explode in a crescendo of fireworks and it is usually the intention of those who construct them to ensure they are finally blown apart in a large explosion. Once the effigies have finished the tableau is lit. Sometimes taking up to ten minutes from the first firework to the last, the tableau forms the centre piece of the firework display.

For the bonfire boys the remainder of the evening becomes a more private affair. For many it is the culmination of a year's work preparing for the celebrations and once the grand processions and firesite displays are successfully concluded and the crowds, previously thronging the streets of the town, drift away, the final processions become an opportunity for the members to relax, enjoy a few beers and generally 'let their hair down'. Between 11.30 and midnight the bonfire boys can be seen dancing in the middle of the streets around the fires of discarded torches. But here, as during the rest of the evening, observance of tradition is observed, the fires being placed on the societies' original pre-1906 firesites when street fires were permitted. The dancing and singing is not totally disorderly. 'Rule Britannia', 'God save the Queen' and 'Auld
Lang Syne' are sung in rotation until, shortly after midnight, the fire brigade arrives to douse the fires and the bonfire boys slowly disperse.

The celebrations remain the same from year to year, identical rituals being acted out, very often with the same personnel. But this repetition does not diminish the enthusiasm of the bonfire boys for their annual celebrations which some sustain throughout the year and for many years. The bonfire boys are aware that they are maintaining a celebration that has existed in Lewes for well over a century and they acknowledge that if they are to survive then the traditions of the 'Fifth' must be passed on to the next generation of bonfire boys. However none of the societies has concerted recruitment campaigns, relying

**Figure 1.4: Reasons for joining a bonfire society**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason given for joining</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Maintain tradition</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain family tradition</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joined because of children</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance social life</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To dress up</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boy/girlfriend</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoymen and tradition</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mystique</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other reasons</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>185</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: 1974 Survey*
entirely on people asking to become members. Figure 1.4 records the reasons given for joining, in a survey of society members in 1974(9). Many respondents had been members for a long time and their responses may reflect why they remained members rather than why they originally joined, but from personal observations over a period of twenty years it is clear that the majority of new members join because of either family or friendship connections(10). There are those who witness the celebrations and then seek to become involved but they probably represent a minority.

While family and friendship networks help to explain why people join bonfire societies Figure 1.4 also suggests why people remain members. The fun of making and wearing costumes, the social companionship, the sense of belonging to something worth preserving, besides the more primitive response to parading with burning torches through darkened streets each hold an attraction for the members. The Cliffe Bonfire Society gave cognizance of the social aspect of their activities in their application to the Registry of Friendly Societies when they submitted that 'social activities bring members together in social intercourse, providing them with an opportunity to interact with people with similar interests, and a source of leisure time activity'(11).

Members remain loyal to the bonfire society they join, it being rare for them to change their allegiance. Those who do are held in a certain distrust by the majority of bonfire boys. Where a transfer of membership occurs it may be
attributed to closer friendship ties with a member in another society or a juvenile moving into an adult orientated society. Normally, when a member ceases to belong to a society he leaves the bonfire societies altogether. Two explanations may account for this strong feeling of society loyalty. Firstly, it is encouraged by the friendly rivalry that exists between the societies. Competition is fierce between the societies as each attempts to mount the largest, most spectacular display which will attract the biggest crowds. Much of this inter-society rivalry centres on the costumes worn by the members. An annual fancy dress competition is organised by the societies which is keenly contested. Such competition at close quarters tends to strengthen society loyalty and the sense of belonging to the society. Secondly, family and friendship networks that support membership must also add to this sense of loyalty. Members belong to the society in which their family and friends are also members. To leave to join another society may be construed as a desire to sever such network links on the part of the leaving member(12). Society allegiance is also fostered in an incidental way. There is constant dialogue between members from each society as to whose society is the best and, because Lewes is a small town, these partisan views are frequently aired.

Membership of the bonfire societies is not confined to the 'Fifth'. Among the active bonfire boys one frequently hears the reply 'We start on the 6th November' to the question 'How long does it take you to get ready for Bonfire Night?' Such a response is not inaccurate and emphasises
that for members who become fully involved in the activities of their societies it is a year-long commitment. As the response suggests these activities commence immediately. The first step taken by each society to prepare for the next celebration is the booking of their bands. Societies rely on the services of local silver, brass and cadet bands. In recent years, to improve the quality of their music, the more affluent societies have employed military bands. With each society employing three or four bands the need to retain their services necessitates early booking, bands frequently being engaged for the following year on the night of the 'Fifth'. As a consequence a number of bands have marched with one particular society for many years.

Once bands are booked, activities during the first six months of the year centre around fund-raising. The societies receive no financial assistance from any outside organization or local authorities, and as a consequence are dependent on their own initiative and resourcefulness to raise, depending on the strength and scale of their celebrations, between £1,000 and £3,000 each year. This is achieved through various fund-raising events, including lotteries, jumble sales and dances. The importance of fund-raising has led societies to co-operate on a number of joint ventures. While competition may divide them, in areas where co-operation will be to their mutual benefit, either financially or in their standing in the town(13) the societies have come together. The arena the societies have established to discuss topics of common interest is the Lewes Bonfire Council. Each society is represented on the
Council by three of their members acting as delegates. The Council has its own secretary, treasurer and chairman. The two former officers are elected annually from the members of the societies, the latter office is held in rotation by each society for one year. Traditionally each society has guarded its pyrotechnic expertise in an effort to be ahead of their competitors, but even in this activity co-operation existed during the preparations for the Queen's Silver Jubilee firework display.

The more practical preparations, the making of torches, the construction of firework displays, the sewing of costumes, the compiling of programmes and the building of bonfires commence in earnest about three months prior to the 5th November. Torches are made by the societies using mainly sacking and tow, later to be dipped in paraffin on the morning of the 'Fifth' and left to drain in readiness for the evening. Groups of members, sometimes numbering up to ten or 15 meet regularly, usually Sunday mornings, to make the torches. The societies' firework displays consist of three elements, set pieces, effigies and tableaux and the practice among the better organised societies is to have separate groups of members working on each. Involving a degree of expertise, each group is generally restricted to three or four members who will spend up to six nights a week for two months constructing and loading the tableau with fireworks. Bonfire sites are lent by local landowners and the fires built there are often the result of the town's tradesmen depositing their combustible rubbish on the site. The societies then construct the fire, in some cases with
great care, following the instructions of past bonfire builders. The costumes worn by the members during the celebrations are home-made and it is in this aspect of the preparations that all members become involved. Pride is taken in costume making, authenticity frequently being striven for. The subject of the costume is chosen by the maker and on the 'Fifth' every conceivable costume may be seen from every historical period and country of the world. Some costumes, however, are particularly associated with specific societies and these often form the leading group of processionists, known as 'pioneers'. To advertise the celebrations each society publishes its own programme which is sold door-to-door prior to the 'Fifth'. Included in the programmes are procession routes and times, brief histories of the celebrations and lists of society officers. Many local businesses support the programmes through advertising, and inhabitants frequently perceive they are contributing to the celebrations by buying the programmes of each society.

Such elaborate preparations are co-ordinated and motivated by the committees and active members of each society who carry out the majority of these tasks. Each society has a similar structure, and functions in much the same way as its counterparts, but each is an autonomous entity. They conform to Hemphill and Westie's criteria for an organisation to be considered autonomous, functioning independently of others, determining its own activities and being free from allegiances. Common ground exists between the bonfire societies due to their similar, if not identical activities and objectives, but they guard their independence...
and individuality. They each have a hierarchical structure that conforms to that found in most voluntary associations, having a president, vice presidents, officers, committee members and general members.

The post of president is an honorary one which is normally held by a civic or business notable from the town. These have included the local constituency M.P., town mayors and local publicans. Qualification for the post is either the degree of prestige for the society that will result, or as repayment for services rendered (16). The extent to which a president becomes involved is self-determined, some remaining figure-heads while others become active participants. Often, because the presidents, along with the vice presidents, come from a higher social status group than the members, they are treated deferentially, frequently being invited to take the Chair at meetings or given the office of Commander-in-Chief on the 'Fifth'. The vice presidents are appointed in recognition of financial or material donations to the societies. Bottomore observed that vice presidents were frequently 'chosen partly for their high status and partly for their ability and willingness to contribute financially; very often the vice presidents take no further part in the affairs of the organization' (17). For the societies a sprinkling of a few 'big names' in the list of vice presidents in their programme is considered prestigious.

The societies have two stratified structures of officials, the committee serving the society throughout the
year, and the procession officers taking charge of the celebrations on the 'Fifth'. The committee structure consists of a chairman, vice chairman, secretary, treasurer and committee members. Each society includes among its committee offices peculiar to its organisation, which are determined by the society's activities. These include captain of torches, captain of tableaux and captain of effigies. The societies also have a second hierarchy of officers whose authority is restricted to the evening of the 'Fifth'. These officers may either be committee or general members, their duties, as their titles suggest in Figure 1.5, involving the control and ordering of the processions.

**Figure 1.5: Society Officers for the 'Fifth'.**

```
Commander-in-Chief
  Aide-de-camps
    Pioneer Chief  Captain of Ranks
        Marshals
```

The committees are very stable, members frequently serving for a number of years, some for as long as 25 years(18). Qualification for election to an office, from my own observations, is normally acknowledged expertise and a willingness to serve. On occasions when a vote has been necessary, the popularity of a candidate may influence the decision. Having proved their competence in a particular
office the individual is likely to be continually re-elected, change usually occurring only as the result of resignation or retirement.

The internal functioning of the committees is an informal affair. Although they conduct their business following standard procedures, the absence of standing orders leads to a considerable degree of flexibility in procedure and decision making. One member who had had experience of committee work as a town councillor commented, 'having been used to Council committee work and other committees I was a little bit amazed at the very informal way in which they conducted their business affairs, but nevertheless seemed to get it all over and agreed in a very short time' (19). The Cliffe Society has formalised its existence as a voluntary association by registering as an Industrial and Provident Society, but although a set of rules were adopted, including how meetings should be called and conducted, the society has continued to run its meetings in the old manner.

The remainder of the society consists of general members who pay membership subscriptions, but who tend to confine their activities to supporting their society on the 'Fifth' by marching in the processions. Only a small number of these members participate in fund-raising activities, but more attend the social meetings organised by the societies, in particular the annual dinner and Badge Night (20). While the committee and active members provide the organisation and finance necessary to stage the event the general members
provide the numbers that makes the event a spectacle.

The formal structure of the bonfire societies is typical of other voluntary associations. Bottomore(21) and Stacey(22) set out certain criteria necessary for an organisation to be identified as a voluntary association. Bottomore lists three criteria: a formal leadership, a routine of appointing leaders, and a fairly stable membership. Stacey extends these to include voluntary membership, membership determined by the members themselves, and a formal name by which the association is known. A composite of these criteria presents a model of a voluntary association by which the bonfire societies can be compared. The societies have a formal leadership, a committee and officers being elected regularly at annual general meetings. Thus a routine of appointing leaders exist. Their membership is fairly stable. Some members can boast lifelong membership, while many others have been members for more than ten years(23). Membership is voluntary and is open to all on payment of an annual subscription. All the societies have names which are used on all correspondence to publicise their activities and incorporated on their badges which are carried in the processions on Bonfire Night.

Only in two aspects do bonfire societies deviate from other voluntary associations, but this results from emphasis rather than fundamental difference. Bottomore and Stacey state the need for a formal leadership and 'some kind of constitution'(24). If they mean by this a written constitution and rules then only the Cliffe meet the
requirements of their model. However, although not written down, procedures for election of committees and officers exist and the running of meetings follow the normal procedures adopted by voluntary associations. Stacey also argues that the organization should have a continued existence and not be a group convened only for a special purpose. While the principal object of the bonfire societies is to organise a single event, the 5th November celebrations, their activities, as already described, extend throughout the year. The societies are conscious of the social dimension of their activities and organise events with the single intention of bringing their members together. Such activities emphasise, rather than detract from, the bonfire societies as voluntary associations. Bottomore and Stacey also categorise voluntary associations according to their function and principal characteristics(25). Bonfire societies exhibit a number of these functions including social, charitable and providing a hobby, and consequently do not neatly fit into any specific category. For this reason, comparison with other voluntary associations must remain at a general level. This limitation does not however prevent bonfire societies being voluntary associations.

A comparison between the voluntary associations studied by Bottomore and Stacey indicate that the bonfire societies differ significantly in the composition of their membership. They found that in the associations not exclusively for a single sex or particular age group, the membership tended to be male, middle aged and middle class. Both found that there
was a preponderance of males in the ratio of 2:1, but using the 1974 membership lists of the societies it was found that 55 per cent (N=256) of members were male and 45 per cent (N=210) were female. Age did not significantly effect this balance between the sexes as Figure 6 shows, except in the 51-60 age group where a sizable proportion of members were male. However there was a marked imbalance among the 54

**Figure 1.6: The sex and age distribution of society members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>16-20</th>
<th>21-30</th>
<th>31-40</th>
<th>41-50</th>
<th>51-60</th>
<th>60+</th>
<th>Totals N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>56.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>43.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals N</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1974 Survey

society activists (26) where 72 per cent were male. Figure 1.6 also indicates that the bonfire society members were not predominantly middle aged. Of the 197 respondents 51.8 per cent (N=100) were between 16 and 30. Only 16.8 per cent (N=33) were over 50. Unlike sex, age did not significantly influence activity, 59.3 per cent (N=32) of the 54 activists being under 30. The youthfulness of the membership is however emphasised when the large juvenile membership is taken into account (27), the under 16's, untypical of most voluntary associations, increasing significantly the proportion of society members under 30 from 51 per cent to 71 per cent.
Figure 1.7: The occupational status of society members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Category</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1974 Survey.

Nor are the members of the bonfire societies drawn largely from the middle class (28) as Figure 1.7 indicates. Using the Registrar General's classification 67.8 per cent (N=133) in classes IV, V and VI may be described as working class. Of the remaining 32.2 per cent (N=63), many came from working class backgrounds, their employment status determining their objectively ascribed social class rather than their cultural behaviour (29). Those more identifiable as middle class members among categories I and II tend to be presidents of vice-presidents of the societies and are frequently considered by the rest of the membership as different from themselves (30).

The differences between the membership of the bonfire societies and the voluntary associations studied by Bottomore and Stacey are also found among the committee members. They found the leadership of the associations they studied to be middle-aged, male and middle class, with the middle class often being over represented in proportion to the total membership (31). This was not found among the
Figure 1.8: The age and sex of committee members

Source: 1974 Survey

Figure 1.9: Committee membership and occupational status (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee membership</th>
<th>VI</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals %</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1974 Survey

bonfire societies, the social composition of the committees not differing significantly from the total membership. This is illustrated in Figures 1.8 and 1.9. Although more committee members are male, the difference between them and their female counterparts is not significant. Over half, 55 per cent, of committee members were between the ages of 16
and 30 and the social class ratio of the committee reflected that of the total membership.

Bottomore and Stacey did not consider the variable 'family involvement', but it was significant among the bonfire societies and is probably untypical of the majority of voluntary associations. Family membership was extensive, with 61.7 per cent (N=121) respondents having one or more relatives who were also members. The majority of these were close family members, either within the same generation or previous generations. In a small number of cases great grandparents were or had also been members. The nuclear family was found to be equally important with 68.5 per cent (N=98) of the 143 respondents who were married stating that their spouse was also a member. Within this group were 85 married couples, 78 per cent (N=65) of whom had children, all or some also being society members. All children under the age of 15, as Figure 1.10 shows, were members apart for

---

**Figure 1.10: Distribution of active and non-active children, age and reason for non-activity (Percentages)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership and non-membership</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>5-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No To young</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not interested</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moved away</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: 1974 Survey*
those considered to young to take part by their parents, but as they reached their mid-teens some children start to leave(32).

Neither was family membership coincidental. Many of those interviewed in 1974 expressed the opinion that the involvement of other members of their family heightened their own enjoyment of the celebrations(33). Among those with children 37 per cent gave 'for the children' as their explanation for joining while among the total membership 16 per cent (N=30) stated they had joined to 'maintain a family tradition' and 46 per cent (N=91) were introduced into the society by a family member.

To summarize the contemporary situation. It would be misleading to suggest that Lewes has a static population consisting only of locally-born inhabitants, but it is a town that has experienced only a very gradual population increase and no major influx of newcomers. The town remains sufficiently small to engender a sense of 'belonging' to the town, not just as a physical, but also as socially-cohesive entity. All children, except for those who enter private education, attend the same secondary school and on leaving school many find employment in the town and go on to marry and raise families locally. Many will also join the various voluntary associations of which the town has many(34). The desire to retain the town's civic identity and dwell on its past may be considered to emanate from a strong sense of history and tradition rooted in the town. Against this backdrop the bonfire societies, celebrating historical
events, with their own history and traditions, and their membership drawn largely from local families, fit comfortably, if sometimes controversially(35), into the social fabric of the town.

An Outline of this Thesis

The Lewes 'Bonfire Night' celebrations occurred annually throughout the nineteenth century and, apart from the suspension of activities during the two world wars, have been held continually through to the present day. The celebrations have not however remained the same. Specific events caused radical changes, the celebrations being transformed from riots to organised pageant and from a street focused event to one where the more dangerous elements have been restricted to outlying fields. More gradual, less detectable, changes have also occurred both in the form the celebrations have taken and in the social, political and religious attitudes expressed through them.

These changes, both the radical, occurring during a brief span of time, and the more gradual process of change evolving over a longer period of years, are the focus of this thesis. The search for explanations of such changes presents an opportunity to analyse the underlying social structure of a small town and, by identifying the sources of tension within it, expose the inner dynamics of social life among the inhabitants. This analysis of the celebrations is developed through an interdisciplinary approach, historical data being viewed through an anthropological perspective.
Periods of conflict resulting in radical change are considered within the framework of Turner's 'social drama' model while the gradual process of change is analysed using Frankenberg's 'recurrent ceremonial drama' approach.

Consideration is at the same time given to historical and anthropological accounts of custom and ceremony. Within the present discussion it is shown that many similarities exist between these accounts, particularly in relation to their integrative function and as vehicles for the expression of social solidarity and social conflict. Because of this, insights from both disciplines are brought together in this thesis which contribute to an understanding of the structural and interactional dimensions of both social solidarity and social conflict. It is argued, that because the celebrations provoked open conflict within the town, they did not perform the integrative function that custom is often attributed as doing for the total community. But social solidarity is expressed through the neighbourhood orientation of the bonfire societies, the structural characteristics of which being manifest through the social networks existing among society members.

A second dimension of this discussion is developed. Customs and the social disturbances and changes surrounding them are frequently interpreted in terms of social class, working class pastimes being modified or suppressed as a result of middle class pressure. But it is shown here that the bonfire boys were drawn from both the middle and working class and participated in the celebrations for a variety of
motives. While some of the working class activists may have been motivated by class considerations the same explanation cannot account for middle class participation. Taking account of the empirical evidence, and while not totally rejecting class as the basis for action, a second, and not necessarily alternative, explanation is proposed in this thesis. Thus in conclusion it is argued that community can equally provide the basis for action, an individual identifying with the place and the people with whom he comes into regular contact.

The discussion of the issues raised here are organised in the following manner in this thesis. Chapter 2 considers the primary sources used in the present research and outlines how they provide both the necessary qualitative and quantitative data from which to develop an analysis of the Lewes Guy Fawkes Night Celebrations. Chapter 3 traces the development of the dramaturgical approach through the works of Gluckman, Turner and Frankenberg and discusses how it is employed in the present research to provide a framework in which the process of social change, as reflected in the celebration, can be analysed. Also discussed in Chapter 3 is the debate surrounding attempts to achieve a symbiosis between history and the social sciences and this is extended to consider ways by which, through such a convergence, structure and process can be brought together into a single explanation.

Chapters 4 to 7 trace chronologically the evolution of the celebrations from the first eighteenth century accounts
through to 1913. Chapter 4 takes the pre-1847 period when the celebrations were marked by sporadic rioting, the culmination of which was the assault on a local magistrate which provoked a concerted attempt by a group of middle class inhabitants to have the celebrations suppressed. Within the 'social drama' model this incident is interpreted as the 'breach' and through an analysis of the leading middle class protagonists two underlying ideologies resulting in differing attitudes towards the celebrations are exposed and discussed. Chapter 5 takes a single year, 1847, and considers in detail the process through which the social drama develops during the 'crisis' and 'redressive' stages. The drama is traced from the discussions at Quarter Sessions when the magistrates expressed their resolve to take action against the celebrations, the ensuing disturbances on the 'Fifth', and finally the redressive measures taken against the bonfire boys through the courts. Using court records, this chapter also includes an analysis of the social composition of those arrested and considers explanations that accounts for their motives.

Chapter 6 deals with the final stage of the social drama, the period of 'reintegration' which extends forward to 1906 when a second attempt was made to have the celebrations suppressed. Discussion focuses on their gradually changing form following the initial radical changes between 1848 and 1853 when the celebrations were transformed from a riot to an organised carnival. Finally Chapter 7 considers the political and religious sentiments expressed through the celebrations and describes how
firework displays and speeches by mock clergy were used to propagate these views. Being overtly anti-Catholic and pro-Conservative these sentiments are interpreted as evidence of a 'popular' ideology shared by both the working and middle class bonfire boys.

Chapters 8 and 9 focus on the 1853-1913 bonfire society member as a group. Chapter 8 concentrates on their structural characteristics. In this chapter the society members are first analysed according to age, sex and marital status, the slight differences between them and their pre-1847 counterparts being discussed and explained. Before going on to analyse the social class composition of the membership, the objective criteria upon which to ascribe social class is considered, including the use of census and trade directory data relating to occupational status. The class diversity of the membership which was found is then related to the diversity of ideological perspectives being manifest through the celebrations. Finally the membership is considered in relation to industrial groupings and the influence of the drinks trade is noted.

Chapter 9 takes up the argument that a sense of community is expressed through the neighbourhood orientation of the bonfire societies. Specific reference is made to the names of the societies, their processional routes, and the residential distribution of their membership. From this, and further evidence indicating the existence of extensive social networks among the members, it is argued that social solidarity occurs on two inter-related levels among the
bonfire boys. Firstly, at the level of society based on identification with neighbourhood, and secondly, at the level of bonfire boys as a social group based on their common interests reinforced by regular contact through family and friendship networks arising from their membership of other Lewes voluntary association.

Finally, chapter 10 critically examines the two class model of society as it relates to the evidence emerging from the present research. It is argued that this model has a limiting effect on analysis as it does not seek alternative explanations to account for the absence of a developing class consciousness. The involvement of individuals from the middle and working class in the celebrations and the diversity of ideologies expressed through them indicates that sources other than class were having a motivational influence. It is concluded from this that the sharing of similar ideological perspectives among the bonfire boys can be attributed to the community orientation of their celebrations. The chapter closes with a consideration of ways in which the present research could be extended through the comparative method.

Notes

1. Other bonfire societies exist in Sussex, but none reach the scale of their Lewes counterparts. The only other town in Britain to have a large organized Guy Fawkes carnival is Bridgewater in Somerset. There small groups band together to form carnival clubs that construct large floats illuminated by thousands of electric
lightbulbs. The floats are paraded in procession through Bridgewater on the Thursday night closest to the 5th November.


5. The term 'bonfire boys' to describe those taking part in the celebrations was first used in the Sussex Weekly Advertiser in 1827 and has been used since then by both the press and the bonfire society members themselves. The term 'bonfire girl' is of more recent origin.

6. The origin of this practice is disputed. Among adherents of bonfire mythology the popular explanation is that it marks the occasion in the early years of the nineteenth century when a local magistrate was suspended from Cliffe Bridge, having remonstrated with bonfire rioters. A thorough search of the local press has failed to reveal this incident suggesting an apocryphal story. An alternative explanation sometimes given is that it marks the boundary between the territories of the Cliffe and Borough societies. What is certain is that as early as 1855 it was being reported that Borough were throwing a barrel into the river (S.A.E., 10.11.55.).

7. Set pieces are flat hardboard shapes, the outline of which are picked out by small brightly burning fireworks called lances.


9. ETHERINGTON, J. (1974), 'A Curious Survival: A sociological analysis of Lewes bonfire societies', unpub. B.Ed. thesis, University of Sussex. Work undertaken as part of this thesis included a questionnaire sent to the members of all the bonfire societies in Lewes in 1974 seeking information relating to the social structure of the membership, eliciting subjective explanations for becoming involved and attitudes towards aspects of the celebrations. Where data from this source is used in the present thesis it is referred to as the '1974 Survey'.

10. Two case studies may illustrate this. A middle aged committee member of the Cliffe has a brother and sister who are members. His father was also an active member when he was alive. His three daughters have been members from an early age. Two are married and their children have also become members. The husband of one of the daughters joined after their marriage. Similarly friendship networks account for membership. Along with a group of 15 to 18 year olds I joined a society when the owner of a coffee bar we frequented joined and encouraged us to do likewise. At that time the society was looking for 'fresh blood' which had prompted the society's secretary to approach the coffee bar.
proprieto.r. When members of this original group graduated to the local pub for their social life they drew in new members. Some of these new recruits already had connections with the bonfire societies through their parents or relatives, but their enthusiasm was reinforced by their peers' own involvement.

11. Letter from the Cliffe Bonfire Society to the Registry of Friendly Societies held by the society.

12. From observation I have noted only one instance of family membership being divided between two societies. A husband left a juvenile society to join one more orientated towards adults, leaving his wife and children with the original society. However, as the children have become older they too have transferred their membership to the adult society.

13. From 1982 to 1985 the societies jointly organised the Lewes Carnival during the summer as a fun-raising event, the proceeds of which were shared equally between the societies. The celebrations for the Queen's Silver Jubilee in Lewes were organised by the societies through the Lewes Bonfire Council.

14. At the present time the pioneer fronts of the Cliffe, Commercial Square, Borough, Nevill, South Street and Waterloo are Viking, Red Indian, Zulu, American War of Independence soldiers, Siamese dancers and Tartar warriors respectively, but the theme of pioneer groups are occasionally changed.


16. One president explained, during an interview in 1974, that he became president after receiving a letter from a society secretary. He observed that the sole reason for joining was a letter from the secretary of the Cliffe when he had been Mayor in 1960 asking him if he would follow the traditional custom of being their president for the year of his office.


18. Data collected from bonfire society programmes. Lists of officers and committee members began to appear in the programmes after 1900. Since 1945 all society programmes have contained these lists.

19. From an interview carried out in conjunction with the 1974 Survey.

20. Badge Night is traditionally held at the society headquarters on the night prior to the 'Fifth'. It is the occasion which doubles as a social event and at which members pay their annual subscriptions.


23. According to the 1974 Survey data 54 per cent had been members for less than ten years, 34 per cent for more than ten years and 12 per cent had been life-long.
26. 'Society activists' were those society members who were either committee members or who frequently participated in society activities.
27. It is not uncommon for newly-born children of members to be enlisted by their parents very shortly after their birth. Being 'born into it' is a situation envied by those who join later in life.
29. LOCKWOOD, D. (1958), The Black Coated Worker, London: Allen & Unwin discusses how changes in the work situation are effecting the traditionally accepted divisions between manual/non-manual and working and middle class occupations.
30. Such attitudes do not go un-noticed by some of the middle class members. In response to the question of whether he saw himself as a 'figurehead' in his society a local doctor replied, 'Well no I don't. They've (the members) made me a figurehead in a way that they very kindly asked me to be Commander-in-Chief, but in a way I rely on them tremendously... I must say they are awfully friendly and helpful.' From interview carried out in conjunction with 1974 Survey.
31. BOTTOMORE (1954), pp.358-359; STACEY (1960), p.81. Bottomore found that manual workers only achieved parity between membership and committee representation in political associations, presumably the parties of the Left.
32. An analogy may be drawn here between bonfire society and church membership. Where parents are active church goers so too are their children. As the children reach adolescence so they choose to discontinue their church membership. It is this procedure of 'recruitment' that led Stacey to exclude religious associations from her list of voluntary associations. Being entered into membership by ones' parents may be considered not strictly 'voluntary'. However if they continue as
members beyond adolescence this exclusion seems unnecessary.

33. The importance of family involvement to the members is expressed in the comments of one interviewee. He remarked, 'Yes all the family has been in the same one (society)... all my family. I've got six brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles and friends. They were all in the Commercial Square and most of them still are and we all get together on that night. And meetings leading up to it. Before the war we used to have a meeting every Friday. Used to have a sing-song, a couple of drinks and a raffle and pay our dues, another shilling another torch, that sort of thing. It was a real get-together.'

34. These are listed in Local Organisations: Lewes, (1979), Lewes: Lewes District Council.

35. The Cliffe Bonfire Society's continued practice of carrying a 'No Popery' banner and burning an effigy of Pope Paul V, the pope at the time of the Gunpowder Plot, still provokes some local opposition. However the Society's claim that in so doing they are not perpetuating past religious antagonism but merely maintaining a traditional element that has no relevance outside the context of the celebrations is generally accepted by the townspeople, including many catholics.
CHAPTER 2

NINETEENTH CENTURY SOURCES

What the Sources Provide

The Discovery of the Gunpowder Plot has been commemorated throughout the country since 1606, but if more than a general description is to be given it is necessary to set both spacial and temporal limits on the research. Although the value of comparative research is acknowledged, it is necessary, due to the depth of analysis to be undertaken, to restrict the present study to a single town, Lewes. The celebrations in the county town of Sussex are well documented in the local provincial press and it is the existence of this source that largely determined the period of study. The eighteenth century celebrations are reported, but it is not until the early 1820's that increasingly descriptive accounts, with sufficient detail for research purposes, begin to appear regularly(1). In addition other nineteenth century sources, particularly those facilitating nominal record linkage are also available. Thus the availability of sources determined a study period from 1800 to 1913, the latter date being chosen because the outbreak of war constituted a significant break, the celebrations ceasing for the duration. Having set the temporal span, the remainder of the chapter is used first to elaborate what the sources are required for and second, to give a description of these sources and the extent of their usefulness.
The sources provide two things. Firstly descriptive material. As stated in Chapter 3, the intention of the research programme is to develop a narrative/analytical account of the Lewes celebrations. Such an account includes not only descriptive narrative based on this material, but also develops from the narrative an analysis of how national and local issues were reflected through the celebrations, how social tension and conflict were manifest at a local level and how the bonfire boys' activities gave expression to a recognition of territory and sense of community. To exploit fully the celebrations as recurrent ceremonial drama sufficient descriptive material had to be found upon which to develop this kind of analysis.

Secondly, sources had to provide the names of individuals involved in the celebrations to enable, through nominal record linkage, the collection of biographical data that could be used to discover the socio-structural characteristics of those involved and their religious and political affiliations. Biographical data was also required to enable the reconstruction of family and social networks existing among the bonfire boys. Thus a source of names of those involved in some way with the celebrations was needed to provide the initial identifying item to allow for nominal record linkage. These individuals, so identified, formed a group which will be referred to as the 'Known Bonfire Population' (KBP).

Three principal sources, bonfire society miscellanea, press reports and court records, provide both detailed
descriptive material and sufficient names of those involved to enable the development of the intended analysis. Only a very small amount of miscellaneous material produced by the bonfire societies exists. In common with the majority of popular customs few records appear to have been kept, those involved rarely documenting their activities. Prior to the mid-nineteenth century the celebrations were not promoted by any formal organisation, what occurred being largely determined by custom. As a consequence there was little need for the bonfire boys to document their activities. Even following the formation of the bonfire societies it appears doubtful whether any consistent record keeping was carried out. Nineteenth century lists of members and minute books for the societies, if they were kept, have not survived.

The little material that does exist relates to the period at the turn of the century and reflects the development of the societies as formal organisations. It mainly consists of a small number of bonfire society programmes which record the times and routes of processions, society officers, subscribers and headquarters. A few balance sheets that generally included the names of the secretary and treasurer, and the occasional photograph with the names of those portrayed written on the back have also survived. This material does not represent a sizable source, but in addition to providing the names of society officers, the information relating to processions routes not provided elsewhere, as will be shown when discussing the territorial characteristics of the societies, is particularly useful.

In the absence of records produced by the bonfire boys
themselves the local provincial press provides an alternative source of data. Because of their comprehensive coverage of the celebrations, press reports became the principal source for descriptive accounts of the celebrations and for the names of those involved. During the first two decades of the nineteenth century the celebrations were only occasionally reported, these reports often being only a few lines. By the 1820's, as local affairs were becoming an integral part of the provincial press, this situation changed, the celebrations being annually reported in increasing detail. As the popularity of the provincial press became increasingly dependent on local news so half column reports of the celebrations during the 1830's became two to three columns in length by the 1850's. By this time the Advertiser had been joined, in 1821, by the Brighton Gazette, which carried reports of the Lewes celebrations, and a second Lewes based weekly paper, the Sussex Agricultural Express, which was first published in 1837. The extent of the detail given in the reports appearing at this time is illustrated in Figure 2.1.

As the century progressed the style of reporting further evolved, transforming the provincial press into a 'verbose local production, full of gossip and small talk'(2). By the 1870's the metamorphosis, from reproduced London tabloid to locally orientated commentator, was complete. As Jackson observes, 'the telling sales factor was to be the provision of information about the local scene, its institutions, its culture, its commerce, and its
THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER.—The anniversary of the Popish Gunpowder Plot was celebrated here on Saturday last, but it was agreeably distinguished from its observance last year by the absence of the tumult which prevailed on that occasion. On the whole, the exhibition was tame and spiritless, and there was but a comparatively trifling display of squibs, fire-balls, and tar barrels, of which latter only two were mustered in the course of the evening. There not being the smallest disposition to excess, manifested by the mob, the police did not interfere and everything passed off in a quiet manner. There was a novelty in the evening’s display—a band of music—which paraded the streets accompanied by a large concourse of people, playing “Rule Britannia,” “Rory O’More,” &c. &c., and at the police station, whither the whole proceeded, they struck up most valiantly “See the Conquering Hero comes.” In the course of the evening, the crowd, in passing the houses of the High Constables, Mr. J. King and Mr. N. Hammond, gave them three times three cheers, and about eleven o’clock they halted in front of the County Hall and the anniversary was concluded by the band playing the National Anthem of “God save the Queen.”

currently newsworthy citizens’ (3). The Brighton Gazette now dealt almost exclusively with matters relating to that town, but the Advertiser, the Express and the more recently established East Sussex News, continued their coverage of Lewes, reports of the celebrations often taking a complete page. In addition to providing a considerable amount of descriptive material and an increasing number of names of those involved they also began to include reports of other bonfire society activities, including preliminary meetings, fancy dress competitions and annual dinners. Figure 2.2, a report of the annual dinners of three of the bonfire societies, including the names of those present, illustrates the changing style of provincial press reporting. The inclusion of lists of names of those attending events developed during the late 1870’s and increased through into the first decade of the next century. Initially few names

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were mentioned, but by the late 1880's reports regularly included lists of up to fifty or more people. Following the turn of the century it also became the practice to record the names of society members, and the offices they held, taking part in the celebrations.

Prior to the 1880's press reports mentioned few names of those involved, apart from bonfire boys arrested during the celebrations, reports of court appearances, including
magistrates' court, Quarter Sessions and Assize Court appearing in the press. Appearances before the magistrates were generally briefly reported, only the names of offenders, the offence, and the sentence being given. On occasions when the offence was considered particularly serious, as in instances of alleged riot, or at times when the authorities made determined moves against the celebrations, those arrested were sent either to Quarter Sessions or the Assizes. The press at these times reported the hearings in considerable detail including those charged, the circumstance surrounding their arrest and the events as they occurred in the court room. Because these court appearances occurred prior to 1850, when the celebrations were carried out in a riotous manner, the reports become the main source for the names of those involved.

Court records for both Quarter Sessions and Assizes add considerably to the descriptive and biographical information contained in the press. Included among the documents relating to trials held at Quarter Sessions are writs, indictments, recognizances, depositions, calendars of prisoners and petitions. In addition to the names of those arrested these documents also give the names of witnesses, sureties, arresting officers and provide additional biographical detail of the accused. They also supplement and elaborate the descriptive detail contained in the press. Indictments state clearly the charge and events surrounding the arrest while first hand accounts are recorded in witnesses' statements. Similar corroborative detail is found in Assize Court records, the accused usually appearing at
Quarter Sessions before being sent to Assize.

Besides providing descriptive material 1,513 named individuals were gleaned from these three sources, the majority from press reports. It was these individuals who constituted the KBP and are subsequently used to develop an analysis of the various groups involved with the celebrations through nominal record linkage. Wrigley defines a nominal record as one 'in which individuals are distinguished by name and by that token are potentially linkable to other nominal records'. A name, usually consisting of surname and first names provides what Winchester terms the single most important 'identifying item'. But before the name can be confirmed as identifying a historical person who actually existed, a pair of records must be linked, identifying items having to correspond in each record. If this is achieved then 'a man' appearing in a single record becomes 'the man', his existence being confirmed by corroborative evidence contained in the second nominal record. Historical individuation is thus established by bringing together pairs of records in which sufficient identifying items correspond. This process of historical individuation is known as nominal record linkage.

Nominal records are thus used for a dual purpose. First to achieve historical individuation and second as a source of biographical data for those involved with the celebrations. Included in the three sources already discussed is a small amount of biographical detail, but
other sources were required to create fuller biographies through nominal record linkage. Fortunately nineteenth century administrators not only standardized the keeping of existing nominal records(7), but also promoted the proliferation of new classes of public records including two that proved particularly useful, the decennial census and registers of electors. Other privately published sources, including poll books and trade directories, also provided valuable additional biographical data for the KBP.

However before discussing the information that these records provide mention must be made of two issues relating to their use. Firstly, the degree of comprehensiveness of the records and secondly, sources of error or inaccuracy in them. Historians frequently use the voluminous nineteenth century records as a source of quantitative data for various purposes, demographical, psephological, geographical or sociological. Interest is generally in total populations(8) and as a consequence the comprehensiveness of the record is important. However, the main focus here is with a small, clearly defined group, the KBP, which is neither a total population of a defined geographical area, nor of the bonfire society membership(9). Initial concern was for individuals and the collectivities and factions they formed as a consequence of shared interests or motives. At this stage the principal purpose to which the records were put was the provision of qualitative, rather than quantitative data. This is not to argue that the comprehensiveness of a record is not important. The more comprehensive the record the greater the likelihood of linking KBP members to it and
thus increasing the biographical data available for each individual.

However, even when the record is not comprehensive, information about individuals not included may be gathered. Wrigley(10) refers to problems arising from bias present in nominal records. Parish registers for example, because they are denominational, include only members of that denomination. In a total population study this may be a problem, but such bias is used to advantage in the present research. Although Hamilton Thompson(11) warns against attempting to obtain more from a record than its compilers intended, the comparing of data from more than one record can yield information contained in neither. If it is established through the census that an individual was resident in Lewes in 1841 and in 1851, but does not appear in the poll books between those dates, then it can be assumed that he did not have the necessary property qualifications to enjoy the franchise. Although the individual's political beliefs remain unknown his absence does give information regarding his probable economic and social status.

As this example illustrates, the development of biographical data in this way depends on corroborative evidence. Winchester(12) comments that 'history thrives... on corroborated predicates applying to particular historical individuals', but he omits to mention using more than two records as a way of resolving difficulties during nominal record linkage. By using numerous nominal records not only
is new information about KBP individuals gathered, but also a large number of identifying items are found providing a wealth of corroborative evidence. This allows for the bias of records to be utilised in the way described and many of the problems arising from sources of error and inaccuracy in individual nominal records to be overcome.

Nominal record linkage also has intrinsic problems arising from sources of error in the records, including variant spelling of names, transposition of initials or digits of dates, and poor handwriting. The method and intention of compilation also effects the record's accuracy and comprehensiveness(13), but through the use of corroborative evidence many of these problems can be eliminated. If, for example John Smith is described as a tailor in one nominal record, but a sailor in two others, it can be assumed that the information regarding occupation in the first record is incorrect. However in the case of many KBP individuals problems relating to record error and omission remain, preventing positive identification through nominal record linkage. As a result the original KBP is separated into three groups, the 'positive' comprising those positively identified, the 'possible' which includes all those names to which more than one individual is linked, and 'no links', where no links are established between names from the original sources and the nominal records used(14). The 'Positive' identification category constitutes 68.1 per cent (N=1031) of the original KBP, and while these can be used with certainty the remaining two groups are used only to provide supporting evidence.
The Individual Records

The information each nominal record provides, the specific difficulties relating to each and the order in which they were linked may now be considered (15). The Census Enumerators' Books (CEBs) from 1841 to 1881 provide the most comprehensive record of the total population during the period covered (16). Unless an individual was not resident in Lewes or was not at home at the time the enumerator called, it should in theory be possible to identify him in the CEBs. They also contained the largest number of identifying items, full name, address, age, occupation and place of birth, to which marital status, relationship to head of household were added in 1851. For this reason CEBs were the first record to be linked with the KEP.

Although sources of error exist in the CEBs (17), both Tillott (18) and Rogers (19) conclude they are of a trivial nature and easily and confidently amendable. However some difficulties arising from how the CEBs were completed do effect the present research. Two, age and place of birth, relate specifically to 1841. Both were not accurately recorded in the 1841 census. Firstly the age of all persons over 15 was rounded down to the nearest five, but the age of children under 15 was required to be accurately recorded. Secondly the question of whether they were born in the county only required a 'yes' or 'no' answer. Corroborative evidence from other sources does however, in many instance, eliminate this lack of preciseness.

Two further sources of inaccuracy, address and
occupation, apply more generally to all CEBs. Incomplete addresses were recorded, particularly in the 1841 CEBs where house numbers were frequently omitted. However the absence of numbers did not prevent the use of the address either for linking purposes or the reconstruction of residence patterns(20), the omission largely being overcome again through the use of corroborative evidence. Although similar evidence, particularly from trade directories, was used the accuracy of occupation remained a source of difficulty. Bagley(21) argues that the tendency to elevate status by giving an inflated job description creates a margin of error that is 'unlikely to be enough to invalidate totals and statistical schedules' while Tillott(22) similarly claims that difficulties surrounding the inconsistent use of 'master' and 'journeyman' is only a minor problem. But, as will be discussed in Chapter 8, the need for an accurate occupation description is essential when placing an individual on a social status hierarchy.

An Act of 1696 permitted the returning officer to publish poll books recording how people cast their votes at general elections. Compulsion was not the intention of the Act, publication being dependent on a local printer or newspaper proprietor taking the initiative. Consequently the number of poll books published frequently reflected periods of political excitement, but in Lewes this was not the case, poll books being published for every contested election between 1802 and 1868. As a nominal record poll books provide a number of identifying items, but include only an exclusive group of inhabitants. In addition to the
individual's name and the way he cast his vote, address and occupation are often included. The address was recorded with varying degrees of preciseness, sometimes the parish of residence being given, more often the street, but only on occasions did this also include the house number.

Specific difficulties in the use of poll books to determine voting behaviour are suggested by Vincent when he asks 'whether the votes given, though accurately recorded and collected, are empty of the kind of meaning they would have to have to be sociologically useful. This was because, though freely given, the votes had no general significance for the person who gave them, or because votes often represented the wishes of anyone but the voter'(23). But having acknowledged this problem there is no way of satisfactorily resolving it. If the information is to be used it has to be taken at face value. Through the use of poll books the political allegiance of some of the KEP individuals can be established and when correlated with other variables the politico-religious character of the celebrations can be explored and contextualised in the local and national situation. This analysis is made difficult following the passing of the Ballot Act in 1872, when the political affiliation of KEP members can only be obtained by linking the names of those reported attending political meetings or standing for council election.

The next large nominal record to be used was the parish and non-parochial registers of the seven Anglican parishes and 13 nonconformist chapels in the town(24). Parish
registers recorded baptisms, marriages and burials and complete series of registers have survived for each(25). Nonconformist registers recorded mainly baptisms, but no Act of Parliament governed the keeping of these(26). As a result no uniformity evolved, and a lack of surviving registers is the outcome of this situation(27). It is generally considered that Anglican registers became increasingly less comprehensive towards the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries(28), a consequence of growing nonconformity, slackness of clergy and the introduction of civil registration of births and deaths in 1836. Following that date both Hamilton Thompson(29) and Rogers(30) claim the registers were so effected that they cease to be of historical interest. The existence of nonconformist registers fill some gaps, but if Drake(31) is correct, the situation is further confused by nonconformists either not entering their baptisms, marriages or burials in Anglican registers, or conversely continuing to use Anglican facilities. Referring specifically to Lewes, the local clergy appear to have been fairly methodical record keepers, but the rapid growth of nonconformity in the town during the nineteenth century obviously effected the comprehensiveness of Anglican registers.

However, as Rogers(32) rightly states, while for demographic purposes Anglican registers may cease to be useful they continue to provide a source of ancillary information for known individuals and it is primarily to this purpose that parish and non parochial registers are put in this study. Accepting that the use of both series of
registers will not provide a comprehensive nominal record they do nonetheless include corroborative linking items, and importantly introduce the religious dimension to the individual biographies by giving the likely religious affiliation of the KEP members.

Registers of Baptism contain the child's name, date of baptism, occasionally date of birth, parish of birth and parents' christian and surnames. Towards the end of the century the address and father's occupation also began to be recorded. Marriage registers contain the same information for both marriage partners, their names, rank or position, residence, their fathers' names and their occupations. Age was also sometimes entered. During the early part of the century this was given in general terms with the use of 'minor' and 'of full age', but later exact ages of couples were recorded. Finally, burial registers record the name, address, age and date of burial of the deceased person. Initially only parish was given, but later in the century the exact address began to be entered. As this description of the three series of registers indicates, each includes a large number of identifying items that both duplicate those found in other records and introduce others. In some instances new identifying items widen the scope of the biographical data available. Precise date of birth supplements the age already found in the CEBs, as does the date of marriage. The names' of fathers, with their occupations, contained in the marriage registers and the date of burial and age at death contained in the burial register also add new biographical detail.

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Like poll books, the registers also provide a unique source for a single variable, religious affiliation. However it cannot be assumed that because an individual is found in a register he is a member of that denomination, nor if he was that he remained so. A person recorded being baptised at a particular church or chapel tells more about the parents than the baptised. Nor can it be inferred that a couple marrying in an Anglican church were both Anglicans. Many nonconformist sects were not registered to perform marriages and as a consequence sect members used the facilities of the parish church. The most accurate source to ascribe denomination is probably burial registers(33), it being reasonable to assume that a person buried according to the rites of particular denomination was himself a member.

Neither does entry in a register establish degree of religiosity, particularly in the case of Anglican registers. Then, as now, it was common for the parish church to be used only for rites, being a reflection of customary practice rather than religious commitment. These intrinsic difficulties are unresolvable, leaving the researcher with the choice of discarding them as unreliable, or using them guardedly. The latter course has been taken here, aided greatly by the use of a combinations of registers.

Trade directories are used primarily for the period following 1881, but directories for Lewes were available for the whole century. Directories first appeared in the 1760's with the purpose 'to provide travelling salesmen and other commercial visitors with a readily comprehensible list of potential suppliers, distributors and customers'(34). They
were not comprehensive and due to the manner of their compilation, were frequently inaccurate(35). Early Lewes directories suffer from both these problems, nevertheless, in the absence of alternatives, they serve as a nominal record for both linking purposes and as a source of biographical data during this period. But as the century progressed they become more useful. By the 1820's Pigot's 'London and Provincial Directory' began to include Lewes, listing in 1824 approximately 500 names set out under trades and professions. In 1845, Kelly's 'County Directory' began to appear, in which names in alphabetical order and including occupation and address were arranged in two lists, 'Court' and 'Trade'. By the 1880's directories become an informative and more reliable source. In addition to some locally produced directories(36) Kelly's continued to cover Lewes, the numbers included increasing considerably. In 1900 Pike's 'Lewes, Newhaven and Seaford Blue Book and Local Directory' first appeared and continued publication alongside the Kelly's directory up to 1913.

By 1900 trade directories were evolving into what may more accurately be described as street directories, both Kelly's and Pike's directories adopting new internal arrangements which included duplicate lists, one set out alphabetically according to name, then address, and the other under street names, including house numbers and occupant. While the lists became more representative of the total heads of household, owing to this change profession and trade were now only occasionally recorded. Thus from originally being a source of name, occupation and address of
a selected group of inhabitants the directories become more comprehensive, but less informative. This change does however provide new information, the main series of directories, Kelly's and Pike's, including in their general information about the town lists of local institutions, local authority departments, churches and the more important voluntary organisations. Names of councillors, office holders and priests are also given. Although comprising only a very small group of inhabitants this information provides a valuable source of biographical data for the local elite, some of whom were found among the KBP.

The final series of nominal records used were the Registers of Electors. These were published annually and because of elaborate and lengthy registration procedure were probably fairly accurate(37). Registers for the Lewes constituency commence in 1843, but for the purpose of this research they are not used until 1881, the last year for which CEBs are available. They contain only those with the necessary age and property franchise qualifications and as a consequence only part of the adult male population of Lewes are recorded. The 1884 Representation of the People Act greatly increased the size of the electorate(38), but the registers remain an incomplete record of the total population.

For linkage purposes the registers record a number of identifying items including surname and full christian names and place of residence, but it was after 1894 that house numbering began to be included. Biographical data is
supplied by the recording of the property qualification under two headings, 'Nature of Qualification' and 'Description of Qualifying Property'. Under these headings the elector's property status is recorded, whether he is an owner or occupier of a house, dwelling house, land, or other property, and if his qualification is the result of multiple ownership. This information provides, in the absence of 'occupation', data from which the individual's wealth and status can be inferred.

Reference has been made to the lack of comprehensiveness of many of the nominal records used, but it has been possible through their use to cover, with varying amounts of data, the complete period of 113 years. This in turn, in theory if not in practice, allows for all the KBP to be linked through nominal record linkage to one or more records. The only class of record to cover the entire period is parish and non-parochial registers, but as has been discussed, these by themselves are totally inadequate. The most comprehensive record is the CEBs, but they only cover the period from 1841 to 1881, although information given in the first can be projected backwards in time. It is therefore necessary to use the other records described. For the period before 1841 poll books and parish and non-parochial registers are used while for the period after 1881 trade directories, street directories and registers of electors represent the best nominal records available. Taken together with the census, with which they also overlap, these records provide complete coverage of the period.
To conclude, preliminary studies of the celebrations (39) suggested the presence of certain socio-structural characteristics, residential patterns and political and religious convictions among those involved. To pursue these lines of enquiry in the present research and to develop others emerging from material contained in press reports, the CEBs, parish and non-parochial registers, poll books, trade/street directories and registers of electors are used for nominal record linkage and the creation of individual biographies. By using these six records, detailed biographies of KBP members are created, in some instances an individual's life history being traced from the date and place of birth, his childhood family, his marriage, the growth of his own family, his changes of address, his religious and political affiliations, his membership of other voluntary associations, and finally his death and burial. Where data is not available partial biographical reconstructions are achieved providing 'snapshot' impressions of the individual at the time of his reported involvement in the celebrations. Family reconstitution, both generational and intergenerational, is also sometimes achievable, but this is made difficult due to the absence of women among the KBP. Thus, while the linking of six records was a considerable lengthy one in terms of time, the number of KBP members who are positively identified and for whom a considerable amount of biographical data has been found made the exercise worthwhile and provides much of the data upon which the present qualitative and quantitative analysis of the Lewes Bonfire Night celebrations is based.
Notes


5. WINCHESTER, I. (1973), 'On Referring to Ordinary Historical Persons' in WRIGLEY (1973), p.21. While concurring with Winchester, specific difficulties surround the use of the name as an identifying item. These arise from the way the name was recorded. Much discussion has been given to the various ways in which a surname may be spelt, but the major problem encountered during the linking of the KBP was with the christian name(s). The press rarely recorded the full christian names, initials being used. When it was not a common surname, or if two initials were used, linking the initial source with nominal records did not present much of a problem, but where only one initial was used with a common surname this gave rise to the name in the initial source being linked to more than one historical person. This in turn created a category of KBP members which are termed 'Possibles' and which can only be safely used as supporting evidence in certain situations.

6. Some of these initial records provide more than a single identifying item (ie. name), court records in particular often also including age, address and occupation of the individuals involved.

7. For example, the result of the 1812 Sir George Rose Act was the standardization of parochial registers, each rite having a separate printed register.


9. Because of the way the KBP was arrived at it may be defined as a 'self-selecting sample', consisting of only those who could be identified through the use of
the various sources described. As a consequence it is likely that large numbers of members, supporters and opponents are omitted from the KBP.

12. WINCHESTER (1973) in WRIGLEY,(1973), p.27
13. For a full discussion of sources of error and how they might be overcome see WRIGLEY (1973).
14. The criteria used to determined these groups is discussed in Appendix 1.
16. Prior to 1841, because of the nature of the questions asked and the method of recording the information, the decennial census is of no use for the purpose of nominal record linkage. The 1836 General Registry Act resulted in the appointment of enumerators and the introduction of standardized forms. As a consequence the 1841 CEBS contained sufficient data for individuals to make them useful for linking purposes. See BAGLEY (1971), pp.243-244.
17. TILLOTT, P.M. (1972), 'Sources of Inaccuracy in the 1851 and 1861 Census' in WRIGLEY (1972), pp.91-126.
18. Ibid., p.128.
20. TILLOTT (1972), p.106 claims that the nature of address data in the returns allows for the reconstruction of the residence patterns of any given locality, but only in the best conditions. In the context of the present research where the residential distribution of society membership is considered in relation to community identity the identification of locality through the use of 'street' is all that was necessary, the absence of house numbering not effecting the analysis.
22. TILLOTT (1972), pp.116-122.
24. For a complete record of Anglican and non-conformist registers see Bibliography of Primary Sources
25. Prior to the passing of the Sir George Rose Act in 1812 these were contained in the same register but after that date each ceremony had to be entered into a separate register. These registers also established a standardized form of entry providing space for specific
items relating to the individuals recorded.

26. The only parliamentary involvement with nonconformist registers were Acts passed in 1840 and 1858 that required all pre-1836 registers to be deposited at the Register General’s Office. They were subsequently transferred to the Public Record Office, but the number of Lewes non-conformist registers held there suggests that the Act was not consistently complied with.

27. For some Lewes chapels, particularly Tabernacle and Jireh, almost complete series of baptism registers exist, but for others few if any were either kept or have survived. Besides the laxity of ministers other factors contributed to the lack of registers. Some chapels ceased their activities before 1913 and records that may have been kept have subsequently been lost. There is also difficulty establishing with any certainty when some sects were formed or disbanded, thus even if registers have survived it is not possible to ascertain if they cover the complete period of the sect's existence.


29. HAMILTON-THOMPSON (1926), p.44.


33. In Lewes the Cemetery records for St Micheals, St Thomas and All Saints Burial Boards from 1854-1913 have survived. These records include all those buried in the Borough cemetery, including nonconformists. The deceased's religious affiliation can be learned from this source, the name of the officiating minister being included in each entry of burial.


36. These included Holman's Lewes Directory and directories published in Brighton by John Davis & Co.


38. This increase is reflected in the registers. In 1881 only 268 persons were listed, but ten years later 1,969 were recorded. The Act was heralded as giving complete manhood suffrage, but using national figures Blewitt (1965) has shown that in 1911 40% of adult males were not on the electoral register. Using a crude comparison between census statistics and the number of entries in the registers of electors it was found that between 1891 and 1911 30% of adult males in Lewes were not on the register.
CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS: A DRAMATURGICAL APPROACH TO HISTORY

Press reports and a number of complete series of nominal records provide a wealth of source material from which to develop a historical account of the celebrations, but it is essential for an understanding and interpretation of the celebrations, not to rely only on the methods and concepts of a single discipline. This would severely limit the scope of analysis. The recurrent nature of the celebrations and the incidents of open conflict arising from them may also be studied through the utilization of anthropological approaches developed by Gluckman, Turner and Frankenberg in their studies of tribal and rural communities. By adopting their conceptual tools and methodological strategies the analysis of the celebrations can be developed beyond historical narrative to a consideration of social structure, conflict and change, for it is only by transgressing the boundaries between the disciplines that structure and change in whole societies can be understood.

Thus two theoretical issues arising from the approach to the analysis of the Lewes Guy Fawkes Night celebrations are raised in this chapter. Firstly, the theoretical and conceptual formulations of Gluckman, Turner and Frankenberg, which are to be used in this analysis of the celebrations,
are examined. Attention is given to Gluckman's method of using incidents of ceremonial and ritual to develop a structural analysis of the society in which the event occurred, then Turner's development of this approach through his concept 'social drama' is outlined before going on to consider Frankenberg's more specific use of 'recurrent ceremonial drama'. It is argued that each has a particular relevance to the present study, providing a methodological and conceptual framework in which to develop an analysis of change as manifested in the celebrations. Secondly, consideration will be given to the convergence debate, and how it influences the present research. Particular attention is given to the potential for the bringing together of history and the social sciences before going on to outline how the shift from 'structure' to 'process' facilitates Abrams' positive formulations outlining how convergence may be achieved.

**Gluckman and 'Ritual of Rebellion'**

Gluckman argued that a single event can be used 'as an entry point into the whole society and its cultural, social and ethiological structures'(1). He focused on specific types of events including incidental, but important ceremonies, and those he termed 'rituals of rebellion'. Through an analysis of these complex events, defined as social situations, Gluckman exposes the social structure of the society in which they occur, isolates points in that structure where social cleavage arises, and illustrates how tension and conflict arising from these structural
characteristics are managed and resolved. In his account of a bridge-opening ceremony Gluckman(2), through a detailed analysis of the physical positions taken by the African and European groups present and the interaction that occurred between them, was able to construct a model of the social structure as it then existed in Zululand.

Gluckman's interpretation of rituals of rebellion took this analysis a stage further through introducing a consideration of how conflict within a social system is managed. Rituals of rebellion, Gluckman claimed, emphasise conflict 'in certain ranges of social relationship and yet establish cohesion in the wider society or over a longer period of time'(3). Cohesion is achieved because such rituals 'proceed within an established and sacred traditional system, in which there is dispute about particular distributions of power, and not about the structure of the system itself'. According to Gluckman, a ritual of rebellion 'allows for instituted protest, and in complex ways renews the unity of the system'(4). Rituals of rebellion, in addition to allowing for insights into social morphology and culture, may also be used to achieve an understanding of sources of conflict within the social structure and how that conflict is managed by the individuals and groups involved.

Gluckman's analysis was carried out within the structural-functionalist paradigm. Society is considered to be made up of a number of inter-related social systems. Conflict is present within and between these social systems,
but if disturbances occur readjustments are made which have the effect of restoring a balance. According to Gluckman(5), although conflict and tension is always present, the social system is held together by a matrix of social ties and dependencies that result in an individual belonging to different groups at different times, thus allowing divisions to be bridged. He observed such a matrix in his analysis of the bridge-opening ceremony which he interpreted as being a symbolic representation of a state of social equilibrium(6). Similarly rituals of rebellion perform a stabilising function. By providing an opportunity for acceptable expression of conflict these regulative and redressive rituals afford an opportunity for the restraining and settling of disputes and as a consequence social equilibrium was maintained(7).

Structural-functionalism is frequently criticised on the grounds that it cannot give an adequate explanation for conflict and the process of change(8), nor take into account the 'exceptional' or 'accidental' occurrences resulting from decisions and actions taken by those involved in the process(9). Gluckman defended the use of equilibrium theory arguing that equilibrium is not a state to be achieved but 'a framework, which is based on observation of reality and then tested against other observations' and that 'in reality many external events and internal "distortions" prevent the institution working thus perfectly'(10). Like an 'ideal type' the notion of 'equilibrium' acts as a guide against which social reality can be assessed. Equilibrium theory, according to Gluckman, 'is a dynamic method trying to deal
with various types of disturbance and different types of change"(11). However, Gluckman expressed his awareness of its limitations in two ways. Firstly through his own theoretical statements regarding change and secondly his support for the direction being taken among his younger contemporaries.

Gluckman distinguished between two classes of social system, the 'repetitive' and the 'changing'. He defined a 'repetitive' social system as one in which interaction occurs without overt conflict and in a state of apparent equilibrium, a fairly static system. A 'changing' social system in contrast 'is one in which conflicts can only be partially or wholly resolved and co-operation partially or wholly achieved by changes not only in the individuals who are members of the groups and the parties to the relationship which constitutes the parts of the system, but also by changes in the character of those parts and the patterns of the interdependence with its conflict and cohesion"(12). It is questionable whether a system devoid of conflict can exist, being more an abstraction than a social reality. But more relevant here is Gluckman's definition of a 'changing' social system. While much of his own research was concerned with showing how stability is achieved in the social system his acknowledgement that change can be observed as a continuing process enabled him to recognise the limitations in his own work.

This led him to give qualified support to more recent trends in British social anthropology. Becoming critical of
the failure to consider the long process of social relations in his own work Gluckman(13) recognised in the work of anthropologists like Mitchell and Turner(14) ways in which his own work could be developed. Whereas he focused on single 'cases' restricted in time and space he observed young post-war researchers treating cases not as single events, but 'as stages in an on-going process of social relations between specific persons and groups in social system and culture'(15). Gluckman observed that these anthropologists 'are now analysing the development of social relations themselves, under the conflicting pressures of discrepant principles and values, as the generations change and new persons come to maturity. If we view these relations through a longish period of time, we see how various parties and supporters operate and manipulate mystical beliefs of varied kinds to serve their interests'(16).

Gluckman termed this approach the 'extended-case method' and acknowledged that if social process was to be understood it was necessary to use 'a series of connected cases occurring within the same area of social life'(17). Preferring to term this approach 'situational analysis' Van Velsen stresses its importance as an 'attempt to incorporate conflict as a "normal" rather than "abnormal" part of social process'(18), but while he argued strongly for the adoption of this approach Gluckman equally emphatically stated that extended-case method does not negate the value of structural analysis(19). For Gluckman the decision was not whether to reject the search for structure in favour of process, but rather which one to emphasise(20).
Turner and 'Social Drama'  

In his early writing Turner appears to adopt a similar theoretical perspective to that of Gluckman. In 'Schism and Continuity' published in 1957 he records his acceptance of the importance of structural analysis. He argues that 'formal analysis of a social system enables us to locate and isolate critical points and areas in its structure where one might expect, on a priori grounds, to find conflict between the occupants of social positions carried in the structure' (21). Conflict situations 'arise necessarily out of the norms imposed by the social structure' (22). In his study of the Ndembu he identifies matrilineal structure and the position of the village headman as the critical points in the structure from which conflict might arise. He proceeds to trace a series of disputes arising from the struggle for succession and, while acknowledging that individual personality might influence the intensity and form the conflict takes, he maintains that 'it is the social structure that determines the occurrence of the conflict' (23).

However, even in 1957 a shift from the more fundamental structural approach is detectable in Turner's work. Like Gluckman, Turner recognises the limitations of structural analysis, particularly equilibrium theory. Discussing incidents of overt conflict in Ndembu villages Turner notes that while periods of apparent equilibrium are achieved following such incidents the source of potential conflict, personal interest and private intrigues, remains. During
periods of equilibrium the victors of the conflict attempt to consolidate their new found power while those defeated struggle to regain their former position. Turner concludes that following a period of disturbance and re-adjustment 'there may have taken place profound modifications in the internal relations of the group. The new equilibrium is seldom a replica of the old'(24). The social system has experienced a degree of change. While the notion of social equilibrium is not rejected Turner begins to shift his emphasis away from structure and towards process. He continues, 'a social system is a dynamic movement through space and time, in some way analogous to an organic system in that it exhibits growth and decay, in fact a process of metabolism'(25).

Structuralist explanations of change are often criticised for their 'before' and 'after' model which does not deal adequately with the process of change. Yeo challenges the adoption of this model by historians because it subordinates the process of struggle to the results of process. Although from a different perspective than Turner's he similarly argues that to understand process it is necessary to study the gap between then and now, for it is in this gap that 'there is space, room for freedom of invention and struggle'(26) Also from a different perspective Moore comments, 'changes are neither temporally nor spacially isolated, that is changes occur in sequential chains rather than as "temporary" crises followed by quiet periods of reconstruction'(27). Turner acknowledges this with his term "process of metabolism" in which he emphasises
the importance of change as a continuing process.

In his later work Turner's shift from structural analysis is more apparent as he becomes less prescriptive about the use of theoretical constructs during the analysis of the substantive area. Referring to structure within the context of his new found Znanieckian concept, the "humanist coefficient", he concludes that the social world is a world of becoming, not a world of being. For this reason studies of social structure become irrelevant(28). Structures and systems are not independent of men, but are the result of their perceptions and actions. Accordingly Turner defines socio-cultural systems depending 'not only for their meaning but also for their existence upon the participation of conscious human agents and upon men's relations with one another'(29). This shift of theoretical perspective leads Turner to restate Gluckman's definition of 'extended-case method'. He notes,

An extended-case history is the history of a single group or community over a considerable length of time, collected as a sequence of processual units of different types, including social drama and social enterprise... This is more than plain historiography, for it involves the utilization of whatever conceptual tools social anthropology and cultural anthropology have bequeathed to us. Processual analysis assumes cultural analysis, just as it assumes structural functional analysis, including more comparative morphological analysis. It negates none of these, but puts dynamics first.(30)

This restatement introduces the historical perspective by emphasising the process of change, but at the same time Turner appears not to reject Gluckman's theoretical position by claiming that structural-functionalistism retains an
Turner goes beyond Gluckman in his differentiation between two forms of process. To provide a framework for social drama analysis Turner stresses the need 'to present a systematic outline of the principles on which the institutionalised social structure is constructed and to measure their relative importance, intensity, and variation under different circumstances with numerical or statistical data if possible.' He continues by stating that 'social activities from which one elicits a "statistical structure" can be characterized as a "slow process" in that they tend to involve the regular repetition of certain acts, as distinct from rapid process seen, for example, in social dramas, where there is a good deal of uniqueness and arbitrariness'(31). What Turner describes as 'the regular repetition of certain acts' appears synonymous with Gluckman's 'repetitive' social system, but his commitment to the discovery of process rather than equilibrium allows Turner to distinguish not between a static and changing social system, but between different speeds of change, 'slow' and 'rapid' process. This redirection of emphasis from equilibrium to process is a positive attempt to modify structuralist theory to allow for an adequate account of change. He does not reject the importance of social morphology, which he defines as 'statistical structure', but focuses on the inner dynamics effecting change.

Turner's later work also gives more scope to interactionist theory. Change is viewed not as a result of
disturbances between social systems, but rather as a process within a social system that is initiated by the actors themselves and not by an external change agent. While men's actions may be influenced by external structural conditions Turner contends that it is the way men perceive these in relation to their own interests that have a greater influence on their actions. Central to this shift in emphasis is Turner's dramaturgical approach in which he develops 'social drama' as a 'descriptive and analytical tool'. He describes social dramas as 'units of harmonic or disharmonic process, arising in conflict situations' (32) which provide 'a limited area of transparency on the otherwise opaque surface of regular, uneventful social life' (33). He defines social drama as,

a process which reveals realignments of social relations at critical points of structural maturation and decay; in another it may be regarded as a trial of strength between conflicting interests in which persons or groups try to manipulate to their own advantage the actual existing network of social relations, both structural and contingent, within the system. Thus the social drama may represent either the natural inherent development of a given social system through space and time at a distinct phase, at a critical point of maturation, or the deliberate attempt by some of its members to accelerate or retard that development. It may be either an index or vehicle of change. In most cases both aspects are present. (34)

Together with more orthodox techniques of analysis social dramas, says Turner, are particularly useful for an understanding of the dynamics of change. He makes this clear in his elaboration of the duality intrinsic to his conceptualisation of social drama.
This definition of social drama incorporates both structuralist and interactionist interpretations, but while reiterating the former theoretical paradigm Turner proceeds to include the notion of individual behaviour as a change agent of the latter. Like Gluckman, Turner views the different theories not as alternatives, but as complementary approaches. Social drama becomes a catalyst of change in which both structuralist and interactionist theories can make a contribution. Ceremony can be studied on two levels. Firstly, through an analysis of the structure and function of the ceremony and secondly, an internal analysis with special attention to how themes within the ceremony reflect change and relate to social patterns and attitudes.

Taking social drama as a single incident or a series of incidents related to the same conflict Turner elaborates its 'processional form'. Social drama according to Turner passes through four stages, breach, crisis, redressive action and reintegration. The 'breach' occurs when regular norm governed social relations are broken as a consequence of open conflict. During the second stage, 'crisis', the full potential of social drama is realised. This phase 'exposes the current factional struggle within the relevant social group, be it village, neighbourhood or chieftdom; and beneath it there becomes visible the plastic, more durable, but nevertheless gradually changing basic social structure, made up of relations which are constant and consistent'(35). Turner assumes that it will be the wish, or in the interests of those concerned, for the conflict to be resolved and it is towards this end that 'redressive action'
is undertaken. Such action leads to 'reintegration' in which the contestants either drop their differences or recognise that schism has occurred and attempt to come to terms with the new situation.

Frankenberg and 'Recurrent Ceremonial Drama'

Frankenberg extends and refines this approach firstly by showing how regular events can be used as processual units as proposed by Turner, and secondly by employing this anthropological perspective to study complex industrial society. In his book 'Village on the Border' Frankenberg(36) describes how controversies surrounding educational facilities in a Welsh village illustrate one of the main cleavages in that society, the division between Church and Chapel. A dispute arising from plans to open a second village school that was to be Welsh speaking exposed a second division among the inhabitants. Through his observations he is able to identify factional interests that gave rise to the dispute. A group of villagers whom Frankenberg describes as 'a small elite of literary-minded Welsh speakers' supported the opening of the school, but the remainder of the village, which also included other Welsh speakers, felt less strongly about the need to preserve the Welsh language. Consequently they did not support the opening of a second school that was to be exclusively Welsh speaking. The successful campaign mounted by the school's supporters split the village and revealed the underlying conflict of interests. Frankenberg concludes that 'given a knowledge of the groupings within the village and the
history of their differences, the examination of the crucial
disturbance which broke down the segregation of village
groups throws light on the processes of village life'(37).

This single event exposes the source of conflict at
that particular point in time. Turner argues that the
explanation for both constancy and change can only be found
by systematic analysis of sequences of social dramas that
arise within the same social unit, but he leaves the
researcher to discover and observe these sequences as they
occur. Frankenberg gives more guidance on what might best
serve as processual units. He observes that conflict was not
manifest in the day-to day activities of the Welsh
villagers, but was revealed on certain crucial occasions,
particularly the St David's Day celebrations and the village
Eisteddfod. He terms these regular events 'recurrent
ceremonial dramas' and argues that they provide 'a second
window onto the opaque urban social process for in such
ceremonies individuals and groups, normally segregated,
temporarily come into interaction'(38). One should not be
mislead by the term 'dramas', for while it is recognised
that disharmony may be manifest through them, they can
equally exhibit various groups coming together harmoniously.

Frankenberg identifies four categories of recurrent
ceremonial drama; ceremonials surrounding individual and
family life crises, reactions to individual tragedies,
perennial occurrences, and occasional celebrations. Included
within the category of perennial occurrences are Christmas,
Easter, bank holidays, elections and meetings. This list can
be extended to include civic occasions, local carnivals and annual commemorations of historical events like Guy Fawkes Night. Because of their regularity this category of recurrent ceremonial drama presents, through a comparative analysis of events spanning a long period of time, 'the opportunity to observe, in microcosm and dynamically, the often slow-moving and diffuse process of complex industrial society'(39).

The Dramaturgical Approach and the Celebrations

The concepts and methods developed by Gluckman, Turner and Frankenberg can be used in an analysis of the Lewes Guy Fawkes Night celebrations. The relevance of Gluckman may be considered first. Although he argues that rituals of rebellion are not applicable to the study of modern Western society(40) some recent researchers(41) have shown this not to be the case. Gluckman focuses on single events, more specifically occasional ceremonies and rituals of rebellion, and through detailed analysis is able to construct the social morphology of the society and isolate the sources of potential conflict. Lewes Guy Fawkes Night conforms to Gluckman's single event in a number of ways. Firstly the event comes within his definition of 'ceremonial', 'any complex organisation of human activity which involves the use of modes of behaviour which are expressive of social relationships'(42). This became increasingly the case following the formation of the the bonfire societies with their hierarchies of officers and supporters. By adopting his analytical approach the social relationships existing
within the bonfire societies and between their members and other groups in the town can be used to give an indication of the social morphology of the town and the sources of social conflict within it.

Secondly, although the celebrations are not a ritual of rebellion as defined by Gluckman, certain parallels exist between them that render his approach useful in an analysis of the celebrations. The celebrations were carried out against a backdrop of tension which occasionally erupted into violence and confrontation between the bonfire boys and their opponents. Many of the bonfire boys' activities were illegal and the manner in which they were conducted can be interpreted as a rebellion against the law and those opposed to them. When defining rituals of rebellion Gluckman states that 'what ever the ostensible purpose of the ceremonies, a most striking feature of their organisation is the way in which they openly express social tension'(43). Like rituals of rebellion, the celebrations were occasions which allowed for the safe acting out of conflict, confined to a single night of the year. Only in 1847, when the authorities made a concerted effort to suppress the celebrations, did street disturbances continue after the 5th November. Adopting Gluckman's ritual of rebellion as a framework in which to analyse social tension surrounding the celebrations is thus particularly useful.

Through the use of Turner's social drama approach the process of change can be introduced into the analysis. Turner, like Gluckman, focuses on specific events, but he
extends Gluckman's structuralist approach by analysing the process of change occurring by tracing the development of social dramas through their four stages. Each social drama has its own time span and it is the social interaction that occurs within this span which becomes the focus of attention. A number of incidents occurred during the nineteenth century celebrations that may be identified as social dramas and analysed using the four-stage model Turner outlines. Among the more significant of these were events resulting from the assault of a local magistrate in 1846, the disturbances during the opening of the Roman Catholic chapel in 1870, and the dispute leading to the suppression of street fires in 1906. In each incident, to be discussed in detail later, the motives of the various factions and the strategies they employed to achieve their goals are clearly manifest, as too are the underlying political, social and religious tensions present within the town. Thus, the adoption of the social drama model provides a framework into which some order of events can be put, facilitating detailed consideration of the motives and behaviour of the participants as the drama unfolds while at the same time enabling insights to be gained into the important structural features within the social system that may be the source of that conflict.

Intrinsic to the notion of social drama is the presence of conflict. However Turner argues that both 'dramatic' and 'harmonic' processual units can occur and emphasis should not always be placed on the former. This differentiation is particularly relevant to the study of the
celebrations. On some occasions open conflict did occur, but on many more, although a simmering undercurrent of opposition is detectable, the celebrations passed off without incident. At these times the processional form may exhibit a greater degree of harmony which is of equal importance as it is through these that the more gradual, almost imperceptible process of change can be observed. The social drama remains a single incident, but when the historical dimension is introduced it is necessary to place the single social drama in an extended historical period.

Guy Fawkes Night celebrations occurred annually and so conform to Frankenberg's definition of recurrent ceremonial drama. Through a comparison between each year's celebration, this recurrent ceremonial drama provides a regular incident that can be utilised to expose the gradual structural and cultural changes occurring within Lewes. Within this extended period social dramas become incidents in a longer sequential chain and their importance in the analysis of change can be placed in a wider context. Underlying tensions come to the surface during social dramas, when these are identified their influence during the more tranquil 'harmonic' periods of the recurrent ceremonial drama can be taken into account.

Frankenberg concludes his discussion on 'recurrent ceremonial dramas' by noting that, although such studies focus on a single community, they 'have to be set in a framework of national and historical data' (46). Cannadine emphasises the importance of this when he argues that 'with
ceremonial the very act of locating the occasion or the text in its appropriate context is not merely to provide the historical background, but actually to begin the process of interpretation'(47). From his study of the Colchester Oyster Feast he observes how 'such an annual occasion changed in its meaning and significance over time - partly because of alterations that were made to the occasion itself, and partly because of developments which took place in the civic context from which it derived its meaning'(48). The Lewes celebrations never became closely associated with local government as the oyster feast did, but Cannadine's general observations are relevant to the Lewes situation. Effigies carried during the processions frequently represented national and international notorieties and opposition to Roman Catholicism was continually present. The significance of these and other features of the celebrations can only be understood through the contextualisation of the celebrations in both the contemporary local and national situations.

Overcoming the Barriers

The need to contextualise recurrent ceremonial drama raises the second theoretical consideration to be discussed in this chapter, namely the relationship between history and the social sciences, particularly anthropology and sociology. Gluckman(49) argues against the interdisciplinary approach Frankenberg appears to be suggesting. He claims that in research, as in other activities, gluttony can choke one, indisciplined trespass on fields one is not competent to traverse, producing more obscurity than creative
Inspiration. A field of study is not exclusively the domain of any one discipline, but each will seek to observe different regularities and establish different relationships in the event. According to Gluckman(50), where a researcher attempts to take over the postulates and hypotheses of other disciplines he necessarily 'abridges' their research and makes 'naive assumptions' about the complexes of events which lie at the boundaries of his circumscribed field. The better alternative is to create a 'closed system' while retaining an awareness that significant events and relationships between events may be excluded(51).

Gluckman was not alone in taking this position. Opponents of convergence between the disciplines, including Windelband, Collingwood, Comte and Spencer, each for various reasons, academic, philosophical and ideological, argue that fundamental differences existing between the disciplines prevent such a development. Windelband claims that sociology is nomothetic, but history is ideographic, while Collingwood stresses the 'practical' nature of history compared with sociology's 'theoretical' perspective. Each discipline, Leff more recently argues, 'represents a separate branch of knowledge which by definition has its own distinctive principles and procedures'(52). Other dichotomies between the disciplines are said to exist. Historians study the past, rely on documentary evidence, handle data qualitatively and make moral judgements. In contrast sociologists study the present, observe research material first hand, analyse data quantitatively and attempt to produce value-free conclusions. It is also argued that a
major difference between sociology and history is the scientific status of the former in contrast to the unscientific character of the latter(53). Rather than convergence, opponents argue there exists a divergence between the disciplines of subject matter, perspectives, techniques and objectives which prevents any real coming together.

This divergence may be put in a historical context. Following an initial interest in the historical perspective, a growing separation between history and sociology can be detected during the 1920's. As practitioners of sociology strove to establish sociology as a scientific discipline(57) its relationship with other disciplines became of peripheral interest. The object of sociology was to discover, using scientific methods(58), general laws that governed society. To achieve this the sociologist sought to interpret his data inductively, and where ever possible statistically, developing hypothetical and conceptual frameworks through the use of predetermined theoretical models. History was considered not to have the necessary scientific method and theories then being sought by sociologists. Sociology could not therefore be involved with a discipline perceived as being dominated by the Rankian dictum that facts should be allowed to speak for themselves. Implicit in this statement is the assumption that any interpretation of facts would be moral and subjective, and where gaps appear between them they would be filled by intuitive inference. Such a methodology is alien to that being sought by sociologists.
Malinowski proclaimed 'fieldwork' as the method par excellence (56), and with the growing influence of the Chicago School, increasing attention was focused on contemporary situations. Concern for the historical dimension was replaced by a pre-occupation with the search for social structure of the societies being studied (57). In this quest social scientists began to limit their research in time, in place and in aspects of phenomena studied. Structural functionalism became in that period the principal theoretical development in both sociology and anthropology. Society was seen as a structure of interrelated and interdependent social systems that was held together through a functional equilibrium. Critics of this theory, both sociologists and historians, emphasise its ahistorical nature. In a biting criticism Halpern (58) argues that not only has the preoccupation with the present excluded the past, but by its very nature structural functionalism prevents a consideration of the past. He points to a fundamental concept developed by the practitioners of this theory, the 'boundary maintaining system' with its necessary notions of 'integration' and 'equilibrium', and concludes that 'by restricting its systematic analysis to the equilibrium of purposes within the integral group, sociology largely excludes historic purposes from consideration' (59).

The introduction of socio-structural theories into history has led some historians to be distrustful of the contribution sociology can make to their discipline. While sociologists are critical of history for its lack of
scientific objectivity, historians are equally repelled by what they consider to be reductionist and deterministic theorizing, either of the sociological or Marxist type. Leff represents this view when he comments that 'whereas metahistory too easily maltreats the evidence in the interest of a preconceived pattern, formal analysis tends to emasculate what is distinctive to history in an endeavour to set it within universal classifications. In either case history is reduced to something which is not history'(60). Even those who have more recently been encouraged by the convergence of history and sociology warn of the dangers of forcing data to 'fit' moulds based on abstract theory(61) or speak out against what they see as the poverty of sociological theory(62). However Stedman Jones observes that such objections are being 'undermined by the sociologists themselves' by their rejection or modification of structural-functionalist theory.

There has been a growing dissatisfaction among sociologists, as Stedman Jones detects, of the static, 'conservative' nature of structural functionalism arising from a desire to reintroduce a historical perspective and notion of process into their research theories(63). That a relationship exists between history and other social sciences has long been accepted. Leading social scientists and theorists including Durkheim, Weber, Comte and Marx have each, although using different theoretical and philosophical perspectives, acknowledged the importance of history and the historical dimension in their work(64). The present move towards convergence is thus not a new
development, but rather a revival. However, precisely how the new found relationship should proceed is proving more elusive to define due to the differences of method, perspectives and theories within each discipline. The current debate in history regarding 'narrative' and 'theory' (65) underlines the diversity among historians alluded to by Thompson (66). Equally, the controversy within sociology and anthropology between functionalists and phenomenologists, is succinctly outlined by Dawe (67). Both debates underline the divergent directions research within the three disciplines apparently proceed. Thus, the researcher who believes a better understanding of a selected area of enquiry can be gained through the adoption of an interdisciplinary approach, not only has to consider the implications of transgressing the academically prescribed boundaries of each discipline but also has to confront an array of theoretical and philosophical perspectives that all claim to be the correct path to understanding.

History as a discipline and as a source of research data is now being reappraised by sociologists (68). The view expressed by Briggs in the early 1960's, that 'contemporary forms are themselves historical products (and) can be understood neither singly nor comparatively without attention being paid to their historical dimension' (69) is now more acceptable to sociologists. Rather than ignoring the past the historical approach, Lewis (70) claims, may be seen as the most tightly controlled type of comparative analysis available to the sociologist. Such comparative studies promise not to give rise to static formal
typologies, but rather the dynamic and processual. Similarly historians are now finding it necessary to undertake a similar exercise as their research interests expand to include the less traditional areas of historical data. Besides the customary preoccupation with great names and momentous events, the more general areas of social and economic history are becoming popular topics for research. As a result new historical data has been generated leading to a redirection of focus away from the unique and towards the generalizable and quantifiable. Such is the character of this data that some of the methods used by sociologists are seen as useful in the analysis of historical data. Cochran acknowledges the pragmatic nature of this relationship when referring to the use of sociological induction in the study of comparable situations that would 'direct the historian's attention to aspects of his material he might otherwise miss, and allow him in turn to suggest changes in the social science concepts'(71). The historians new-found interest in mass phenomena has thus lead to an increasing use of socio-structural analysis and concepts previously used only by practitioners in the social sciences(72).

Thus historians, sociologists and anthropologists, in response to trends within their own disciplines are increasingly looking beyond traditional boundaries towards the disciplines of others in their search for suitable concepts and methodologies with which to analyse their new found areas of study. This convergence has further been encouraged by a realization that they share topics of common interest(73). Consequently there is growing traversing of
discipline boundaries, the ease by which this has occurred being recognised by Briggs when commenting on the work of economists,

Their examination of economic growth, for instance, has sometimes led them from economics into economic history, from economic history into social and other kinds of history, and from social history into sociology. The speed of movement and ease of assimilation serve to demonstrate how artificial are most of the boundary lines between the different social studies.(74)

This is not to say that a similar traversing of discipline boundaries had not occurred in the past(75), but in the contemporary situation the move towards convergence is a conscious development among both theorists and researchers provoking discussion and controversy. Whether the differences between the disciplines will 'wither away', as Briggs suggests, without considerable re-evaluation of theoretical positions and outright resistance from within each discipline is less certain.

Those favouring a reapproachment between the disciplines emphasise the similarities between them rather than the differences(76). In part the purpose of the present research is to assess the utility of applying an anthropological and sociological approach to the study of history through an analysis of historical data using concepts and methodologies developed in these disciplines. In this context certain areas of contention between those favouring and opposing convergence may be considered and related to the present research.
Considerable discussion centres on whether sociology or history can claim to be a science. Opponents of convergence argue that this is a fundamental difference between the disciplines. Among those rejecting this, Brinton(77), and more recently Anderson(78), argue that the proposition creates a false division. Historical knowledge is of its nature provisional, incomplete and approximate, but so too is much of scientific knowledge. What separates them is not that one is a science and the other not, but rather the methodology employed in search of that knowledge, in practice both disciplines employing rigorous procedures to ensure validity, authenticity, and absence of bias in their findings. As Smelser(79) concludes, differences in method are more often determined by the data, and remain a question of degree and emphasis rather than an insurmountable difference.

Arising from this dispute is the question of predictability and probability. In the context of historical data Dovring(80) stresses the importance of seeking probability, but sociologists, in their efforts to establish their discipline as a science, sought 'predictability' in their findings. Even when the subjective aspect of human behaviour was being taken into account predictability remained the goal. To achieve this hypotheses are constructed according to theoretical models, and data collected and tested within these models. This approach is grounded on the Weberian theory of 'rational social action' and the concept of 'role'. Given a person's position and experience, it is argued, he can reasonably be expected to
behave in certain ways in given situations. Placed in the context of a social group such predictable behaviour can be more easily illustrated, the occasional deviant being discounted as statistically insignificant, deviance being the result of abnormal or irrational behaviour.

This method can be criticised for assuring predictability through self-fulfilling prophecy, however it is flawed in two other specific ways. Firstly, by disregarding the statistically insignificant it fails to treat as problematic the deviant(81), and secondly it cannot be assumed that the statistically insignificant is as a consequence theoretically irrelevant(82). A realization of these theoretical weaknesses has, among other developments, led to greater emphasis being placed on probability(83). When searching for causality the objective has become 'the prediction of probabilities rather than certainties'(84). Thus the rigid hypothesis formulation of 'given A and B, then C' is modified to 'given A and B, then probably C'. If 'C' is not found, rather than being dismissed it becomes problematic and an area for enquiry. Besides the possible presence of previously unidentified variables, account has also to be taken of the influence of the 'humanist coefficient'. The consequence of this has been to bring the social sciences closer to history.

If the nineteenth century Lewes Guy Fawkes Night Celebrations are taken as one case among many, which they were(85), their survival into the twentieth century might be considered deviant. Developing a hypothesis suggested by
Malcolmson(86), that given the presence of an influential liberal nonconformist party expressing a strong puritan ethos and the occurrence of a popular pastime in an economically developing town, then we might reasonably expect to find that pastime being rigorously suppressed or 'sanitised'(87). Accepting this hypothesis numerous examples can be cited, including Brighton, Eastbourne and Guildford, where these variables were present and the celebrations were effected in the predicted manner(88). In Lewes however, where both variables were present, the 'predictable' outcome did not occur. It might be argued that the hypothesis had been wrongly applied and through comparative analysis it would be possible to isolate other causal variables. But even if this were undertaken, and the benefits are clear, the result would be a plethora of variables each having a possible causal relationship. How a convincing combination can be achieved which might give an accurate explanation of causality may not be in terms of 'predictability' but rather 'probability. Becker inadvertently recognises this when he discusses the different levels of hypothesising employed by historians and sociologists.

The sociologist conceives his task differently. His validation must be predictive - albeit, in historical sociology, in the retrospective sense. He must say, "If and when these combinations of these social actions and norms recur, in forms that can be regarded as identical for the generalizing purposes in hand, in situations likewise identical, then these are the probable consequences.(89)

If prediction of findings is thus unattainable in sociology then the differences become, as Smelser argues, a question
of degree and emphasis. Sociological findings may be considered more accurately 'probable' than those of history, but this is not the result of a superior scientific method but rather the outcome of more readily available and comprehensive research data.

One divergence between history and the social sciences that is frequently referred to by opponents of reapproachment is their differing perspectives. History is considered ideographic, being concerned with the study of the particular or unique, while sociology is nomothetic, seeking generalities from diverse data through the comparative method. Unlike the historian, whose single objective is to give a convincing account of the data presented, the sociologist tests existing theoretical and conceptual models, attempting to identify generalities that will be applicable as both working concepts and causal explanations, and ultimately to formulate 'laws' governing the social world.

Extending this line of argument a little further, the historian who selects the 1847 Lewes Bonfire Riots as a topic of study will see it as a unique event with its own specific causes and consequences. He will make a thorough search of available source material noting the detail, the chronology of events, the leading actors, the illustrative data to substantiate his conclusions, then through a process of synthesis and inference develop what he hopes will be a convincing account and explanation of the incident. Emphasis is placed on empirical data and the meaning given
to the account is context bound. The sociologist who selects
the same event will analyse it differently. He is likely to
come to the empirical data with a set of well formulated
questions and hypotheses and armed with a body of conceptual
and theoretical models. To some degree meaning will already
be partially prescribed by the questions to be asked of the
empirical data. Working within his theoretical model he will
select only that data that is considered relevant. Like the
historian attempting to give a convincing account of the
riot, the sociologist will also wish to establish the event
in the wider context, the data providing the basis for
generalization and comparative analysis.

This is clearly an over-simplification of how
historians and sociologists work. In reality, due to the
diverse methodologies and theoretical perspectives within
each discipline there could be a wide variety of accounts of
the event. In addition to what might be termed the purely
' historical' and 'sociological' accounts, others not so
readily attributable to a particular discipline could be
given. Sociologically orientated historians might employ
particular sociological concepts or quantitative techniques
to aid their analyses while historically-minded sociologists
might adopt the social drama technique suggested by Turner
to analyse the inner dynamics of the riot. In some instances
there may be little difference between the approaches
adopted by researchers from either discipline.

Such a convergence, realised or not, has already
occurred. Although each have approached social disturbance
from different perspectives, Turner as an anthropologist, Smelser(92) as a sociologist and Tilly(93) as a historian, they have through their respective models, 'social drama', 'value added' and 'mobilization', recognized the importance of process through which a disturbance develops. While not identical in every detail the similarities between the three models are such that they may readily be woven into a single approach(94). That such a convergence can be shown to have occurred emphasises the point that the data being used is the same body of data whether it is used by the historian or the social scientist. What differs is the data that is selected for analysis and how that data is analysed. Ideographic and nomothetic approaches may thus be considered not as exclusive alternatives, but as poles of the same continuum(95). By establishing this it is possible to confirm the contention that 'the classic distortion between science and history that identified them, respectively, with generality and pure particularity... is now coming to be modified by admission of the necessary interpenetration and interdependence, in all types of scientific and historical work, of both generalizing and descriptive activity'(96).

This conclusion can equally be arrived at in relation to a second proclaimed difference between the disciplines. According to opponents of convergence while history is the study of the past, the present is the concern of the social sciences. However such a demarcation is equally arbitrary and in reality non-existent. The French Revolution, because it occurred sufficiently long ago, can be accepted as a
subject for the historian. The Toxteth riots which were more recent, may be categorised as an event of the present and therefore the preserve of the sociologist(97). But when does the past end and the present begin? In reality what is being observed is a continuing process from which historians and sociologists select their data according to their particular research interests. While a demarcation of time span may be necessary to make research manageable, a strict adherence to the notions of past and present prohibit the opportunity to seek comprehensive explanations. The past can provide insights into the present just as an interpretation of the present may aid an understanding of the past. The social world has many facets, the sociological, historical, anthropological, geographical, but rather than indulge in academic parochialism it is more fruitful to recognise and pursue complementary and unifying factors that aid fuller explanation.

A final polarity preventing convergence which is germane to the present research is that while history is qualitative, the social sciences rely on quantitative data in their explanations. It is argued that history, due to data deficiency can only remain qualitative(98). Such deficiencies arise from gaps in historical documentation, either as a result of things going unrecorded at the time, or through the historians own selection of sources. Some historians argue that the scarcity of quantifiable data is a fallacy(99), but their reliance on historical sources like parish registers, poll books and decennial census does not adequately resolve the problem as only particular historical

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topics can be addressed. This narrow link forged by historical quantifiers between history and the social sciences, according to Dovring(100), allows for the study of mass phenomena but precludes consideration of unique events.

This over-reliance on data suitable for quantitative analysis, although being a valuable aid to an understanding of social structure, is nevertheless and incomplete one. It rests on the assumption that only problems susceptible to quantification are important. This weakness is criticised by Schlesinger when he comments that the 'approach claims a false precision by the simple strategy of confining itself to the historical problems and material with which quantitative techniques can deal, and ignoring all other questions as trivial... The mystique of empirical social research, in short, leads its acolytes to accept as significant only the questions to which the quantitative magic can provide answers'(101). Thompson similarly points to the inadequacy of a purely quantitative account when referring to eighteenth century violence, 'for the symbolic importance of violence - whether the violence of the state and the law or the violence of protest - may have no direct correlation with quantities'(102). If history and the social sciences are to come together, rather than suggesting that qualitative and quantitative analysis are diametrically different attempts must be made to integrate them, or at least render the two methods complementary, in a single explanation.

This has implications for the present research.
Quantitative data is introduced through the use of census, poll books and parish registers. The data from these sources give information relating to structural characteristics of the known bonfire population, including age, sex and social class composition. Such data is important, but also limited. To give a full explanation of the Guy Fawkes Night Celebrations consideration of qualitative data is essential. Through the adoption of the anthropological approach described qualitative aspects can be developed within a sociological framework. For example the relevance of the concepts 'community' and 'social network' can be assessed with reference to both quantitative and qualitative data relating to the territorial characteristics of the bonfire societies. Stedman Jones comments that 'the confusion of theory and technique has resulted in a meaningless but harmful division between quantitative and non-quantitative historians, as if this marked the real boundary of historical progress and reaction. Quantitative history is obviously invaluable where important problems can be resolved by quantitative means'(103). Equally quantification can be used to prevent errors resulting from intuitive generalizations. But while the two forms of data are the result of different techniques, rather than leading to divergent explanations they constitute complementary components of a single explanation(104).

Two strategies have been employed in the present research aimed at achieving a single explanation. Firstly, qualitative data is taken from a wide variety of sources, including those providing corroborative data. Through this
sufficient data to facilitate meaningful comparative analysis is made available. The tenets of historical enquiry, 'the detection of errors, falsification, biases, or distortions,' that permits the establishing of 'probability of facts, or rather the compatibility of the probable actuality and the statements about it'(105), are also met. Secondly, comparative analysis is made possible through the anthropological approach being adopted. By identifying the Lewes Guy Fawkes Night Celebrations as a recurrent ceremonial drama, each celebration becomes a source for comparative data. Conceptual interpretations of a single case cannot become evident unless it is later corroborated by parallel example. Through the analysis of the qualitative data arising from each celebration the relevance of sociological concepts can be tested and generalities developed. In both instances the use of sociological concepts can be shown to aid an understanding of historical situations and process through the availability of sufficient empirical data to substantiate their applicability.

An issue that arises from this discussion, constituting a problem in its own right, relates to the actor's own definition of the situation in relation to the sociological concepts used for the analysis of historical data. Historians, suspicious of sociological methodology, claim that quantitative analysis has a dehumanizing effect on history and is unable to deal with significant human problems(106). They argue that historical method despite its limitations may yield truths about both individual and
social experience which quantitative social research by itself could never reach. Leff(107) claims that history's concern for conscious human beings acting according to their intentions distinguishes history from the social sciences, but Abrams(108) has more recently observed that the sociological perception of man is also present in history, the scientific school placing 'structure' at the centre while the narrative school place 'man' at the centre. This is not a dispute that is confined within the quantitative and qualitative debate, nor between historian and sociologist. The importance of an individual's subjective assessment of the situation and the action he decides to take as a result of his interpretation of his situation, has been acknowledged in both disciplines. While many historians might claim to have always held this perspective Turner's acknowledgement of the 'human coefficient' reflects a trend among social scientists to take greater cognizance of men as active agents within their social world(109).

In his pioneering work in historical sociology, Becker showed an awareness of this problem in terms of the interdisciplinary approach. He stated that, 'every effort must be made to specify the definition of the situation offered by the subject or subjects, without initial admixture of the observer's definition - eg. social action appears in clusters, many of which the subject gives names (class, tribe, traders guild) - which represent ready-made definitions of situations'(110). Where such names are given by the subject, for example bonfire society, and are recorded in the sources used by the researcher then this
provides a starting point for analysis. However, if the researcher's object is to employ concepts already developed in sociology while at the same time taking account of what Abrams has termed the 'human agency' certain problems are encountered. Many concepts describe clusters of social relationships which depend largely on the subjective assessment of those involved in that relationship. Within the present research the concepts of social class, community and social network are all shown to be pertinent. Speaking of class Abrams (111) notes that in quantitative analysis class is erroneously dealt with as an object rather than a social relationship occurring within a process involving a 'friction of interests'. Similarly the concepts of community and social network do not describe objects, but social relationships that may separate, unite, or enter into struggle over a period of time. They do not become social entities until people are conscious of them and behave accordingly, they arise through a process of social interaction.

In the historical context observation of these less definable social groups has to be interpreted from recorded situations rather than observed contemporaneously, which makes the testing of concepts difficult. The researcher thus has to find ways to elicit from the data evidence that indicates the usefulness of the concepts to his explanation. The strategy being used here is to focus on occasions when tension and conflict were present in varying degrees. Thompson (112) and Colhoun (113) argue that consciousness of class or a sense of community are
frequently manifest at times of conflict when people have to make conscious and purposeful decisions, and identify their group allegiance. At these times differences become more clearly defined and as a consequence better observed both in the present and in the past.

**Convergence Achieved?**

From the preceding discussion it should have become clear that the present research is a conscious attempt to unify both the historical and the sociological into a single explanation. To conclude we may consider briefly areas where a fusion is occurring. Certain areas of co-operation have been criticised. Firstly the historian's use of sociological concepts and the sociologist's use of historical data to illustrate and test the validity of their concepts. This 'borrowing' has been criticised as a pragmatic arrangement that in the long term will not be helpful in achieving real convergence(114). Lipset(115) rejects this commenting that,

To use concepts and methods developed in sociology or in other social sciences, however, does not turn the historian into a systematizing social scientist. Rather, these offer him sets of categories with which to order historical materials and possibly enhance the power of his interpretive and causal explanations. Thus, looking at the findings of social science may give a particular historian certain ideas as to the types of data to collect which may be pertinent to his problem.

What has been termed the 'checking' process is similarly criticised. Dovring(116) and Sherif and Sherif(117) refer to the group subjectivity within both disciplines and argue that if this is to be overcome there is a need for a
comparing of findings 'as a check on the validity of its own
generalizations'(118). These and similar attempts at
interdisciplinary research have been criticised by
proponents of convergence on the grounds that, although they
lead to co-operation they remain a marriage of convenience
rather than positive steps towards real convergence.

These interdisciplinary exercises should not be
automatically dismissed as they help to establish areas of
common ground already existing between the disciplines, but
more positive strategies fostering convergence should be
sought. Addressing himself to this objective Smelser(119)
argues that 'a major requirement of integration is that some
common language be developed so that elements of the
different social sciences can be systematically compared and
 contrasted with one another'. Issue may be taken over his
use of the term 'language of science' as a unifying agent,
but his call for the formulation of a common language is a
significant contribution to the convergence debate. In some
instances it can be argued that this common language is
already evolving through the use of concepts like social
class and community by both sociologists and historians. In
which ever context, historical or sociological, such
conceptualisations, if used with a care for clarity and
preciseness of definition, should describe the same cluster
of social relationships and be understood by readers from
either discipline. Abrams concurs with Smelser, but suggests
that it may prove more difficult to achieve than he assumes
when he states,

...in practice it seems to me that historians and
sociologists still have a long way to go in cultivating a common rhetoric that will effectively and adequately express what can readily be seen as their common logic of explanation. Just because structuring is both a chain of events and a relationship of abstract conceptions, both narrative and form, finding a mode of discourse appropriate to reveal it, and demonstrate it, remains, as it has long been, a much harder problem than that of working out the terms of the fusion of history and sociology in principle. (120)

However Abrams is not deterred by the problems he identifies and proceeds to outline an approach that he considers will achieve not only a convergence of disciplines, but also a convergence between the polarities of 'structure' and 'action'.

The most fruitful area of integration is through what Abrams terms the 'problematic of structuring' and the taking into account of the active part played in this process by the 'human agency'(121). The problematic of structuring recognizes the interdependence of structure and the human agency. Instead of positing these as dichotomous, structure is viewed as a process through time, with the human subject playing an active role in influencing this process while at the same time being influenced by it. The 'new narrative', Abrams argues is the 'appropriate discourse to reveal it'. Narrative writing ceases to perform its traditional purpose of recording what happened by becoming an attempt to recover the movement of human agency as structuring. Narrative thus has an 'interpretive ambition' and an integral part in demonstrating the process of structuring. Cahnman and Bosckoff(122) make a similar case for the purposeful use of narrative when they argue that description and analysis are complementary, that 'responsible description is incipient
analysis' leading to interpretation. Abrams extends this to include a positive and conscious use of narrative in the interpretive function. He notes that the researcher must organise his argument in terms of a continuous confrontation and interweaving of narrative and theoretical matters. Thus narrative and theory cease to be alternative modes of explanation, but become a 'unified project'(123). As Hobsbawn(124) comments, narrative in this sense is being used as a means of 'illuminating some wider question'.

The various theoretical and methodological strands through which the present research is developed may now be drawn together. This study, as its principal objective, sets out to demonstrate the relevance of models and concepts used by social scientists to the structuring and analysis of historical data. By adopting this approach it is hoped that in some small way the research strategy employed will contribute to the developing debate supporting a convergence between history and the other social sciences. Quantitative historical sociology can make a contribution both to an understanding of the past and as a way of transgressing discipline boundaries and for this reason is not rejected in the present research. However it is acknowledged that, because of its emphasis on exposing 'structure', it limits the opportunity presented by convergence of the disciplines for a more comprehensive understanding of the central dynamic, 'process'. For this reason consideration is given equally to qualitative data, both for illustrative and contextual detail and also as source material for an exploration of the interests and motives of those involved
in the Bonfire Night Celebrations. As a recurrent ceremonial drama including incidents of social drama the celebrations also provide an opportunity for the historical and anthropological dimensions to be inextricably intertwined in a single analysis of process. While recognising the importance of the historical dimension in their work, Gluckman, Turner nor Frankenberg address themselves specifically to the question of convergence. Turner's and Frankenberg's attempts to expose process through their dramaturgical model is markedly similar to that outlined by Abrams. While not addressing each other directly they appear to be 'cultivating a common rhetoric' which is an essential prerequisite to convergence.

Further similarities exist between Abrams, Turner and Frankenberg that are brought together in the present research. Their emphasis on 'process' rather than 'structure' brings them within the same theoretical perspective. This interactionist paradigm necessitates a much greater comprehension of the active part played by actors in the process of structuring which in turn brings theory and empirical data into a process of dialogue. Conceptualizations, hypotheses and theories, through a mutual interrogation with the empirical evidence, become better grounded in the data(125). Theory cannot, as a result, become a collection of abstract constructs reified into unassailable absolutes. Thompson(126) has taken the view that theoretical discussion should wait until much more empirical work has been done, but the pursuance of this course detaches theory from the empirical data. Conversely
Neale (127) argues that 'history must become theoretical or it will become irrelevant'. Better Abram's policy of seeing them within the same process. In this way theory is related directly to empirical data through the use of the 'new narrative'. It is the intention of the present research to show that a dialogue between theory and empirical data within the dramaturgical model can be developed.

Notes

4. GLUCKMAN, M. (1957), 'Rituals of Rebellion in South East Africa' in GLUCKMAN, M. (1963), Order and Rebellion in Tribal Africa, London: Cohen & West, p.112. The functionalist interpretation of this concept is succinctly put by A.F.C. Wallace (1966, Religion: An Anthropological View, New York, Random House, pp.135 and 138). He states, 'In the category of behaviour that has been conveniently labelled "ritual of rebellion" we are confronted by rituals in which people are permitted ... to do precisely the wrong thing. The paradox, however, is only a seeming one, for the ultimate goal is still the same: the maintenance of order and stability in society. Rituals of rebellion are intended to contribute to this order by venting the impulses that are chronically frustrated in the day-to-day course of doing what is required.'
9. VELSEN, Van J. (1967), 'The Extended-Case Method and

11. Ibid., p.234.


20. Gluckman expresses the researcher's dilemma thus; 'if he presents all the data we cannot see the structure within it; if he emphasises the structure, we lose much of the process of actual social life.' He concluded, 'I believe this dilemma will always be with us, as our subject swings between the pole of structural analysis and the pole of narrative.'(1968, p.235.)


22. Ibid., p.94.

23. Ibid., p.94.


25. Ibid., p.162.


29. Ibid., p.17.

30. Ibid., p.44.

31. Ibid., p.44.

32. Ibid., p.37.

33. TURNER (1957), p.93.

34. TURNER (1957), pp.161-162.

35. TURNER (1957), p.91.


38. Ibid., p.145.

39. Ibid., p.149.


41. See ARONOFF, M.J. (1976), 'Ritual Rebellion and

42. GLUCKMAN (1962), p.22.
43. GLUCKMAN (1963), p.112.
44. See chapters 5, 7 and 8.
46. FRANKENBERG (1966), pp.146-147.
50. Ibid., pp.159-162.
51. Ibid., p.185


59. Functionalists have sought to answer some of these criticisms. See GLUCKMAN (1968); COHEN, G.A. (1960), Modern Social Theory, London: Heinemann, pp.56-66.


64. See CAHMAN and BOSKOFF (1964); HALPERN (1957); BURKE (1980).


70. LEWIS (1968), p.xx.


72. The work of the Cambridge Group for the Study of Population and Social Structure is a current example of this approach, but see also work undertaken into
patterns of conflict in Western Europe by the Centre for Research on Social Organization, University of Michigan, under the general direction of Charles Tilly


83. Scientists however are not always able to make hard and fast predictions, but proceed on the basis of probabilities and conjecture.

84. BROKUNIER, S.H. (1954), 'Problems of Historical Analysis', The Social Sciences in Historical Study: A Report of the Committee on Historiography, Bulletin 64, New York: Social Science Research Council, p.89. Glaser and Strauss (1968, p.201) commenting on the same point note that 'a belief in tests of significance can also, in the process, direct ones attention away from theoretical relevance of content towards confusing statistical significance with theoretical significance... Merely being statistically significant does not mean that the relationship is or should be of theoretical relevance'

85. No precise count has been carried out, but taking the two provincial newspapers used in this research celebrations were reported in over sixty Sussex towns and villages during the course of the nineteenth century.


87. 'Sanitized' refers to the practice of Victorian 'improvers' to modify contemporary popular events into acceptable forms, the vulgar and disorderly elements
being removed.

88. In Brighton the celebrations were a riotous affair with burning tar barrels being dragged through the streets during the first two decades of the nineteenth century. The centre of these activities was the Steine, but as the town developed into a thriving seaside resort the authorities prohibited its use, no doubt influenced by the fact that many fashionable houses had been built in the vicinity. This was enforced by the use of troops and special constables. The celebrations continued to be held each year on the outskirts of the town, but their scale diminished and by the 1870's no reference to the celebrations is made in the press. In Guildford the action of the authorities against the celebrations during the 1850's and 1860's led to its eventual demise, the celebrations being suppressed by 1866 after considerable violence. The development of Eastbourne as a large urban town has many parallels with Brighton, but here the celebrations were fostered by the authorities and successfully 'sanitised'. During the middle of the century press reports indicate that the celebrations were developing in the same way as was occurring in Lewes, with the formation of a number of bonfire societies. However the bonfire boys do not appear to have retained the same independence as their counterparts in Lewes because by the 1890's the press was reporting that the celebrations had been transformed into the Mayoral Carnival.

91. For a good example of this approach see CASTRO J.P. de, (1926), The Gordon Riots, Oxford, Oxford U.P.
93. TILLY (1978).
94. Turner's 'processional form', intrinsic to the process through which a social drama evolves, is similar to the 'processional' development of popular disturbances described by Smelser(1962) and Tilly(1978). Although they each approach a similar situation from different perspectives, Smelser with an emphasis on structural characteristics and Tilly stressing a 'purposeful' interpretation, they all identify the importance of process, that events develop through a sequence of activities, each activity dependent on, and growing out of the former.

Comparison between social drama and Smelser's 'value-added' model is particularly relevant during the initial stages of the process they describe, Smelser is concerned to show how disturbances develop and is less interested in their outcome. He lists six important determinants influencing the development of disturbance, what he terms 'collective behaviour'; 'structural conduciveness' - the source of tension being present within the social structure; 'structural strain' arising from circumstances at this point of tension; the development of a 'generalized belief'
unifying the protagonists. These preliminary structural determinants are not unlike those outlined by Turner as precipitating the 'breach' during a social drama. When this stage is reached Smelser identifies the need for the presence of 'precipitatory factors' which cause the outbreak of hostilities. There follows the 'mobilization of participants' into action which in turn provokes the 'operation of social control' during which the social control agents will attempt to prevent the mobilization, or in some circumstances condone it and remain inactive.

Tilly's 'mobilization model', apart from its shift of emphasis away from structure, is very similar. 'Contenders' may have shared interests, be aware of similar advantages or disadvantages, which give rise to 'organization', a 'common identifying and unifying structure among the individuals' developing in the process. Tilly takes for granted the occurrence of precipitating factors by proceeding directly to 'mobilization' that preceding the outbreak of collective action. Like Smelser, he too considers the operation of social control, but describes it more from the point of view of the contender, referring to 'opportunity'. Social control contains three elements, 'power' and who wields it, 'repression' and 'opportunity'. If the contender has sufficient power, or the repressive agencies have the necessary strength, then the opportunity may not be there. Like Smelser's model, Tilly's also fits best the initial two stages of social drama.

95. See BECKER (1958); KRUGG (1967).
97. Interestingly a SSRC programme set up to study the Toxteth riots accorded equal status to historical, sociological, political, economic and psychological aspects.
100. DOVRING (1960), Chapt.5.
104. Glaser and Strauss (1968, p.65), referring to different types of data as 'slices of data', argue that they provide the analyst with different views and vantage points, each of which contribute to a fuller understanding of the subject being studied.
105. PITT (1972), p.54.
106. Floud is critical of the work of British Marxist
historians and the History Workshop in particular for their rejection of the quantitative method. He attributes this to their desire to create a 'people's history' in which due attention is given to 'the experience of working people in the past and thus to stimulate an imaginative sympathy for them.' See FLOUD, R. (1984), 'Quantitative History and People's History', Social Science History, vol.8, no.2, (1984).

111. ABRAMS (1980), pp.5-6. Neale emphasises, in relation to social class, the importance of how people perceive themselves. He states, 'I believe that what social historians have to do, indeed must do, is to understand and make explicit those perceptions that men and women had of themselves, ...self-perception and its consequences for social action are important, perhaps the most important components in the formation of class and class consciousness.' NEALE, R.S. (1981), Class in English History, 1680-1850, Oxford: Blackwell, p.8.
112. Thompson distinguishes between two ways in which 'class' can be used, as a heuristic or analytic category, or with reference to real, empirically observable historical context. He goes on to argue that the former has much less direct correspondence to class due to its static nature. According to Thompson class evolves through time, class consciousness arising out of and realised through struggle around issues. See THOMPSON, E.P. (1978), 'Eighteenth Century England: Social Class Struggle without Class', Social History, vol.3, (1978) pp.147-149.
118. Ibid., p.8.
123. ABRAMS (1980), p.11.
125. Again, the case made by Abrams for the use of the 'new narrative', with its emphasis on the bringing together

126. THOMPSON (1979), p.4.
CHAPTER 4

CONFRONTATION AND 'BREACH': 1800-1846

The Establishing of a Custom

The developing form of the celebrations during the pre-1847 period when disturbances were endemic will be considered in this chapter. Particular attention is given to the innovative character of the bonfire boys as reflected through the introduction of various features that became integral elements of the annual celebration. The various possible causes that provoked riots and the multiplicity of motives within the various groups involved or effected by the celebrations are then discussed. Taking the celebrations chronologically, it is shown that during the early nineteenth century enthusiasm and repression fluctuated as the opposing factions attempted to influence the actions of the authorities. Finally the assault on Sir Henry Blackman is attributed with causing the 'breach' between the opposing factions and in so doing exposes the underlying social tensions present in the town at the time.

The commemoration of the Discovery of the Gunpowder Plot, which was inaugurated by the passing of an Act by Parliament 'for a publique Thanckesgiving to Almighty God everie Yeere on the fifte day of November' (1) in 1606, has probably been observed in Lewes, except during the Commonwealth, in different forms through to the present day. The first account of the celebrations in the local press
appeared in 1773, but between then and 1824 only 14 reports were included in the newspapers. Because of this lack of evidence the exact form the celebrations took before the 1820's can only be scantily described. The 1773 report reads thus and prompts three questions. Was this the first celebration held in Lewes? Was the celebration sufficiently significant or different to warrant reporting? What information does the actual report contain?

Friday being the Anniversary of the Gunpowder-Plot, some gentlemen of this town and neighbourhood, from a just sense that the custom of making bonfires, letting off rockets, &c. in a town (common on this occasion) is attended with dangerous consequences, made use of their utmost endeavours to suppress it, but to no purpose; for those assembled in commemoration of the day, (believing it highly expressive of their loyalty) deeming the gentlemens' measures too precipitate, proceeded to handle them with a degree of roughness, that soon obliged them to desist. In consequence of which, information was the next day lodged against two persons, for letting off rockets, on each of whom the magistrates levied the fine of 20s. One of them refusing to pay it, was committed to the House of Correction for a month.(2)

The reference to 'custom' and 'common on this occasion' suggests that the celebrations were a regular occurrence, but apart from an isolated account of a celebration held in 1679, to be discussed later, two brief references to bell ringing in 1723(3) and a bonfire in 1757(4) no other evidence of the celebrations before this date have been found. However that it was considered a custom by contemporaries is again recorded in 1798 when the bonfire 'was, according to custom, made in the usual place on School Hill in this town'(5). The celebrations were still being referred to as a custom in 1848, it being noted that 'it
must be remembered that for more than a century, this anniversary has been celebrated in the main street of the town'(6).

The second question relates to the significance of the report. Why were events of 1773 considered sufficiently important to be reported? Prior to that date Bushaway's contention that popular customs remained unrecorded 'either until respectability had been imposed through the mechanism of control or until a particular custom had acquired the aspect of quaintness beloved of the antiquary'(? may be applicable, but the report indicates that he ignores the capacity of custom to gain the headlines by exhibiting a lack of 'respectability'. Frequently the most lengthy and detailed accounts appeared when disturbances occurred, the 1773 celebration possibly being newsworthy on account of it being the first in a series of attempts to suppress the celebrations.

Thirdly, the 1773 account describes the form taken by the celebration, 'making bonfires' and 'letting off rockets' and also the readiness of some townspeople to suppress the bonfire boys' activities and the support they received from the courts. The lively character of the celebrations is noted by the Hampshire Chronicle in 1785(8).

The greatest riot that perhaps ever was known at Lewes, happened on School Hill, where an immense quantity of wood was collected, in order to be set on fire ...which so terrified the inhabitants, that they made formal request to the Magistrates, praying their assistance.

The magistrates removed the wood, but were subsequently
compelled to read the Riot Act as the crowd refused to disperse. In the ensuing disturbance a magistrate was knocked to the ground along with others who came to his assistance. The report continued,

In this rebellious state, accompanied with the firing of rockets, squibs, grenades, &c, the town continued to near twelve o'clock, when at last, by spirited exertion of the Justices, Peace Officers, and others, nine of the ringleaders being sent to the House of Correction, and several others paying the penalty of 20s each, ...the people were dispersed, and all was made quiet. Many persons, who were on the above evening taken into custody ...broke away, and were rescued before they could be properly secured.

This account, besides giving descriptive detail also records the strength of feeling on both sides, the magistrates wishing to suppress the celebrations while the bonfire boys were equally determined to resist them.

The fear of conflagration, resulting either from the annual street fire or squibbing(9) constantly fuelled a desire to suppress the celebrations. The bonfire boys, by their careless disregard for person or property, gave their opponents frequent opportunities to stress the inherent danger of their activities. Squibbing was carried out in a totally irresponsible manner. In 1795 squibs were thrown into the great parlour of the Star Inn, one of the town's principal coaching inns, igniting the floor boards(10). Two years later a correspondent, M. Adams, took the Advertiser to task for making light of the damage caused on the 5th November, referring to windows being smashed by stones with rockets tied to them, his own house only saved from fire due to it being wet following heavy rain(11). In 1823 a rocket
was thrown through the window of Mr Ellman's house in Southover. The furniture in a room where a small boy was sleeping was set on fire, but was doused in time(12). A similar casual disregard for the safety of others was exhibited by the bonfire boys when a lad named Fowle was 'dreadfully burnt' by a rocket tied to his waistcoat and lighted squibs 'were cowardly thrown at a poor defenceless servant girl' burning her clothes and causing hysteria(13).

In 1798 the authorities, 'regardless of the active exertions of our magistrates, constables, and many deputies appointed for their assistance' were unable to prevent the bonfire being 'made at the usual place on School Hill', but were successful in deterring the crowd from the use of fireworks.

Bonfires appear to have been central to the bonfire boys' activities, the press referring to fires in the street at an established site, an approximate 100 yard stretch of the High Street at the top of School Hill, previously the town's market place. This was the annual rendezvous for the bonfire boys and became the target of the authority's efforts to suppress the celebrations. Attempts in 1773, 1785 and 1798 met with only partial success, in 1797 the bonfire boys being openly defiant in the face of opposition. The Advertiser noted the usual fire on School Hill, 'but the conductors of it being threatened with a stout opposition, they were some what more than ordinarily ceremonious in lighting it. The man appointed to that post, with a dark lantern in one hand, a match in the other, and a bundle of shavings hung across his shoulder, and singing "God Save the King"'(14) proceeded to light the bonfire. But in 1806 the
press indicates the opponents came close to achieving their objective.

The 1806 celebration was a particularly lively affair with 18 arrests, the majority being charged with offences arising from the building of the bonfire(15). Six of those arrested were sent before Quarter Sessions, five subsequently being given prison sentences of one to six months. The remainder appeared before the Magistrates and were fined varying amounts between 10/- and 40/-. These stiff sentences had a deterring effect. The press was able to report the following year that 'the Anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot, was passed over here, owing to the vigilance of the magistrates, and divers inhabitants, who patrolled the streets to a very late hour, without the dangerous nuisance of a bonfire in the public street... Rockets were however, let off in abundance'(16).

The response of the bonfire boys to this success indicated their own determination not to be thwarted. The Advertiser noted they 'have the best authority for saying, that if the populace had quietly given up the idea of lighting a fire in the public street, a handsome sum of money would have been tendered them, to purchase fireworks, &c. for the purpose of testifying their joy, in a proper place, in commemorating the providential discovery of the horrid Popish plot of Guy Fawkes and his adherents in 1605, of which every good man must retain a thorough detestation!'(17) Whether the bonfire boys accepted this enticement is unclear, but in the following year their
desired to retain their 'right' to celebrate was manifest through their readiness to compromise to achieve that end. In 1808 they made their bonfire 'in a very safe place, on the Castle Banks, and let off their crackers, &c, with great cheerfulness, and without annoyance to anyone' (18).

Following this change only one further report appeared before 1821. The 1814 report suggests the celebrations had gone into decline, the Advertiser noting that 'we scarcely remember our streets... to have been so free from the annoyance of squibs, rockets and other fireworks' (19). There is little evidence to suggest the reason for this decline. Whether it was the result of action taken by local authorities or government, influence of Continental wars, or simply a decline in interest on the part of the bonfire boys remains conjecture (20). Following this decline the year 1821 marked a revival in the celebrations, the press noting that 'the excess of fireworks set off here on the last Monday evening... reminded us of former times' (21). This new found enthusiasm was manifest two years later when the bonfire boys rekindled their defiance of the law by returning from Castle Banks to the High Street. Although printed notices prohibiting, on pain of imprisonment, the throwing of squibs were distributed by the constables the press reported a profusion of squibs outside the Star Inn at the top of School Hill. The crowd however appeared more compliant than on previous occasions when, following the intervention of the town's Senior Constable, Mr Whiteman, they ceased their activities when properties were endangered (22).
These fourteen early accounts identify certain constant features present in the celebrations. The bonfire boys regularly lit fires in the street, indulged in squibbing and generally riotous behaviour, and displayed a disregard for the safety of people and property. Their opponents and the authorities, fearful of the consequences of these activities, endeavoured to suppress the celebrations. When such efforts were made the press reports that the town authorities used the full force of the law then available to them, short of requesting the assistance of the military. Insufficient evidence prevents any conclusive explanation why the authorities decided to take action when they did, but their action may account for the bonfire boys, on occasions, allowing the celebrations to decline.

These reports also suggest a certain continuity in the celebrations. Despite apparent periods of decline, particularly following 1806, the Discovery of the Gunpowder Plot was celebrated in a similar manner, and fairly regularly, throughout this period. But while identifying constant features it is also important to be alert to, and take cognizance of, changes occurring within the custom, and attempt to explain the reasons for these changes. While custom can be a recurrent ceremonial drama, this should not imply that it represents an unchanging tradition. Phythian Adams rightly argues that evidence of custom after a period of repression or of rapid change should not be used to illustrate earlier times without substantiation(23). Custom does, in reality, reflect both the rapid and gradual process of social change. Change can be detected in these early
celebrations thus providing a starting point for the
development of an analytical account of Lewes Bonfire Night.

Squibs, Barrels and Riots

Having established that the celebrations were held with
sufficient regularity prior to 1824 to be acknowledged as a 'custom' by the contemporary press, the account of the celebrations may now be extended to 1846 when a particular incident provoked a situation, the eventual outcome of which was a radical change in the form the celebrations took. In the years leading up to this incident the celebrations continued to fluctuate, periods of decline, notably from 1828 to 1836 and 1842 to 1845, following years when the authorities took particularly stern action against the bonfire boys. In 1827 additional constables were sworn in and following the identification of ringleaders among the crowd eleven persons were arrested, charged with assault and riot, and sent to Assize(24). Similarly, in 1841, following notices issued by the Chief Constable, Captain Fowler Mackay, prohibiting the use of squibs and tar barrels, 27 persons were arrested. All but four were sent to the Lent Assizes, where they received sentences of imprisonment ranging from 14 days to two months(25). The activities of the bonfire boys declined following these years, but whether this was a result of acquiescence, fear of punishment or it being considered just not worth the aggravation is impossible to ascertain. However it was during this period when repeated attempts of suppressions occurred that the bonfire boys proved most innovative, evolving features that
were to remain intrinsic to the celebrations throughout the remainder of the century.

Squibbing continued as the single activity through the 1820's, no mention of bonfires being made, and it is clear from press reports that this was carried on with the same careless abandon as before. In 1826 'squibbing, &c took place in the High Street about half past six, and continued incessantly until ten'(26) while in 1834 the town was 'filled with boys and others, who let off their squibs & other fireworks with impunity, defacing property and otherwise to the annoyance of the inhabitants.'(27) Lord Chichester, Chairman of the Bench, remarking that squibbing continued to cause annoyance when sentencing three lads in 1843 stated that 'it was a disgrace to the town that this practice should prevail; and when respectable inhabitants made a complaint, the Magistrates would do all in their power to abate so mischievous a nuisance'(28).

The dragging of blazing tar barrels was introduced in the early 1830's. The Express suggests that this practice was an alternative to a fire following the loss of the White Hill site(29), but it took the bonfire boys some time before this alternative was introduced. Although the loss of the firesite occurred sometime after 1806 and the bonfire boys returned to the streets in 1821, it was not until 1832 that the first tar barrels were rolled through the streets. Both local newspapers lamented their introduction, the Gazette stating that 'we most decidedly object'(30) while the Advertiser, in sterner tone, commented, 'The march of
intellect has not yet been able to prevent the celebration of this powder plot tom foolery'(31). These remarks made little impression on the bonfire boys and by 1834 barrels were being used to make the bonfire in the High Street outside County Hall(32). In the same year eight men appeared before the magistrates accused of having 'unlawfully made a bonfire by a lighted tar barrel and rolled the same about the streets'(33).

This practice continued and became the focus of attention for both the bonfire boys and the police who attempted on numerous occasions to prevent the activities of the barrel parties. It was recorded that 'several of those combustibles were dragged by the mob through the streets, and finally formed into a bonfire opposite County Hall'(34). Subsequent reports suggest that the rolling of tar barrels down School Hill was becoming a sport among the bonfire boys(35). From various reports it appears that the boys gathered in gangs, or 'barrel parties', to drag the offending items about the town while the police responded by either seizing the 'tub' or arresting those active in dragging it. The following account is typical of many. Giving evidence before Magistrates in 1841 Supt. Fagan described how,

he, under the direction of Capt Mackay ordered the police constables to station themselves about the town, but not to interfere, unless a breach of the peace took place, and then only in case they did not know the parties. He himself perambulated the town, and saw squibs and fireballs thrown. At nine o'clock in the evening, eleven special constables were sworn in at the County Hall; and while that was going on, a tar barrel was rolled down the High Street to Friars
Walk. He went down and took hold of the tub. The men around it were disguised, and cried out "Give it him". He was struck several times with a bludgeon, and knocked down and trampled upon... There were about 20 persons dragging the barrel and 200 following, some of them of respectable appearance. Those rolling it were disguised.(36)

This account was corroborated by Sergeant Ballard in a written statement for the Assize Court hearings to which the arrested were finally sent for sentencing(37).

Fagan's evidence alludes to another feature, the wearing of disguise(38), that was evolving at this time. Reference was first made to disguise by R.W. Lower, a special constable, while giving evidence before magistrates in 1838. He testified that Reuben Barnes, one of the rioters, 'was dancing in the crowd, disguised with a piece of sheepskin turned inside out'(39). Following the 1841 disturbance Sergeant Ballard, giving evidence at Assize, described how he had 'observed a lad named Gander, who wore a red jacket and whose face was coloured red'(40). Other accounts describe bonfire boys with 'blackened faces' and 'coats turned inside out', but in 1847 one disguise foreshadowed what was to develop following the formation of the bonfire societies in 1853. One arrested bonfire boy, a man named Wimhurst, 'was armed with a pick-axe, and was dressed, or rather disguised, in a Guernsey shirt, a black leather belt with stars, and wore over his face a white cap, having holes cut for his eyes and mouth'(41). As will be described later, the Guernsey became the 'uniform' of the fledgeling bonfire societies.

The wearing of disguise was obviously intended to avoid...
recognition and thus elude arrest. Mackay had instructed his constables only to arrest those they did not recognise. Those they did recognise 'had information lodged against them'\(^{(42)}\) and were arrested and charged later when the likely confrontation or attack on them by the bonfire boys if the arrest was attempted during the celebrations could thus be avoided. However if those wearing disguise escaped immediate arrest they also successfully avoided being identified and apprehended later. It was probably for this reason that disguise was condemned by the opponents of the celebrations. M.A. Lower, a local school master and antiquarian, in an 'anonymous' pamphlet\(^{(43)}\) addressed the 'young men of the town' guilty of donning disguise in unequivocal terms.

It was a pity and a shame I last night beheld the assassin-like and un-English disguise and mask resorted to among you to avoid recognition. What can be more cowardly? Is this the mode of action for the open-hearted, open-handed, manly youth of England? One would almost expect next to see the poison cup and the stiletto. Never, oh! never let those things occur again, but whatever opposition you may in future feel yourselves called upon to show, throw away the shelter of the Italian Bravo, and appear in your true characters as Englishmen, who can never feel ashamed of being known when engaged honestly in a good cause.\(^{(44)}\)

However this condemnation had little effect, the wearing of disguise increasing in the following years.

Finally, the introduction of a band during the 1840's suggests the celebrations were evolving a more organised dimension. Apart from a hint of preliminary organization in 1797 when the bonfire boys were 'somewhat more ceremonious in the lighting' of the bonfire\(^{(45)}\) there is little evidence
indicating any permanent group directing the celebrations. Indeed lack of organisation was cited by the defence lawyer at the Assize hearings in 1848 in an attempt to have the charge of 'conspiracy' made against a group of bonfire boys dismissed. Mr Creasy argued that 'there was not a little evidence that they had ever met before; there was no proof of previous co-operation'(46). However the presence of bands suggest that someone, or some group was in some way directing the celebrations, a band having to be hired and paid for. It may have taken part spontaneously, but this seems unlikely on account of the increasing regularity with which bands appeared.

Bands were first mentioned in 1842 when 'there was a novelty in the evening's display, a band of music - which paraded the streets accompanied by a large concourse of people'(47). The presence of a band was again reported in 1844 when 'towards the approach of midnight some musicians appeared on the scene'(48), but no further reference to a band appears until 1848, when following disturbances the year before, 'the crowd was enticed away by a band to witness a bonfire on the farm of John Ellman, Esq'(49). On this occasion, rather than being an innovation, the band was being used for a different reason, to lure the crowds away from the High Street to the safety of fields on the outskirts, thus removing a 'nuisance' from the town centre. But which ever way bands were used, their regular appearance in the celebrations, particularly after 1853, became an important accompaniment to the processions.
While the bonfire boys were being innovative it is evident from contemporary accounts that many observers considered their activities riotous. Press reports, court witnesses and charges brought against those arrested all refer to riot and riotous behaviour. In 1847 the Gazette observed,

Our readers scarcely require to be informed of the riotous proceedings which, under the guise of celebrating the Gunpowder Plot, have for many years disgraced the town of Lewes. We may, however, briefly state that the grossest outrages and excesses have year after year been committed on the 5th November, when large mobs of people disguised with masks and armed with bludgeons have held possession of the town, and set the authorities at defiance.(50)

The Advertiser echoed these sentiments when they noted that 'a moment's reflection cannot fail to point out to them that that which was once license has swelled into riot, that what was once a public expression of rejoicing, has degenerated into a public nuisance; and that which was formerly enacted under authority is now enforced in defiance of it.'(51)

The term 'riot', Stevenson(52) has suggested, was used in contemporary press reports to describe a noisy incident, without reference to the legal definition(53). This was however not the case in Lewes. Charges, particularly when large numbers of people were involved in making bonfires or dragging tar barrels, always included the charge of riot. The charge against those sent to Quarter Sessions in 1806 read, 'did riotously and injuriously collect and cause and procure to be collected and place a large quantity of combustible materials to wit one hundred faggots of wood and
ten cart loads of straw' (54). In 1827 ten men were accused of being 'rioters, routers and disturbers of the peace' (55) while those arrested in 1841 were indicted on account that they did 'unlawfully and riotously light fire, throw cast kick push and draw certain fireworks fireballs and tar barrels into in through and along the public street' (56).

That the celebrations were riotous, at least from the perspective of the authorities, is evident. Nor can this interpretation be simply dismissed as biased or based on prejudice. The numbers involved were perceived as intimidating. In 1827 the crowd consisted of 'divers other evil disposed persons to the number of 200 or more' (57), while in 1838 it was reported that 'a great many persons were in the High Street... at that time 1,000 people from the Hall to the Crown' (58). PC Francis Fagan jnr., in 1841, described the barrel being pulled by 12 to 15 disguised persons followed by a hundred or more others (59).

Neither did the bonfire boys exhibit any respect for authority, whether it be in the form of town officials, special constables, police or local magistrates. Law enforcers were frequently assaulted. In 1827 some of 'those guardians of the public peace, being known to the bonfire boys, were rather roughly handled and compelled to make a precipitated retreat' (60). Two years later Joseph Read, the town's Headborough, lodged complaints before the magistrates against three men who had 'attacked him with much violence' and along with a mob 'pursued him and stoned him, till he found protection in the house of Mr Adams' (61). In a written
deposition Read described how 'some of the persons perceiving this informant cried out "there goes Jerry, twig him, informer, turnips, kick the bugger, he has got no friends" (and) was again jostled and pushed against the house, his shoes torn off, his head hurt against the wall, his breeches torn and six shillings taken out of his pocket' (62). A local solicitor, George Hoper was similarly attacked in 1837 (63) and in the following year several special constables, including Mr Whitfeld, the High Constable, were roughly handled while trying to prevent the dragging of tar barrels (64). In 1841 police officers trying to prevent the same activity were set upon 'with force and arms to wit sticks stones bludgeons and other offensive weapons' (65). Giving an account of this attack Supt. Fagan described how he was 'struck on his head with a boulder, and knocked down with bludgeons, and trampled upon.' (66). The singling out of law enforcers by the bonfire boys clearly indicates that such acts of violence were neither random or irrational.

The 'Breach': The Assault of Sir Henry Blackman

During the 1846 celebration a particularly vicious attack on a local magistrate led to a final determined effort by the authorities to suppress the celebrations. Reporting the events of that night the 'Advertiser' describes how, following the building of a bonfire outside of the County Hall, the crowd...

...emboldened by the impunity with which their outrages on the peace and respectability of
the town had passed, the tar barrel party, who were disguised and who appeared to be under the management of some leader, and excited by drink and the riot of the whole scene, repaired about ten o'clock to the house of Mr Blackman, who, as an active and conscientious magistrate was well known to be opposed to the lawless proceedings of the bonfire rioters. (67)

What ensued is reported in detail by the 'Express'. Outside Blackman's house, situated near Cliffe Bridge the mob...

...piled three tar barrels one on top of each other and set them on fire. The flames soon rose to a great height, which, with dense smoke, really became alarming to the inmates, among whom were several ladies. Mr Blackman, alarmed for the safety of his property, and to allay the fears of his company, went out and mildly, but firmly, desired the mob to disperse. The only attention paid to the well meant advice of the worthy magistrate were derisive jeers, and fresh means were used to increase the flames. Finding his advice valueless, he attempted, as we are informed, to take one of the ringleaders into custody, which, when he had nearly accomplished, he received a blow over the eye from one of the numerous bludgeons which were on the instant raised, and was felled to the ground. Mr Blackman was picked up and carried into the house in a state of insensibility... This incident seems to have had little or no effect on the mob, who for some hours afterwards continued their sport. (68)

The Advertiser concluded by deeply regretting this brutal assault 'upon a gentleman, whose private and public character alone ought to have shielded him from insult and preserved him from injury'. Sir Henry Blackman was coal and wine merchant trading in Lewes, a landowner and a magistrate since 1837. His age, given as 70 in the 1851 CEB, should also have protected him against the violence to which he was subjected.

Many years later a bonfire boy present during the assault on Blackman recounted that there had been no
intention of doing him any harm(69), but at the time this explanation would have received little sympathy. The Advertiser's editor, G.P. Bacon, captured the mood of the moment when he wrote in his editorial that 'the hour is gone for the passive endurance of such outrages. The system must not be "let alone" any longer. The time is come when the inhabitants of Lewes must rouse themselves from their apathy, and wipe away this blot on their fair name'(70).

According to Yeo(71) working-class culture is recalcitrant, innovative and intrusive, in that order. When working people's innovation becomes intrusive it has to be modified from above. The attack on Blackman marked a point when normal norm-governed relationships were broken. The celebrations had frequently been rowdy and on occasions riotous. The authorities had displayed a degree of vacillation, action being taken in response to pressure rather than law breaking, illegal acts like the street bonfire frequently being permitted to go unhindered.

In the years leading up to 1846 the bonfire boys were seeking the limits of acceptable behaviour. In a stratified society, as Barrington Moore argues, 'there is a set of limits on what both rulers and subjects, dominant and subordinate groups can do'. These may or may not be formalized, but a dynamic fluid situation exists. He argues that 'what takes place, is a continual probing on the part of the rulers and subjects to find out what they can get away with, to test and discover the limits of obedience and disobedience. No one knows exactly where the limits are until he finds out by experience'(72). The dominant body of
opinion may have prevented the authorities from taking
decisive action previously, but the assault on Blackman went
beyond tolerable behaviour, innovation had become intrusive.

Similar incidents had occurred before, but the 1846
incident is significant because it produced a radical change
in the celebrations that reflected a sea-change occurring in
the wider society. Previous attempts to suppress the
celebrations had been unsuccessful and while resulting in a
decline in activity for a few years, did not radically alter
the annual ritual enactment of the celebrations. Indeed by
the introduction of the various innovations during this
period the bonfire boys could be seen to be strengthening
their celebrations, from being a day of spontaneous
rejoicing to a custom with accompanying legitimating
features. But faced with concerted opposition to their
celebrations following the 1846 assault the resolve,
tenacity and adaptability of the bonfire boys was to be
tested.

The assault on Henry Blackman marked what Turner
identifies as the 'breach' in the 'processional form' of a
social drama. It provoked fourteen months of conflict during
which the bonfire boys with their supporters and financial
backers struggled against the police and opponents from
among the inhabitants of Lewes. Relationship between the
various groups had been strained throughout the period
discussed, an underlying tension existing between the
warring factions. This tension was rarely manifest in open
conflict and when it was the inadequacy of documentary
evidence prevents meaningful analysis. However a wealth of documentary sources describing, and giving background data to the Blackman incident exists enabling a detailed analysis of a social drama within a historical context to be undertaken. These sources make it possible to construct a comprehensive account of the assault, the actions taken by the authorities leading up to the 1847 celebration, that celebration and the ensuing court cases. From a close examination of the content of these reports, the statements made during the court hearings and the accumulation of biographical detail of characters involved it is possible to analyse their motivations and the underlying social tensions present in the town at the time.

There are two dimensions of conflict, although they are frequently viewed as two opposing theories (73). One places an emphasis on the structural characteristics of society and in so doing tends to portray human beings responding to forces beyond their control. Originating in the work of Durkheim, 'Breakdown' theory develops this type of explanation. Social tension and popular unrest are the outcome of a collective response to the relative processes of integration or disintegration in a whole society. Durkheim argues that society is differentiating unsteadily in response to a variety of pressures, economic, political, cultural, and during a period of transition from one stage to another, a state of anomie exists. It is during these transitional periods, when structural strain is most acute that social disintegration leading to tension and unrest is likely to occur. The second theory, while not ignoring
structural characteristics, places an emphasis on the perceptions and actions of those involved in the conflict, reference being made to the shared interests of the antagonists. Proponents of 'solidarity' theory argue that conflict grows out of a struggle for power, individuals banding together to take action in pursuance of their common interests and objectives. This perspective is frequently adopted by Marxist theorists to account for manifestations of the class struggle.

Polarized theories rarely provide adequate explanations, and in this instance Tilly(74) correctly argues that a more constructive and fruitful strategy is the merging of these two approaches. As Tilly suggests, they are often interpretations of the same phenomena, one reflecting the conservative view, that violence is the result of social breakdown, while the other radical perspective sees conflict as a growth of new forms. This merging gives rise to a third perspective which acknowledges that those involved in conflict may be reacting to structural strain, while at the same time views that response as a purposeful act in pursuit of self-interests. The situation is perceived, assessed and then responded to according to what the group interprets as their own common interests. These two contributing factors Tilly(75) defines as 'causal' and 'purposeful' explanations.

Turner's social drama model, as has been shown, takes account of both dimensions of conflict. While any explanation for social tension must necessarily include the attitudes and objectives of those involved, sources of
structural strain influencing the situation in which the actors are placed must also be taken into account. The bonfire boys' confrontation with the authorities in response to the attempt to suppress their celebration following their assault on Blackman can be interpreted as a purposeful collective act. They shared a common objective to maintain an occasion which meant more to them than merely an opportunity to riot. But before developing the purposeful dimension of the social drama, sources of structural strain that possibly contributed to tension at this time must be considered.

British historians argue that a period of transition occurred in England during the industrial revolution experienced in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (76). This period of transition, Rude (77) suggests, occurred between the 1730's and 1840's. Although no direct causal link has been established between the disturbances in Lewes and the consequences of change associated with the industrial revolution, the celebrations leading up to and including the social drama of 1847 must be set against the background of a radically changing society. Cognizance must be given to external causal factors influencing the celebrations and the actions of the bonfire boys. The effect of such external influence was acknowledged in the local press, the process of enclosure being given as a reason for the bonfire boys' return to the High Street when Castle Banks became unavailable (78).

Three processes of industrial development, according to
Hobsbawm (79), influenced popular 'explosions'; transition to industrialism, classical free competition, and modern forms of state and corporate capitalism. The resulting hardship experienced by sections of the working people during these processes and their response have been well documented (80). Industrialisation also forced a qualitative change in labour relations that permeated through from industrial centres to rural areas. The paternalistic master-servant relationship declined, giving way to free wage-labour negotiating with employers (81). This was manifest in a gradual change in attitudes; paternalism, with its emphasis on face-to-face relationships and mutual dependency, gradually being replaced by impersonal, antagonistic relationships arising from acquisitive self interest (82). Capitalist modes of production also led to increasing calls for rigorous labour discipline. Time ceased to be governed by the annual cycle of agriculture, becoming dictated by the need for efficient factory production (83). Popular recreation, the time spent pursuing it and the manner and place where it was pursued became a disputed area. Those wishing to instill the work ethic saw leisure as the promoter of idleness. Those who had previously supported or sponsored the popular mode began to withdraw their patronage and active participation (83).

How far such changes were effecting Lewes is difficult to assess. The town had experienced increasing prosperity during the years leading up to 1847. The town had become an important market and service centre for its rural hinterland, small craft manufacture and light industry had developed and by the 1830's the town had four iron
foundries, four breweries, two printing works, a paper mill, and ship building facilities for sea-going vessels. But Lewes was not an industrial centre, either for large scale manufacture or a single industry. Employment was diverse and workforces small. As a consequence a radical shift in labour relations away from the traditional master-servant relationship seems unlikely to have occurred.

Neither was the town developing as an urban centre. Urbanism is given as an explanation for popular disturbance and the decline of popular recreations, particularly those held in the street or open public place (85). Lewes experienced a significant population growth during the first half of the nineteenth century, almost doubling from 4,909 in 1801 to 9099 in 1851, but it remained a small town compared with rapidly growing seaside towns in the county (86). The town was expanding with the consequent loss of open spaces, but the High Street continued to be available to the bonfire boys. As Thompson argues, urbanism did not automatically lead to a decline in popular recreation (87).

The 'Popular' and 'Puritan' Ideologies

Lewes remained a small market town, but growing opposition to the celebrations suggest that attitudes were changing, and these did reflect the influence of industrialisation and urbanism. For those inhabitants enjoying the direct benefits of the town's increasing prosperity the annual outburst of popular excess became an
anathema. As Malcolmson notes, 'their concern for economic growth allowed slight sympathy for activities not obviously productive (and) as the pace of urbanization accelerated, and as the means of social control became increasingly sophisticated, the clash between the popular point of view and the growing concern for orderliness and property rights was very much accentuated'(88).

This clash of views, and the opposing ideologies from which they came, were readily detectable in the attitudes expressed towards the celebrations following the assault on Blackman. Both Lewes newspapers supported the call for action against the celebrations, but their editors proffered differing solutions. The editor of the Advertiser, G.P. Bacon stated,

In many cases it is easier to point out error than to propound a remedy, but in the present instance the remedy is at once simple, easy, and apparent. It only rests with the inhabitants of Lewes to pronounce their disapprobation of the doings referred to, to put an effectual stop to the proceedings.(89)

Bacon appears to be advocating the suppression of the celebrations, but the Express is more conciliatory, its owner and editor, W.E. Baxter, lamented the assault but suggested a less repressive solution.

We are among those who are least inclined to curtail the amusement of the people, but we view with deep regret the annually recurring scenes of the Fifth of November in the streets of Lewes and deeply deplore that the advice offered to the Guy Faux demonstrators, to remove their sport to some less dangerous place than the High Street, has not been taken.(90)
Following the 1847 disturbances Baxter continued to propound this view.

It will not be ill timed to suggest a compromise which may prevent similar expenses in future years; for we must remember that what ever laws are, they are more powerful and effective when they are upheld by the cordial co-operation of the well-disposed portions of the community... there can be little doubt that the good sense of the "Leaders of the Guy" will lead them to remove the nuisance from the streets if a suitable spot be offered to them; and that they only oppose the attempt made to prevent the celebrations... English youth are more likely to rebel against force than against reason...' (91)

Bacon responded to this suggested compromise in a highly critical manner condemning the Express for advocating a flexible interpretation of the law (92).

This difference of opinion arguably reflected their opposing political allegiance. William Edwin Baxter was born in Lewes in 1808, being educated at Lewes Grammar School before entering his father's bookselling and stationers business. In 1837, with his father, he established the Sussex Agricultural Express which soon associated itself with the Conservative cause. Baxter consistently supported the Conservative Party, remaining loyal when many local Conservatives voted for the Peelite candidate, Sir Henry Fitzroy, in the 1847 General election. His adversary, George Peter Bacon, came to Lewes from Norwich in the early 1840's, purchased the Sussex Weekly Advertiser, and immediately took up the Liberal cause in a predominantly Conservative town. However, what is important here is not so much their political affiliation, but their support for opposing ideologies that were dividing the middle class at this time,
ideologies that perceived popular recreation in very different ways. Malcolmsen terms these divergent ideologies and the attitudes that arose from them, the 'puritan' and the 'popular'(93).

Bacon's persistent attacks on the bonfire boys and his continual call for the suppression of their celebrations were indicative of the 'puritan' attitude towards popular recreation. While self-interest motivated some among the local business community, others, including moralists and bourgeois reformers, approached the disturbances with missionary zeal. The recreational activities of the poor became the focus of concern, increasingly being viewed as an impediment to economic and moral progress. Popular recreation was distasteful and a threat, nocturnal saturnalias being particularly feared. They were not conducive to effective labour discipline, gave rise to social disorder and encouraged immorality, moral evangelicals claiming they provided an opportunity for sensual indulgence, sexual dallying and drunkenness(94).

These attitudes were reflected in statements made by opponents of the celebrations. Concern for the effects of rioting on trade and the town's prosperity motivated some to support suppression. Businesses had to close early on the 'Fifth', with premises barricaded, windows boarded and wet straw placed over pavement gratings. Lower, lamenting this situation in his pamphlet, complained,

I put it to their reason and common sense, as well as their better feelings, whether this conduct should not, for the credit and
respectability of Lewes, at once be brought to an end... That trade suffers I am fully convinced... Many persons are looking forward with considerable anxiety, to see whether any, and what, good will result to the town from the railway. It has been said, that when the 'Keymer Branch' shall be completed many persons will prefer a quiet (?) town like Lewes for a place of residence, to Brighton or other large and gay watering places... However much good the railway might do to Lewes, the inhabitants themselves prevent it by a want of peaceable and orderly conduct.(95)

He also expressed concern for the moral well-being of those involved.

Another anniversary of the Fifth of November is past, it was accompanied by all the usual disgusting parade of disguises, bludgeon and riot... And where can a more lamentable or disgusting sight, than to look upon a large body of human beings in a state of savage excitement, "slaves" to the worst feelings and impulses of which their nature is susceptible? And yet, such a sight might have been witnessed for hours last night in the High Street of Lewes.(96)

Bacon echoed these sentiments when he asked whether 'true religious feeling of any kind, can in any way be advantaged by the riotous and brutalising orgies celebrated by a class of men taken from amongst the lowest ranks of society'(97), 'the scene reminding one far more of the orgies of infuriated savages than the "amusements" of even a semi-civilised people'(98). The likening of the bonfire boys to savages is reminiscent of the views popularised by Le Bon and his followers(99), views that have since been critically reappraised (100), that reflect the same assumptions and fears. The crowd is considered inferior and threatening, disturbances arising from the 'mere impulse of an untamed people'(101).
The low esteem in which the bonfire boys were held is reflected in the frequent use of the term 'mob' to describe their gatherings. Giving evidence following disturbances in 1838 William Rose, the proprietor of the Star Inn, described those attempting to prevent an arrest as the 'rabble'(102). Fagan, giving evidence during the 1841 trials, constantly referred to 'the mob' while Nathaniel Blaker, recounting his childhood in Lewes, describes 'how for several hours the town was given up to the mob'(103). Even when no significant disturbance occurred, as in 1849, the Advertiser still reported that 'in the course of the evening a mob - in its worst sense - sallied forth, shouting like a parcel of savages'(104).

The contemporary 'popular' view of the 'mob' was probably not significantly different from the 'puritan', but while the assault on Blackman was condemned, the tone in which the Express wrote about the bonfire boys suggested a far more tolerant attitude towards them. It was 'compromise' rather than suppression that the Express sought.

It cannot be disguised that there is a large portion of the inhabitants, who are favourable to the celebration of the 5th November, who tacitly support the barrel system, and among these (horresco referens) may be numbered very many of the fair sex! We believe, indeed there are few persons in this town who would not openly encourage the celebration, were opportunity given for its being carried out with safety to the public; for ever in the absence of this opportunity, many are, as we have said before, tacit supporters of the system... We by no means agree with those who, from political motives, would put down the "Guys".(105)

This attitude reflected the contrary ideology.
Conservatives, particularly in rural areas where the pressures of industrialism and urbanism were less immediately felt, were more inclined towards the 'popular' point of view. It was, as Malcolmson (106) notes, a backward looking ideology that combined a 'subtle blend of tolerance, self-interest and paternalistic habit' towards the recreations of the common people. Tolerance and a disposition towards traditionalism were strongly reinforced by an awareness of the methods for maintaining social control in a period before the establishment of an efficient police force. Popular customs, like rituals of rebellion, were perceived as a safety valve, an opportunity for the underdog to escape momentarily from his position of subjugation and let vent to his inner feelings. Some collective behaviour, as Turner and Killian (107) claim, 'is institutionalised, so that it is evoked under conventionalised situations and proceeds within conventionally understood bounds'. If the activities of the bonfire boys remained within accepted limits they were tolerated, if not encouraged. The Blackman incident however forced those who had previously countenanced the celebrations on the defensive. They now had to justify their support against increasingly vociferous advocates of the 'puritan' ideology. Bacon and Baxter, through their newspapers, gave expression to the irreconcilable ideologies that motivated the middle class protagonists during the social drama that ensued following the attack on Sir Henry Blackman.
The Bonfire Boys' Own Perceptions

But to these two ideologies must be added a third, the agents' own. How the bonfire boys perceived their own activities and what motivated them to take action also requires consideration. Developing Gramsci's distinction between 'historically organic' and 'arbitrary, rationalist' ideologies Rude(108) identifies a 'popular ideology' arising from 'the less structured thoughts that circulate among the common people, often contradictory, confused and compounded by folklore, myth and day-to-day popular experience'. This popular ideology is a mixture of two elements, the 'inherent' and the 'derived'. Only the first is the peculiar property of the 'popular' classes, being based on direct experience, oral tradition or folk memory, not being learned from sermons, speeches, or books. The second is superimposed by a process of transmission and adoption from outside, taking the form of a more structured system of political and religious ideas(109). Because 'popular' ideology is a mixture of these two elements, the motives that derive from it are similarly diverse. Some are 'indigenous', arising from immediate problems experienced by those involved in the disturbance, like loss of jobs, an increase in food prices, or the threatened termination of a popular recreation. Such problems often arise through structural strain and may therefore be considered causal explanations.

A causal factor often given as an explanation for social unrest is economic hardship, mainly the consequence
of cyclical depression and high food prices. Certainly the price of food appeared to motivate many disturbances, Clarke (112) cites 1766, 1791-93 and 1795-96 as occasions when they coincide, and Rostow, extending the analysis into the nineteenth century isolates the years 1811-12, 1816, 1819, 1826, 1830-32, 1837, 1839-42 and 1847-48. A correlation between these dates and the incidence of unrest during the Bonfire Night celebrations must however be shown if economic determinants are to be given as the single cause. But these do not neatly coincide with the years 1773, 1875, 1806, 1828-29, 1841 and 1846-47 when, according to press reports and court documents, disturbances occurred. Only in 1841 and 1846-47 is there a correlation between the two sets of dates.

This lack of correlation gives support to those who are critical of the economic determinism implicit in the work of Rostow, Ashton and Hobsbawm. Contrary findings have led some to conclude that at best economic determinants give only a partial explanation. Both Slack (113) and Tilly (114) argue that economic hardship may explain some riots, but this factor is not always present. Similarly Williams (115) comments that while hunger may have been the spark in some situations other social issues involving local usages and traditional rights may have been more important. As will be shown, causes such as those suggested by Williams, are very important in an explanation of the Lewes Bonfire riots.

Rude's second category of motives, 'derived' (116) arise from political or religious views held by those involved in
the disturbances. Many disturbances have been linked with political issues. During the 1790's anti-Jacobin feeling aroused by the French Revolution led to effigies of Tom Paine being burnt in London and the Queen Caroline Affair provoked anti-government demonstrations in 1820. During the Reform agitation of 1830-32 there were various disturbances including the burning of effigies of bishops on the 5th November, 1831 following the defeat of the Bill(117). Disturbances occurred locally at Rye and Horsham, but none in Lewes, either following the defeat of the Bill or during the bonfire celebrations. Neither were there disturbances during the celebrations when widespread unrest marked the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act in 1834 and the Chartist agitation of 1839-40.

Thus two causal factors, economic hardship and political motivation, often given to explain popular disturbances, do not provide adequate explanations to account for the bonfire disturbances or the motives of those involved. For a better grounded explanation Rude's notion of 'popular ideology' can be utilised. But before discussing how this ideology can be used to interpret the actions of the bonfire boys' two issues, both germane to an understanding of the motives of those involved in the social drama, need to be considered. The first relates to the presence of a diversity of motives, the second to how motives might change during the course of a disturbance.

Critics of crowd behaviour rarely attribute motives to those involved, referring to them instead collectively as
the 'rabble' or the 'mob'. This misconception of the nature of the crowd has been given the status of objective theory by social theorists like Le Bon and Park. Park, who is attributed with first coining the term 'collective behaviour', defined it as the 'behaviour of individuals under the influence of an impulse that is common and collective, an impulse, in other words, that is the result of social interaction' (118). Historians and sociologists have become increasingly critical of this interpretation due to its failure to take account of the actors as conscious, thinking people. Emotive terms like 'mob', Rude argues, 'present the crowd as a disembodied abstraction and not as an aggregate of men and women of flesh and blood' (119). A crowd may be violent, unpredictable, or easily stirred by rumour, but as Rude claims, it is not 'fickle', or 'peculiarly irrational' (120), nor does it act impulsively. Those involved, while possibly being 'carried along in the tide' are not motiveless, but act for a reason. People act in pursuit of their interests, responding to their own perception and interpretation of their situation rather than impulsively. To explain a crowd's behaviour it is necessary to understand the motives of those involved.

The presence of diverse motives may be considered first. The possibility of differing motives being present within the same crowd is noted by Rude when, describing eighteenth century crowds, he comments, 'even if the immediate or overt motives leap to the eye, we still have to explore those that lie beneath the surface; and if persons of differing classes or creeds are involved, some may be
impelled by one motive and some by another'(121). Empirical observation, Turner and Killian(122) claim, has confirmed that crowds are often heterogeneous in motivation. They identify five types of participant, the 'committed' who is involved due to commitment to the cause being expressed; the 'concerned' who feels commitment but leave others to act; the 'entertained' who enjoys participating regardless of commitment to the cause; and two others, the 'spectator' and the 'exploiter', who differ from the rest because of ego-detachment rather than ego-involvement. Tilly acknowledges the diversity of motives amongst those attending the 1866 Hyde Park Reform meeting, commenting that 'no doubt some of the demonstrators were angry, some were drunk, and some enjoyed the rough and tumble'(123). As will be shown, such a multiplicity of motives was present among the bonfire boys.

The second issue relating to motives of individuals in a crowd is that they may change during the course of the disturbance due to unforeseen incidents causing those involved to reassess their situation and subsequently perceive their interests differently. Turner and Killian refer to this in the following terms.

In its extreme form the crowd is unplanned, unanticipated and ephemeral. Decisions made during its brief existence are based on the emergent definition of the situation; they do not seem to reflect pre-existing conceptions of what course or the outcome of the crowd behaviour should be.(124)

The bonfire boys' gatherings were not totally unplanned, but they often appeared volatile. Having taken to the streets with a vague perception of what they intended to do, an
unanticipated incident could change both their mood and
object of attention. The bonfire boys entered what
Blumer (125) terms the 'milling process', during which 'the
incipient excitement becomes greater... the most obvious
effect... is to disseminate a common mood, feeling, or
emotional impulse... to increase its intensity.' But while
during this process the crowd 'is spontaneous and lives in
the momentary present', it does not follow that individuals
involved lose their 'ordinary critical understanding and
self control'. They are not automatically subsumed by a
common mood, decisions being taken consciously by thinking
individuals.

The intervention of a magistrate or the police during
a celebration, a not uncommon event, was perceived by the
bonfire boys as a threat or a challenge to their activities
and something therefore to be resisted. Immediate decisions
would be made by those involved. Some would decide to
assault the police, others would choose not to become
directly involved, but remained to encourage others, more
would decide to become spectators and still more would
choose not to become involved at all and leave the scene
altogether. All might have continued to share the original
motive to celebrate the Discovery of the Gunpowder Plot, but
their original motives were modified during the course of
the celebration due to the unforeseen incident.

Thus the causes for tension and conflict and the
motives of those involved can be shown to be interrelated
and multidimensional. This is illustrated in Figure 4.2.
**Figure 4.2: Causes and Motives giving rise to Popular Disturbances**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation for cause</th>
<th>Responsive</th>
<th>Purposive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>Riot in response to threatened suppression of the celebrations.</td>
<td>Riot to maintain the 'right' to continue a custom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derived</td>
<td>Attack on people attending recently opened Catholic Chapel</td>
<td>Riot to overthrow the government.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The necessary conclusion to be drawn from this is that there is no single explanation to account either for the cause or the motive behind a disturbance. Among those taking part there is no collective perception of the situation, no unified motive, no one common objective. People become involved for different reasons, sometimes responding to predetermined circumstances, sometimes attempting to create new circumstances. Often one will grow out of the other. Similarly people come to the situation with different motives, individuals possibly having more than one motive for being there. They may be out to have a good time, but by their presence may also be seeking to maintain a custom.

Within the historical context, the discovery of motives can present difficulties, especially those of the common people(126). The underlying ideologies of factions within the Lewes middle class were articulated in the town's two provincial newspapers, but no similar mouthpiece was
available to the bonfire boys. Historians, unlike the contemporary sociologists, can neither observe an incident, nor ask the participants why they acted as they did. Second hand accounts that may, or may not, record the views of the inarticulate common people are the only source available. In practice researchers can only sift through press reports, court records and other relevant sources in the hope of finding clues to explain what motivated people and prompted their actions.

Sources, including poll books and parochial and non-parochial registers provide limited, and sometimes unreliable, information relating to the derived motives of the bonfire boys. Confronting this problem Rude(127) suggests that motives can be deduced from the crowd's actions, the focus of their activities, the slogans they shouted or the banners they carried. It is important to look behind the interpretations placed on their actions by contemporary commentators including the press. The Lewes press contains detailed accounts of the bonfire boys' activities including reports of assaults and attacks on specific people and houses. Occasional reference is also made to slogans shouted and banner inscriptions. The reporting of titles of tunes and songs heard also gives clues to the bonfire boys motives. Less reliable, but not to be ignored, are motives ascribed to the participants in the press or by judges and magistrates at court hearings.

Hobsbawn notes, 'the fact that the mob is a pre-political phenomenon does not mean that it had no implicit
or explicit idea about politics'(128). Other historians(129) have recorded the tendency of the common people to demonstrate in support of 'Church and King' and patriotic causes. But what were the bonfire boys' motives? Poll books and religious records provide limited information as to their political or religious convictions. Few of the bonfire boys arrested were enfranchised(130), the number who were being too small to draw any conclusions from. If they did express political aspirations through the celebrations, what few indicators there are suggest they conformed to what Storch interpreted as 'a certain residual defiance of authority, a truncated and deformed conception of popular right, No Popery and patriotic rhetoric'(131).

The Lewes press suggests that a sense of patriotic loyalty was expressed through the celebrations. Those taking part in 1773 did so 'believing it highly expressive of their loyalty'(132). The Advertiser concluded a number of years later that the celebrations were misconstrued as 'the silly ebullitions of mistaken loyalty'(133). Other evidence of patriot loyalty was the music and songs. In 1797 'God Save the King' was heard(134), in 1842 the band played 'Rule Britannia', 'See the Conquering Hero Come' and 'God Save the Queen'(135) and in 1844 the celebrations were concluded with the National Anthem(136). Following 1853 patriotic jingoism became an integral part of the celebrations and although the celebrations had changed there form there is no reason to presuppose that those sentiments were not present before that date.
Similar vagueness surrounds the religious sentiments expressed through the celebrations. The earliest record of a celebration in Lewes appeared in 1679 when Benjamin Harris recorded that he observed,

This day... a procession not unworthy taking notice of. In the first place went a company of young men armed with swords and muskets, pikes &c. like a company of soldiers; next several pictures were carried upon long poles... the first being a Jesuit represented with a bloody sword and a pistol, with this inscription: 'Our Religion is Murder, Rapine and Rebellion'... Just before the Pope marched Guy Faux with his dark Lanthorn, being booted and spurred after the Old Fashion... Next comes the Pope with his Cross Keys, Crosier, Staffe and other Fopperies, having his train borne up by several of his clergy, being saluted as he passed. There were between twenty and thirty boys with vizards, and two or three who had their faces painted after an antick manner, one whereof carried Holy Water in a tin pot, sprinkling the people with a bottle-brush. In this manner they having carried his Holiness through the Town and Streets adjacent, at night, after they had first degraded him, they committed him to the flames.(137)

It seems unlikely that this was the normal form of celebration in Lewes, being more likely a single incident reflecting popular consternation at the revelations of popish plots made by Titus Oats(138). London witnessed large processions and the burning of papal effigies the same year. The credulity with which Oate's accusations were received reflected the paranolac fear of catholicism found at every level of English society at this time(139). Similar 'No Popery' processions had occurred in London since the unpopular marriage between James and the Catholic princess, Mary of Modena, in 1673, and continued under the auspices of the Green Ribbon Club until 1681(140).
Stevenson comments that 'No Popery' played an important part in the xenophobic and patriotic attitudes characteristic of many eighteenth century disturbances particularly those that occurred during the Protestant Association's campaign of 1778-1780(141). In the popular mind patriotism and anti-catholicism were inextricably intertwined. The Papacy was considered an alien political and religious power which, under the leadership of the Antichrist, the Pope, sought to impose its dominion over Great Britain. Popery was an attack on the British constitution and a threat to Englishmens' liberties(142). To what extent these beliefs permeated the Lewes celebrations at this time is impossible to ascertain due to inadequate evidence. Anti-catholicism was expressed at the time of the passing of the Emancipation Act in 1829, a petition from the congregation of the Independent Calvinist chapel of Jireh(143) being sent to Parliament, but no manifestation of opposition is reported during the celebrations(144).

However popular anti-catholicism was an intrinsic feature of the celebrations following 1853, and while reports make no reference to anti-Catholic manifestations prior to this opponents at the time claimed that anti-catholicism was a motivating factor. Describing four groups of subscribers to the celebrations Bacon claims the fourth class, 'proh pudor! desecrate the sacred name of religion, and contribute their mite to keep alive the flame of sectarian strife'(145). Lower similarly refers to the religious dimension when he comments that, 'if there are any, who from religious prepossession or otherwise, feel
called upon to commemorate the anniversary of Gunpowder
Plot, I am sure they will see the reasonableness of
confining their rejoicing to their own premises, without
annoyance or danger to their neighbours'(146). However
Lower's words were not heeded, the bonfire boys preparing to
confront the mounting opposition that had been the
consequence of their attack on Blackman.

Notes

2. S.W.A., 0.11.1773.
3. According to a churchwarden's account book on 'Nov ye
5th: Pd. ye ringers being ye day of Deliverance from ye
powder plot .. 2/6.' Cited in the official programme of
the Lewes Borough Bonfire Society, 1974.
4. An entry in the Town Records refers 'To giving notice
about the Bonfire, and watching the same 0.2s.0.' Cited
in the S.A.E., 12.2.1907.
5. S.W.A., 12.11.1798.
8. Hampshire Chronicle, 14.11.1785, cited in BUSHAWAY
9. 'Squibbing' is a term used to describe the practice of
throwing a firework known as a 'squib' in the street.
The characteristic of this firework was that it would
shoot along the ground with great velocity and
unpredictability, with a tendency to ricochet into the
air when it hit an obstacle. In Lewes this homemade
squib is nicknamed the 'Lewes Rouser'.
10. S.W.A., 9.11.1795.
11. S.W.A., 13.11.1797.
12. S.W.A., 10.11.23. This incident is corroborated many
years later by the child whose bed it was; see ELLMAN,
Rev.E.B. (1912), Recollections of a Sussex Parson,
13. S.W.A., 11.11.1799.
14. S.W.A., 6.11.1797.
15. E.S.R.O., Q0/EW38.
16. S.W.A., 9.11.07. The charge stated that the accused
'did riotously and injuriously collect and place and
cause and procure to be collected and placed a large
quantity of combustible materials to wit one hundred
faggots of wood and ten cart loads of straw ...and caused it to be lit.'

17. S.W.A., 9.11.07.
18. S.W.A., 7.11.08.

20. The apparent inactivity of the bonfire boys during the first two decades of the nineteenth century and increasing determination of the authorities to suppress the celebrations, can be explained by reference to external factors arising from the existing national political situation. At this time the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars provoked fear of revolution at home and the threat of invasion. The south coast, being considered vulnerable to invasion, witnessed the construction of a string of Martello towers and a growth in local militias. These fears led the authorities to view with distrust any popular disturbance among the 'lower orders' under whatever auspices, political, economic or recreational, and following the defeat of Napoleon the repressive government of Lord Liverpool acted firmly against any potential or actual disturbance, legislation adding to the general climate of opinion in the country. See BRIGGS, A (1959), The Age of Improvement, London: Longman, pp.207-216; WOOD, A. (1960), Nineteenth Century Britain, 1815-1914, London: Longman, pp.46-52; WESTERN, J.R. (1956), 'The Volunteer Movement as an Anti-Revolutionary Force', English History Review, vol.LXXI, no.281, (Oct.1956), pp.603-614.

22. B.G., 13.11.23.
23. PHYTHIAN-ADAMS (1975), pp.31-32.
24. S.W.A., 12.11.27 and 24.11.27.
27. S.W.A., 7.11.34.
28. B.G., 2.11.43.
29. S.A.E., 11.11.48.
30. B.G., 8.11.32.
31. S.W.A., 12.11.32.

32. The move from the traditional site at the top of School Hill to outside the County Hall was made possible by the demolition of the old Town Hall building in 1810. The building had been situated in the middle of the road between the County Hall and the White Hart opposite. The new firesite was used until 1906 when street fires were finally banned.

33. E.S.R.O., QR/E819.
34. S.W.A., 13.11.37.
35. S.A.E., 10.11.38 and 11.11.43.
36. S.W.A., 15.11.41.

38. The use of disguise was illegal under the Waltham Black Act of 1720. Initially directed at poachers 'but the Act had scarcely been passed before it was enlarged by successive judgements so that arming and/or Blacking might constitute in themselves capital offences'. See

39. S.A.E., 10.11.38.
40. P.R.O., ASSI 36/4.
41. S.W.A., 9.11.47.
42. S.W.A., 15.11.41.
43. LOWER, M.A. (1846), Observations on the Doings in Lewes on the Evening of the Fifth of November, 1846, with a few words to parties interested, Lewes; G.P. Bacon. This pamphlet was published anonymously under the pseudonym 'An Old Inhabitant', but it has been subsequently attributed to Lower.

44. Ibid., pp.9-10.
45. S.W.A., 6.11.1797.
46. S.A.E., 25.3.48.
47. S.A.E., 12.11.42.
48. S.A.E., 9.11.44.
49. B.G., 9.11.48.
50. B.G., 11.11.47.
51. S.W.A., 19.10.47.
52. STEVENSON (1979), pp.10-11.

53. According to the Riot Act of 1715 a riot was said to have occurred if 12 or more persons remained assembled an hour after the reading of the Riot Act. Those who did so were guilty of a felony. Under common law riot was a violent and co-operative action by three or more people. It seems likely that the charge of riot was arbitrarily applied to any size crowd that was considered hostile.

54. E.S.R.O., QR/E710.
55. P.R.O., ASSI 35/267/5.
56. P.R.O., ASSI 35/282/3.
57. P.R.O., ASSI 35/267/5.
58. S.A.E., 10.11.38.
60. S.W.A., 12.11.27. Charges brought against the rioters in 1827 recorded assaults against eight men, all local tradesmen who were probably acting as special constables. See P.R.O., ASSI 35/267/5.

61. B.G., 12.11 29.
62. E.S.R.O., QR/E802.
63. S.A.E., 10.11.34.
64. S.A.E., 10.11.38.
65. P.R.O., ASSI 35/282/3.
66. S.A.E., 13.11.41.
67. S.W.A., 10.11.46.
68. S.A.E., 7.11.46.
69. S.A.E., 7.11.93. The correspondent stated that Blackman 'came out of his house near the bridge and tried to stop the "run". In the heat of the moment someone struck him with a cudgel and broke his arm'.

70. S.W.A., 10.11.46.

73. For a general discussion of these 'opposing' theories see TILLY, C., TILLY, L. and TILLY, R. (1975), The
76. For example, see BRIGGS (1959), Chapter 1.
78. S.A.E., 11.11.48.
86. For example, the population of Brighton increased from 7,339 in 1801 to 65,569 by 1851. Similarly the population of Hastings increased from 3,175 to 17,621 over the same period.
88. MALCOLMSON (1973), p.159 and 140.
89. S.W.A., 10.11.46.
90. S.A.E., 7.11.46.
91. S.A.E., 27.11.47.
92. S.W.A., 30.11.47.
93. MALCOLMSON (1973), pp.5-14 and 89-107.
95. LOWER (1846), p.9.
96. LOWER (1846), pp.3-4.
97. S.W.A., 13.11.49.
98. S.W.A., 12.11.50.
99. Describing the characteristics of a crowd Le Bon lists 'impulsiveness, irritability, incapacity to reason, the absence of judgement and of the critical spirit, the
exaggeration of sentiments, and others besides'. Such characteristics he claims 'are almost always observed in beings belonging to inferior forms of evolution - in women, savages, and children, for instance'. According to 'contagion theorists', within such a crowd the individual becomes subsumed through a process of 'imitation' and 'mental contagion'. He ceases to think rationally, becoming a mindless actor in a mass of people that takes on its own single identity. The crowd, according to Tarde, becomes a 'single animal, a wild beast without a name'. See LE BON, G. (1896), The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind, London: T. Fisher Unwin (6th Impression, 1909); TARDE, G. (1912), Penal Philosophy, cited in BARROWS, S. (1981), Distorting Mirrors: Visions of the Crowd in Late 19th Century France, New Haven: Yale U.P., p.145.


102. S.A.E., 10.11.38.


104. S.W.A., 13.11.49.

105. S.A.E., 27.11.47.

106. MALCOLMSON (1973), p.70.


108. RUDE, G. (1980), Ideology and Popular Protest, London: Lawrence & Wishart. Rude's use of the term 'popular' is very different from that of Malcolmson. While Malcolmson uses it to describe a middle class ideology, expressed through their attitude to the recreational activities of working people, Rude employs the term with reference to the ideology of the working people themselves. Although there are similarities between the two ideologies they do not automatically lead to the same attitudes within a given situation, the former being paternalistic while the latter is a source for action.


111. SHELTON, W.J. (1973), English Hunger and Industrial


114. TILLY (1975, p.75) notes that while violent protest occurred between 1838 and 1848 the price of bread was not particularly high, but when it was, in the 1850's, there was little violence.


120. RUDE (1964), p.257.


122. TURNER and KILLIAN (1972), pp.22-29.


130. Only 40 of those arrested are recorded in the poll books, many of these appearing only occasionally.


132. S.W.A., 8.11.1773.

133. S.W.A., 8.11.1773.

134. S.W.A., 6.11.1797.

135. S.A.E., 12.11.42.

136. S.A.E., 9.11.44.

137. HARRIS, B. (1679), The Domestick Intelligence, no 39, 18th November, 1679.


140. FURLEY, O.W. (1959), 'The Pope Burning Processions of
the Late Seventeenth Century', *History*, vol.XLIV, (1959), pp.16-23.

141. See STEVENSON (1979); CASTRO (1926).
143. E.S.R.O., NI/5/6.
145. S.W.A., 10.11.46.
146. LOWER (1846), p.8.
CHAPTER 5

1847: THE YEAR OF 'CRISIS'

Non-Intervention: Support or Weakness?

Following the 'breach' caused by the assault of Henry Blackman the social drama entered a period of 'crisis' during which the various groups involved developed strategies to achieve their divergent objectives. In this chapter the events of 1847 are described and salient issues discussed as they arise. In January magistrates at the Quarter Sessions meeting resolved to take action against the celebrations. During October a petition calling for the suppression of the celebrations was submitted to the Bench. This action by a group of Liberal activists provoked the 'crisis' during which a large number of inhabitants were reluctantly sworn in as special constables to assist in the curtailment of the bonfire boys' activities. Events on the 'Fifth' are described before consideration is given to the 'redressive' measures taken through the use of the courts.

Public pressure prompted the authorities into action. Laws prohibiting fires, tar barrels and squibbing already existed, but the authorities frequently chose not to enforce them. Even following the assault a certain reluctance to act is detectable. The Advertiser rejoiced 'on every ground' that, 'it has been determined to issue handbills offering a large reward for the discovery and apprehension of the parties whose ruffianly conduct towards Mr Blackman has
excited such strong and universal reprobation' (1). The Express reports the reward offered was £50 (2). But this optimism was not realised. Three 'boys', Edward Stanford, William Hemsley and John Alderton, arrested on the 5th November appeared before magistrates. Two were released into the surety of their fathers, being ordered to appear at the next Quarter Sessions while Alderton was discharged on promising to appear when called. No further reference to the three boys appears in either press or Quarter Sessions records, suggesting that further action was not pursued. Neither is there mention of any arrests resulting from the offered reward.

This apparent unwillingness or inability to act at this stage did not deter opponents of the celebrations from requesting the authorities to act on their behalf, Lower concluding his pamphlet thus,

I most earnestly request the Right Honourable, the Earl of Chichester, and the other magistrates constituting the Lewes Bench, having the long period of a year before them, to give the whole matter their most serious consideration; and I trust after due deliberation, will feel themselves imperatively called upon to adopt such decisive measures as will certainly prevent even an attempt on the part of those usually concerned in the unseemly proceedings in Lewes to carry on. (3)

His plea did not go unanswered. The matter of the Lewes riots was discussed at the January Quarter Sessions (4) where a scapegoat was sought. Serjeant D'Oyly reported that Captain Mackay had acted on the instructions of the Lewes Bench of Magistrates. In their own defence J.V. Shelly and R.W. Blencowe claimed they had received a written request
from the Constables of Lewes, Benjamin Flint and John Hilton, not to interfere.

Magistrates and local officials were able to exercise considerable discretion in how they acted towards popular disturbances and a number of factors may have influenced the two constables to recommend non-intervention. Was action necessary and if it was, did they have sufficient control agencies at their disposal with which to contain the disturbances? Assuming they had, would intervention prevent the disturbance or, as it previously had, provoke it? Beyond their role as law enforcers their personal attitudes towards the celebrations have to be considered. Did they sympathise with, or give tacit support to, the bonfire boys? Were they, as members of a local political elite, implicated in the celebrations? The local nature of the disturbances may also have been influencing their decisions. Magistrates and town officials had to confront rioters with whom they might have a variety of political and social ties within the community.

These factors may be taken in turn. There were some among the town's middle class who were prepared to tolerate, if not support the celebrations. The Express reflected this attitude when it remarked that 'so long as the parties do no harm, there perhaps is no serious objection to our local act lying in abeyance for a few hours'(6). The celebrations were rowdy and dangerous, but little of serious consequence occurred. A few windows were broken, but no houses were fired or destroyed, assaults were perpetrated, but rarely
caused serious injury. The celebrations, perceived as riotous by some, did not constitute a threat to the social order. Distinguishing between three main characteristics of popular action Thompson(7) identifies the 'anonymous tradition', the tendency to acts of violence or damage to property. He attributes the nature of this violence to deference with a threat, the common people reminding the gentry of their paternalistic duties. These acts more often sought to inflict or exert pressure rather than to indulge in bloodshed or indiscriminate damage. Having cognizance of this body of opinion in the town and the knowledge that the celebrations did not constitute a real threat, the magistrates may have felt inclined not to act against them.

The inactivity of the magistrates may also have been determined by a lack or resources preventing them from taking effective action. The latter was due mainly to inadequate forces at their disposal. It was not until 1840 that the Chief Constable and 15 constables appeared before the magistrates to take the Constabulary Oath, thus establishing the East Sussex Constabulary, and then only one sergeant and three constables were stationed in Lewes(8). Prior to this law enforcement was the responsibility of local inhabitants, parish constables and special constables sworn in to police the celebrations(9). On occasions when the authorities had attempted to intervene they had met with determined resistance and failure. This problem was acknowledged by Sir Henry Shiffner during the Quarter Sessions discussions when he admitted that 'I am quite satisfied that our police are insufficient to put down these
riots. If they are put down, it must be by military force'(10). The local magistracy appear to have been reluctant to take such an extreme measure.

Secondly, the dilemma of intervention provoking a riot had to be resolved. Quiet years were sometimes attributed to stringent action taken by the authorities. Conversely, years when major disturbances did occur, as in 1841, the bonfire boys were forewarned of the action to be taken against them resulting in their 'mobilization for action under a hostile belief' leading to what Smelser(11) terms a 'hostile outburst'. The magistrates could avoid precipitating this situation, particularly as it was one in which they felt vulnerable, by taking no action.

Lack of determination on the part of the authorities may also have been influenced by an influential group of inhabitants sharing the 'popular' ideology expounded by the Express. Stevenson argues that a 'mob' is often licensed to act by the local community(12) and the opponents of the celebrations constantly claimed that the activities of the bonfire boys were condoned and encouraged by many inhabitants. The Gazette observed that 'many of the tradesmen openly wink at the proceedings and cannot be brought to co-operate with the Constabulary'(13). Shiffner alludes to this support when speaking at the Constable's Dinner in October, 1847. He begged the question,

Has there not been exerted... a "moral influence" - if it deserves the term - of directly opposite tendency? Have not many of the respectable inhabitants, so called, used that influence to sway, to aid, and to encourage the
enactment of the very disturbances complained of. Have not large sums been subscribed for the purpose of furnishing forth the ailment by which these outbreaks have been fed. And have not still larger amounts been disbursed in order to defray the costs of defending the peacebreakers from the consequences of their misdeeds? ...and it is equally patent that sums thus levied and thus disbursed have been raised - not by operatives - not by mechanics - not by the actual rioters, but by those very persons whose "moral influence" might and ought to have been exercised to so widely different an end.(14)

Little documentary evidence exists to substantiate these accusations. The accounts of Sir Ferdinando Poole suggest he was giving financial support during the 1780's(15). Poole lived in Lewes, was Sheriff of the County for 1789-90, a man of the turf and a friend of the Prince of Wales(16). In 1826 a subscription was raised to pay a bonfire boy's fine(17) and in the following year a similar subscription raised money to employ defence counsel for some of the rioters(18). However the organisers and contributors remain anonymous. The only other named person to be associated with the celebrations as a supporter was Benjamin Flint, the town's High Constable in 1846. Refusing to request the intervention of the police he subsequently chaired a committee of local tradesmen to organize, and presumably to finance, the 1848 celebration. Flint, was a local grocer and cheesemonger, an Anglican and a Conservative supporter who did not transfer his allegiance to the Peelite faction in 1847, all suggesting that he would have embraced the 'popular' ideology.

Further, less conclusive, evidence suggests support for the celebrations from the town's gentry and tradesmen.
Individuals involved in two incidents during the 1846-1847 social drama may have been acting the way they did as a consequence of their support for the celebrations. The first incident centres on the reluctance of many called to act as special constables on the 5th November, 1847. One hundred and seventy inhabitants were summonsed, but the Express reports 'the strongest disinclination to serve was manifest by the great majority'(19). Following a meeting in the Star Inn during the evening prior to the day they were due to be sworn a deputation consisting of Henry Saxby, chemist; Edward Chatfield, merchant; Thomas Hillman, merchant; and George Knight, butcher, presented a memorial to the Earl of Chichester signed by 108 of the 170. It stated that they were averse to the action being taken by the magistrates, 'as it would materially affect feelings and private interests'(20).

Two explanations for their antipathy suggest themselves, support for the celebrations or fear of reprisals if they were seen acting against them. Tenuous evidence supports the first explanation. Of the 170 only 20 names appear in various press reports (see Figure 5.1). Five were excused due to 'divers infirmities'. A further seven were 'very reluctantly' sworn. Of these, three appear possible supporters of the celebrations. Benjamin Batchelor Buckman asked to be excused on account of a bad finger, but in 1841 he stood surety for David Arnold, a young tinman accused of throwing fireballs on the Fifth(21). Similarly John Gibbs had stood surety for Henry Gander, a coal porter accused of riot and assault in the same year(22). The son of
Figure 5.1: Biographical profiles of the 20 known persons summoned to serve as special constables in 1847

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Age(a)</th>
<th>Place of birth</th>
<th>Pol.(b)</th>
<th>Rel.(c)</th>
<th>Town Official</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Back</td>
<td>146 High St</td>
<td>Posting master</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Rodmell, Sx</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Tab</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Bates</td>
<td>North St</td>
<td>Beershop keeper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Berry</td>
<td>High St</td>
<td>Wine merchant</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Ang(d)</td>
<td>H'borough(1849)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin B. Buckman</td>
<td>24 Dolphin Lane</td>
<td>Cooper</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Wes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Chatfield</td>
<td>High St</td>
<td>Timber merchant</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>H'borough(1844)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Elan</td>
<td>High St</td>
<td>Poulterer</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Arlington, Sx</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Wes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Gibbs</td>
<td>High St</td>
<td>M. Shoemaker</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Ang(e)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Hillman</td>
<td>North St (Cliffe)</td>
<td>Corn/coal merchant</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Jeffery jnr.</td>
<td>High St</td>
<td>Grocer</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Peelite</td>
<td>Ang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Knight</td>
<td>High St</td>
<td>Butcher</td>
<td>20(f)</td>
<td>Lewes(g)</td>
<td>No poll</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.S. Lempriere</td>
<td>High St</td>
<td>Tailor</td>
<td>40(f)</td>
<td>Sussex</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Medhurst</td>
<td>High St</td>
<td>Millwright</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Beddington, Sx</td>
<td>Lib(h)</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Morris</td>
<td>High St (S'over)</td>
<td>Wine merchant</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Laughton, Sx</td>
<td>Con</td>
<td>Jir(1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William North</td>
<td>High St (Cliffe)</td>
<td>Tea dealer</td>
<td>40(f)</td>
<td>Hampshire</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>n.con(j)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Saxby</td>
<td>High St</td>
<td>M. Chemist</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Chariton, Kent</td>
<td>Peelite</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Jury(1837 &amp; 46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Steere</td>
<td>West St</td>
<td>M. Miller</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Con</td>
<td>Jir</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josiah Weller</td>
<td>31 North St</td>
<td>Sadler</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>FIrle, Sx</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Tab</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Wilde</td>
<td>South St</td>
<td>Timber merchant</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Tab</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Wood</td>
<td>High St (Cliffe)</td>
<td>Brewer</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbreviations:  
Ang (Anglican), C (Conservative),  
H'borough (Headborough), Jir (Jireh), Lib (Liberal),  
M (master), n.con (non-conformist), Pol (Politics),  
Rel (Religion), S'over (Southover), Sx (Sussex),  
Tab (Tabernacle), Wes (Wesleyan).

Notes:  
a. 1851 census;  b. 1847 poll book;  c. Ascribed according to parochial/non-parochial registers.  
d. Some children baptized at Jireh, but buried at All Saints;  e. Children baptized at Bethesda, but then at South Malling and St Anne's;  f. 1841 census;  g. Born Sussex (1841 CEB), but baptized at All Saints;  h. No vote recorded, but voted Liberal in 1859 and 1860;  i. Baptized at Jireh, but buried at St John's, Southover;  j. Buried as a non-conformist.
the third reluctant person, John Bates, was in 1845 fined 18/- for letting off squibs (23). Three men, Samuel Medhurst, William North and John Steere were each fined £5 for refusing to serve.

These six men represent an insufficient number from which to draw any reasonable conclusion, but they do not conform to the Conservative Anglican, Liberal-Nonconformist division suggested by Malcolmson. Four were Liberal voters in 1847, one a Conservative and one recorded no vote. Four belonged to nonconformist sects. The two likely supporters, Buckman and Gibbs were a Liberal Weslyan and a Peelite Calvinist respectively, and as such, may be considered the least likely to support the celebrations (24).

An interesting fact about the remaining 14 who were called to serve as special constables is their political affiliation. Eight were Liberals, two were Peelites and only two were Conservative voters. No conclusions can be drawn from such a small portion of the 170 called, but of the 19 who were reluctant to serve 12 were Liberals, six of whom were also nonconformist, exactly those people Malcolmson suggests would oppose popular recreation thus prompting the question of why they were reluctant to serve.

This leads onto the second explanation for the manifest reluctance to serve. Fear of reprisal could not have been far from the minds of many. Lower had intimated this fear when he warned,

Let any individual only be suspected by the mob as unfavourable to them, and forthwith he is a
marked man - if he ventures among them he is personally ill-used and insulted, or his house beset, with tar-barrels drawn to the front of it and burnt(25).

Recollections of previous assaults on special constables during the celebrations must have also been influential, Mr Beard, speaking to those assembled to be sworn, commenting that 'it was no joke to have their heads broken'(26). During the same discussions genuine fears were also expressed by John Gibbs, who was concerned for his family and home. On being called he stated that,

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his house was situated in a part of the town where more fireworks were let off than any other place. He had an afflicted wife and six children to protect, and how was he to do it if he were called away... If I am called away in another direction, my house may be burnt, my family may suffer, and I may lose my all (awl).(27)
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His emphasis on the last word caused 'great laughter', according to the Gazette, on account of Gibbs being a shoemaker. It may therefore be concluded that fear led many to attempt to avoid being sworn as special constables.

The second incident suggesting support from the gentry involved the Fullagar family. John Edward Fullagar was a Lewes solicitor. The extent of his wealth is reflected in his employment, in 1851, of a governess for his four children, two female servants and a groom. An Anglican, he had voted Conservative until Fitzroy's defection when he ceased to vote in general elections. One of his sons, Walter H. Fullagar, 'only recently admitted to practice as an attorney in His Majesty's Superior Courts at Westminster'(28) was accused of being a party to a squib
attack on the house of William Button, a staunch Liberal and opponent of the celebrations. Two lads were accused of tying squibs, allegedly supplied by Walter Fullagar, to the door of Button's house. While the magistrates agreed that Button 'had been annoyed by a serious outrage upon his property'(29), insufficient evidence prevented Fullagar's conviction. The Fullagars were again implicated in encouraging the bonfire boys when, in 1847, Joseph Harbour, one of John Fullagar's servants was arrested for stealing a tar barrel from the South Coast Railway Company, presumably to drag through the streets(30).

How influential this illusive group of supporters were is equally difficult to determine, but the inconsistent approach of the magistracy to the celebrations may however reflect their rising and declining influence. Following the 1847 disturbances two J.P.'s, John Ellman and Sir Henry Shiffner, were instrumental in providing the bonfire boys with an alternative firesite, but their public statements and sentencing prior to this indicate that when the climate of opinion was such they were prepared to act severely against the bonfire boys. Addressing the Grand Jury at Quarter Sessions after the assault on Blackman, Shiffner preferred the more radical solution.

He thought that the magistrates - he had stated it over and over again - were called upon to prevent those disgraceful scenes which had occurred in the town of Lewes for many years... He had offered to take all the responsibility on himself of calling in the military from Brighton in support of the civil forces; and he would do so again, for he thought this was the only course that ought to be adopted, and that the Magistrates ought not to place the police in a situation to
have their heads broken by a lawless rabble.(31)

Similar determination was expressed by other magistrates present. John Villiers Shelly asserted the right of the magistrates to act independently of public opinion when he stated 'that he would not ask the opinion of the town at all. It was the business of the Magistrates of the county, whether it was the opinion of the town or not, to put a stop to such occurrences'(32).

The magistrates' resolve had been reflected previously, harsh sentences being meted out to those accused of rioting. Of 116 men arrested during the celebrations between 1806 and 1847 only six were discharged. On three occasions, 1806, 1829 and 1847, a total of 18 rioters were sent to Quarter Sessions, with a further 39 appearing before the Assizes in 1827, 1841 and 1847. Most fines ranged between 20/- and 40/-, sometimes increased by costs, and frequently accompanied by the alternative of a prison sentence. Those appearing before the Assizes received prison sentences of between 14 days and six months. Only in 1827, when twelve rioters were discharged from Assizes after entering into their own recognizance of £20 each, and in 1843 when three rioters appearing before the local Bench were only fined 5/- to 10/-, is there any sign of leniency shown that might be construed as reflecting tacit support for the celebrations by the magistrates.

At other times those supporting the celebrations appear to have been in the ascendancy, the magistrates following a policy of non-intervention. Following the 1841 disturbances
a letter appeared in the Advertiser with the following observation.

...there was considerable greater tumult than has been experienced here for some years. This has by many persons been ascribed to the placards previously published, and to the rumoured concentration of the whole of the Constabulary Force in this place - for were it not for some such exciting cause, something whereon to whet the edge of desire for what is called "a spree", the observance of this day would shortly be obsolete. I do not say it would cease, but without any opposing body (except so far as the preservation of the peace and protection of property is concerned) which but imparts zest to the effervescent spirits of the turbulent, the bonfire and its consequences would soon appear flat and tame and in time entirely subside.(33)

Reports in 1842 suggest the police took this advice, the Gazette reporting that the celebration was 'a tame affair', the police not interfering(34). Non-intervention appears to have continued, the Gazette, in 1843 noting that 'No notices were issued on this occasion, nor were the police called out'(35).

The policy of non-intervention did not meet with unanimous approval. 'A HINT', in a letter to the Express asked 'what has become of the police for which this town is so heavily taxed I cannot divine, but they have hitherto made no attempt to put a stop to this disgraceful state of things'(36). Those opposing this policy felt vindicated by the assault on Blackman and began to voice their feelings. Shiffner spoke of former occasions when 'the Magistrates... had been assured that the proceedings would cease of themselves, if they were not interfered with', but while there had been no interference 'the nuisance, instead of
ceasing, has only become greater' (37). While Shiffner condemned those who had suggested non-intervention, Bacon, through the Advertiser, criticised the authorities for taking such advice.

We say deliberately... it is impossible for the town to shake off the discredit of acts which, though it may disavow, it nevertheless sanctions by a tacit sufferance... It has several magistrates resident within its walls; it has a paid constabulary force, and it has highly respectable officers periodically elected to preserve the peace of the borough. Despite all this, magistrates, police and borough officers alike sit quietly by, and witness the annual infraction of the peace... passive observers of acts which peril the property if not the lives of its inhabitants. (38)

The Developing 'Crisis': The Magistrates Respond

Discussions at the January Quarter Sessions in 1847 however signified the magistrate's intent to abandon their non-interventionist policy and to take measures to prevent disturbances occurring on the 'Fifth'. The magistrates' intentions were raised at the Headborough's Luncheon in May, following which 'An Old Inhabitant, but not one of the Jury' observed that 'it seemed to be the sentiment of all present that the time had arrived that this annual scene of riot and misrule should be abolished... and it now only remains for them by one united effort to rid the town forever of a disgraceful demoralizing and dangerous practice' (39).

Concern however was expressed on how this could be achieved. Mr Shelly considered 60 men 'united for a legal purpose would be more than a match for double the number bent on an illegal one' (40), but Shiffner doubted whether
the whole of the Sussex Constabulary, numbering only 28 men at this time, would be sufficient. Mr Molineux, an old Lewes inhabitant, thought that only the military could put a stop to the celebrations.

Opponents of the celebrations must have been encouraged by this change of policy. Early in September a petition signed by 32 leading inhabitants was presented to the Lewes Bench of Magistrates. Recalling previous 'tumultuous and riotous proceedings' the petitioners went on to request 'that you (the magistrates) will take this subject under your serious consideration and adopt measures that shall prevent the repetition of such scenes' (41). The existence of the petition was publicised by Bacon through the Advertiser's editorial. He claimed that 'The disgrace... has... been partially wiped away by the efforts of a few of the inhabitants who not only excited themselves at the time to discover offenders, but who have since adopted such steps as they deemed most calculated to put down the evil complained of.' (42)

Those opposing the celebrations had previously remained a shadowy group, but the petition provides evidence of whom these 'few' inhabitants were, which presents an opportunity to consider their motives and the extent of their influence in the town. The names and biographical details of the 32 signatories are set out in Figure 5.2 and it is from this data that their motives for opposing the celebrations can be deduced.

Twenty seven lived in the High Street, twelve of these
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Age(a)</th>
<th>P of B</th>
<th>Pol(b)</th>
<th>Rel(c)</th>
<th>Town Officer</th>
<th>No of Employees(c)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>George Adams(d)</td>
<td>197 High St, AS</td>
<td>M. Cabinetmaker</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>No poll</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Atwood</td>
<td>39-40 High St, AS</td>
<td>Ironmonger</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Norw</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George P. Bacon</td>
<td>64 High St, St M</td>
<td>Printer/publisher</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td>Norw</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar Blaker</td>
<td>211 High St, AS</td>
<td>Solicitor</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Blaker Jr.</td>
<td>Priory Cres., S'over</td>
<td>Solicitor</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Browne</td>
<td>214 High St, AS</td>
<td>Dyer</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Button</td>
<td>33 High St, Cliffe</td>
<td>Schoolmaster</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Tab</td>
<td>Jir(7)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Cook</td>
<td>High St, Cliffe</td>
<td>Corn/coal merchant</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>H'Borough</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Cooke</td>
<td>89 High St, St M</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles S. Cooper</td>
<td>High St, M</td>
<td>Solicitor's son</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Crosskey</td>
<td>214 High St, AS</td>
<td>Dyer</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
<td>Spalding, Kt</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>H. Const.</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Davey(e)</td>
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<td>Painter/plumber</td>
<td>55</td>
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<td>Lib</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Pigg</td>
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<td>Land surveyor</td>
<td>47</td>
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<td>Lib</td>
<td>Qua</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burwood Godlee</td>
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<td>Corn/coal merchant</td>
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<td>H'Borough</td>
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<td>3 High St, AS</td>
<td>M. Shoemaker</td>
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<td>Acliston, Sx</td>
<td>Lib</td>
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<td>Gabriel Grover</td>
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<td>Tea dealer</td>
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<td>Com(7)</td>
<td>Ang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nathaniel W. Hale</td>
<td>High St, AS</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Nathan Hammond</td>
<td>42 High St, AS</td>
<td>M. Baker</td>
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<td>Lib</td>
<td>Bapt</td>
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<td>John Harvey</td>
<td>6 High St, Cliffe</td>
<td>Wine merchant</td>
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<td>Ang</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Harvey</td>
<td>33 North St, AS</td>
<td>Brewer/merchant</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>Lib</td>
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<td>Mark A. Lower</td>
<td>43 High St, AS</td>
<td>Bookseller</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chiddingly, Sx</td>
<td>Lib</td>
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<td>Rubeen W. Lower</td>
<td>169 High St, St M</td>
<td>Ironmonger</td>
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<td>High St, St J</td>
<td>Draper</td>
<td>36</td>
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<td>Lib</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Maxfield</td>
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<td>Grocer</td>
<td>46</td>
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<td>Arthur Morris</td>
<td>19 High St, St M</td>
<td>Surgeon</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hampshire</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Call</td>
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<td>William H. Morrel</td>
<td>78 High St, St M</td>
<td>Surgeon</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ringmer, Sx</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Ang</td>
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<td>John Smith(f)</td>
<td>Fishers St, St J</td>
<td>Dyer</td>
<td>49</td>
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<td>Horsham, Sx</td>
<td>Peelite</td>
<td>Ang</td>
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<td>John Smith</td>
<td>High St, St J</td>
<td>Solicitor's clerk</td>
<td>48</td>
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<td>Pluckley, Dev</td>
<td>Lib</td>
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<td>William Weston</td>
<td>54 High St, St J</td>
<td>Hairdresser</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Randall Whiteman</td>
<td>172 High St, St M</td>
<td>Tailor/draaper</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Whittfeld</td>
<td>150 High St, AS</td>
<td>Banker</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>Peelite</td>
<td>Wes</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Abbreviations:
Ang (Anglican), AS (All Saints), Bapt (Baptist), Beth (Bethesda), Emp (Employees), Dev (Devon), Serv (Female servant), H'Borough (Headborough), H.Const (High Constable), Jir (Jireh), Kt (Kent), (Master), M.Serv (Male servant), P of B (Place of birth), Pol (Politics), Qua (Quaker), Rel (Religion), St J (St John's), St M (St Michael's), S/S (Souther), Sx (Sussex), Tab (Tabernacle), Unit (Unitarian), Wes (Wesleyan).

Notes:
- Age is estimated from the 1851 census. Where information is not available, the less reliable 1841 census was used.
- Political affiliation is determined by the 1847 poll book, in a few instances the 1841 poll book was used.
- Number of employees comes from information in the CEBs.
- The petition was signed by 'Adam and Son'. This was an understatement of George and John. However both were still resident at 197 High Street. It has therefore been assumed that George was the petitionary.

- William Jr was living in the same house as his father, William Sr, therefore it has been assumed that father signed the petition.
- There were a large number of John Smith's in the 1841 and 1851 censuses. Many, mainly because their social status was very different from that of the signatories, were not selected. Two John Smith's in the petition were closely connected with other signatories. However, a third John Smith could have been the signatory. His biographical profile was: High St, St Anne's, Estate Agent, age 59, born Ringmer, Sx., did not poll in 1847, but had previously voted Conservative, Anglican, one male and two female servants.
- Profile of William Jr., William Sr was still alive and could equally have been the signatory. His biographical profile was: 24 St Mary's Lane, M. Hairdresser, age 60, born Fletching, Sx., Peelite, Anglican.
on School Hill, the favourite place for the bonfire boys to roll their barrels. Their houses were therefore in the most immediate danger from fire and squibbing. But if the hazard of fire was their only motive why then did others living in the same area also not sign? There is sufficient evidence to argue that by coming together to pursue the suppression of the celebrations the signatories formed what can be defined as an 'action set'(43), a group of individuals who temporarily attuned their actions to each other in pursuit of a common objective. Either an individual or clique of signatories activated pre-existing social networks based on linkages arising from propinquity, political, religious and business connections.

As is indicated in Figure 5.2, socially the signatories represented a cross-section of professional, mercantile and trade interests. The majority were relatively wealthy, employing both male(44) and female servants and in some instances large numbers of employees. Some were influential in town affairs, nine having served as town officers or as members of the Jury(45) while others, including Bacon, John Blaker, Browne, Godlee and Morris attended a number of town meetings prior to 1847 and could therefore be described as active in town affairs. Nineteen of them were natives, a disproportionately high number, which taken with their involvement in the Jury suggests they represented a local ruling oligarchy of property owners(46).

The interconnectedness of the petitioners is further strengthened through family, business and friendship
relations. John and Edgar Blaker were brothers. Grover married Maxfield's sister, Mary, in 1833, John Harvey had married Delia Button, probably William's sister, in 1813, and John Smith, the draper, married John Maxfield's sister Elizabeth in 1831. Later, in 1864, John Maxfield Smith, the son of the draper, John Smith, married William Harvey's daughter, Alice. John Harvey and his son, William, were in business together. Business partnerships also existed between Browne and Crosskey, Maxfield and Smith, and Godlee and Jacob Cooke. Some were active in promoting the business development of the town. Brown and Godlee served on the committee set up to promote the Newhaven-Lewes Ship Canal in 1838, Edgar Blaker, Godlee and John Smith, the solicitor's clerk, were associated with the Lewes Savings Bank (47), and Bacon and M.A. Lower served on the 1851 Exhibition Committee. In another sphere of activity William Davey, Figg, and M.A. Lower, with two active magistrates, R.W. Blencowe and W.H. Blaaw, formed the ruling clique of the Sussex Archaeological Society during its formative years (48). Bacon and Button were also members of the Society at this time.

Equally significant is their religious and political affiliations. The ideological perspectives motivating these men to take action may be deduced from these affiliations. Fourteen were Anglicans, fifteen belonged to various nonconformist sects, seven to the Calvinist Methodist congregation of Tabernacle. The affiliation of two others is unknown. The significant feature emerges when this is linked with their political affiliation. Twenty were Liberal
voters, four had supported the Peelite candidate (49) in 1847, and only three had voted Conservative. In 1843 seven of the Liberals, John Blaker, Godlee, Goldsmith, Mark and Rueben Lower, Morris and John Smith, the draper, requested the use of County Hall for a meeting to be addressed by Richard Cobden M.P., supporting the abolition of the Corn Laws. Thus some of the signatories appear to represent a group of Liberal activists. Of the fifteen nonconformists fourteen were Liberals and one a Peelite. All three Conservatives were Anglicans. Linked with their non-conformity, this group of men, when taken as a whole, through their expression of the 'puritan' point of view represented the leading opponents of the bonfire boys.

Within the context of the developing social drama, the appearance of the petition and the subsequent expression of support for it by the magistracy marked the opening of the 'crisis', a period lasting through October, during which battle lines were drawn. Whether the petitioner's request prompted or added to the magistrates' resolve to suppress the celebrations is unimportant. Early in October a notice was issued by the Clerk of the Lewes Petty Sessions warning the bonfire boys of the magistrates' 'determination to use every means in their power to prevent such outrages and to punish the offenders' The notice went on to state that the Chief Constable, local Peace Officers and special constables would be employed and any 'other forces as the Justices, with the advice of her Majesty's Secretary of State, may deem it their duty to employ' (50). Shiffner, reiterating the magistrates' resolve at the Constable's Dinner on the 14th
October, called upon inhabitants of like mind to support them and expressed the hope that,

...the tradesmen of the town would use their legitimate influence, by example as well as by precept ...he felt confident that there was sufficient moral power inherent in the legitimate influence of the respectable inhabitants of the town, to effect the desired purpose ...he wished to urge ...that they should appeal to the reason of the operatives, so as to bring about a clear understanding of what was right. (51)

To use Donajgrodzki's (52) phrase, Shiffner was calling on inhabitants to act as 'social police'.

The assault on Blackman provided the opponents of the celebrations an opportunity to exert their influence, but the "sea-change" occurring in society at this time probably also rendered conditions conducive to their pressure. As Stevenson (53) and Gurr (54) argue, 'disturbance' and 'disorderly' are culturally relative concepts that can change. What was acceptable or tolerated behaviour in one situation at a certain time may be perceived differently in another place or time. The increasing influence of the 'Puritan' view was reflected through the changing political fortunes of the Conservative and Liberal factions in the town. Previously the town had displayed mixed political allegiance, a Conservative and Liberal frequently being sent to Parliament to represent the Lewes Constituency (55). But in 1847 the Conservatives were eclipsed, the sitting M.P., Sir Henry Fitzroy defecting to the Peelites. In the General Election of that year, in alliance with the Liberal candidate, Fitzroy received 71% of the votes against his two Conservative opponents. The Conservatives were not to enjoy
an election victory again in Lewes until 1874.

The Liberal's success brought to an end a period of political power sharing within the town, when probable lack of agreement among the ruling elite prevented a definite policy towards the celebrations. It may be no coincidence that only one of the four leading town officers in 1847 was a Conservative, the others being a Liberal and two Peelites. This shift in political complexion manifest itself in the change of attitude towards the celebrations. The bedrock social conservatism that had permeated all strata of Lewes society, and had protected the bonfire boys against their opponents was giving way to a developing Liberal 'puritan' ethos. This shift left the authorities feeling they would gain sufficient support from inhabitants to achieve the suppression of the celebrations.

This change coincided with an increasing sense of confidence among the law enforcers. Previously they had had to rely on local people to act as 'policemen'. These people were often known personally to those they were attempting to control and while they could exert a moral influence they also exposed themselves to retaliation and revenge. By the 1840's the local property owners and tradesmen were losing this role and were being replaced by the growing police force(56) which was subsequently used to support the efforts of the urban middle class through the suppression or sanitizing of popular recreational forms(57). This new anonymous face of social control was easier to employ and while the Lewes magistrates did enlist the assistance of a
body of local inhabitants as special constables they no longer had to rely only on this source for law enforcement.

At the Sessions on the 18th October it was reported that following discussions with the Secretary of State a body of London police would be made available to support the local constables. On the 30th October a second notice was issued by the Clerk to the Magistrates which again appealed to the 'principle Householders and Inhabitants' to use their influence to dissuade 'the junior members of their families, their servants, and their work people' from partaking in the celebrations(58). On the 2nd November, following initial reluctance, 170 local tradesmen and gentry were sworn in as special constables in support of the regular police and troops. According to the Gazette(59) two troops of Lancers at Brighton were kept under arms in readiness at a minute's notice if required, Charles Wille, in his diary, recording that they were stationed two miles outside Lewes, on the Brighton Road(60).

Thus the scene was set for confrontation. The press records the bonfire boys commencing promptly.

No sooner, however, had the clock struck twelve on Thursday night, and Guy Fawkes Day thus commenced, than a lighted tar barrel, held by a chain passed through it, was set rolling down the steep part of St Anne's Hill towards the High Street preceded by a man armed with a pick axe and disguised by a mask, and followed by about eighty others armed with bats and bludgeons, shouting and making an awful uproar. Captain Mackay, however, had been apprised of what was to take place, and with the approbation of the magistrates adopted a plan to suppress the nuisance and detect the rioters. At the foot of the hill by the residence of George Molineux he stationed about a dozen of his men, two of whom, were instructed to hold a
chain from side to side of the street, to be raised on the approach of the rioters. On their arrival at the spot in question, the chain was raised knee high, and over it fell several of the leaders, eight of whom were pounced upon by the police and conveyed to the station house, while their companions took flight.

At noon the body of London Police (80 men of 'A' Division) arrived at Lewes and took up their station in the Corn Exchange. At four o'clock the special constables mustered at the County Hall to receive their instructions and their staves. They were divided into four bodies, two of which... remained in Lewes while the other two were sent to Southover and Cliffe... After dusk a party lighted a bonfire on Cliffe Hill where they amused themselves harmlessly in exploding fireballs and fireworks. In the town a crowd assembled in the High Street opposite the County Hall, and amused themselves with using insulting expressions towards the police and special constables, an occasional rocket being exploded in the thickest part of the crowd... to about eight o'clock when a disposition was manifested by the crowd to go to greater lengths. Shortly after eight the Brighton Mail arrived; and the horse taking fright at a squib started off, and ran against the shop lately occupied by Mr Cheeseman, at the top of St Mary's Lane... the driver was thrown out with considerable violence, and sustained material injury to the spine...

The magistrates now determined to take active measures; and Lord Chichester, advancing to the front of the County Hall, addressed the crowd (who immediately became profoundly silent) expressing a desire that they should go home, and stating that the police would be ordered, at the expiration of five minutes, to clear the streets.'(61)

This report shows that although the bonfire boys were prepared to confront the police the authorities displayed restraint. They had mustered sufficient forces to contain any rioting, but the reading of the Riot Act was an attempt to avoid a potential conflict situation erupting into violence. The reading of the Act, Stevenson argues, 'in the face-to-face world of a smaller town or village, meant that the magistrates were serious in their intentions to
prosecute and that riotous proceedings would not be passed
off lightly'(62). Not all responded to Chichester's
ultimatum, but the press report the police retaining control
of the situation.

Many accordingly left the street, and in five
minutes on a word of command being given, the
police formed in double lines in front of the
Hall, and immediately one wheeled round and
proceeded up the street, driving the mob before
them. From this time the middle of the town
assumed nearly ordinary appearance.

At twelve o'clock the specials were sent
home; and on Saturday morning the London Police
departed by train, the aspect of the town being
such' as to induce the magistrates to think no
further attempt would be made to break the
peace.(63)

But the magistrates misjudged the determination of the
bonfire boys to resist. In the absence of law enforcers the
town became the scene of nightly disturbances for the rest
of the month. Crowds, often numbering more than a hundred,
congregated in the High Street throwing fireworks and
dragging tar barrels. According to the Gazette the town 'is
completely in the hands of the mob'(64). These events appear
to have been allowed to continue with apparent impunity
until, towards the end of the month special constables were
again sworn and extra police drafted in. It was only then
that rioting was finally suppressed.

The Bonfire Boys: A Manipulated Mob?

During the rioting the bonfire boys singled out the
houses of their opponents, the properties of two
petitioners, Button and Bacon, becoming the target of their
wrath. Bacon observed how his offices appeared to 'have been
expressly selected with the view to retaliation'.

For a considerable period hundreds of the mob were collected round this office and various modes of annoyance resorted to, but... nothing occurred until about twenty minutes past eleven, when a part, fully deserving the title we last week applied, viz - that of "lawless blackguards", rushed through the streets and discharged a volley of stones through the windows of an upstairs private sitting room.(65)

These were not random acts of violence, but an expression of animosity towards known opponents. Such incidents were not uncommon, a number of attacks on other Lewes properties being previously recorded. But whether these were manifestations of the perpetrators' feelings towards the occupants, or the result of random carelessness is unclear. Live coals and rockets were thrown at the house of Mr Adams by 'a person (as if to intimidate)... upon my looking out of the window'(66). During the 1830's a rocket was thrown through the windows of Mr Maxfield(67) and those of Mr Wells and his neighbour, Mr Abbott, were broken(68). These people shared two things in common, they lived either in, or adjacent to, the High Street and were wealthy, both of which may have led to them becoming targets. Others(69) have noted a predisposition of crowds to attack the homes of the wealthy irrespective of their sympathy towards the cause being promoted. But while the attacks on Button's and Bacon's properties may expose an underlying antagonism between rich and poor, they also indicate the presence of other motives.

Before considering these motives however it is necessary to explore the contradictory evidence supporting
and refuting the claim that the bonfire boys were being manipulated by others. Rude is critical of this conception of the crowd 'as the "passive" instrument of outside agents - "demagogues" or "foreigners"(70), but Thompson, distinguishes between quasi-insurrectionary and 'mob' behaviour. The latter is the outcome 'of the deliberate use of the crowd as an instrument of pressure, by persons "above" or apart from the crowd'(71). Various examples of manipulated mobs have been described(72) and many of these were already predisposed to being used because of the inherent popular sentiments towards such things as the monarchy, patriotism and anti-Catholicism.

The bonfire boys did present a guaranteed crowd every 5th November which only required being directed and encouraged, and that this occurred was alluded to by Lord Denman when summing up at the Assizes following the 1847 disturbances. In so doing he hinted at the motives of those who were encouraging the rioters.

It would appear that some persons in a superior station of life were absurd and stupid enough to employ these poor people in this way, to annoy a class of persons who did not agree with them in religious belief.(73)

Bacon was more expansive, arguing that those who supported the celebrations through their financial contributions did so for a number of reasons including "fun", the keeping up of "old custom" and to 'keep alive the flame of sectarian strife'(74). But whether the bonfire boys were being manipulated, as Denman suggests, or whether financial contributions were given out of a sense of paternalistic
patronage for an event of the common people is difficult to determine. Skelton rightly warns that while 'rehabilitating the historical crowd' one must not be 'reluctant to concede the manipulation of rioters by those outside the mob' (75). But in the case of the bonfire boys there is little or no evidence to support this contention.

However, certain political and religious tensions being acutely felt in 1847 may have motivated some to attempt to use the controversy surrounding the celebrations to their own advantage. Lewes saw two Parliamentary elections in 1847, a March by-election marked by controversy regarding previous corruption and a particularly acrimonious General Election in July. Besides controversy surrounding the effects of the Poor Law Removal Act and repeal of the Corn Laws, the candidate's professed determination to defend Protestantism against concessions towards Roman Catholics was much disputed at the hustings. Fitzroy and the Liberal, Perfect, were elected, to the chagrin of their opponents, a defeat that was more acutely felt due to Fitzroy's defection. If the Conservative faction did use the celebrations as a vehicle to reap revenge their action may be interpreted as opportunist rather than reflecting a prolonged policy of manipulation.

The extent to which the promoters became involved may indicate to what degree the celebrations were manipulated. A promoter, as Turner and Killian (76) argue, may participate openly or covertly, remaining at a safe distance. Some evidence suggests respectable people were actively involved.
Lower and Bacon claimed that such people were implicated in the assault on Blackman. Bacon deplored the fact 'that persons occupying what is termed a respectable position were amongst those who were so disguised' (77). 'I know', claimed Lower, 'the nephews, cousins, and connections of some of the principal inhabitants in the town are among you, and the legal, mercantile, and landed and other interests were fairly represented by those who were encouraging the disgraceful scenes enacted last night' (78). But there is little corroborative evidence for their claims. Of those arrested during the celebrations between 1800-1847 only three came from a higher social status group than the majority of those apprehended. In 1806 William West, a bargemaster, pleaded guilty at Quarter Sessions for rioting and in 1834 William Bartram, a draper and tailor (79) was fined for throwing fireworks. The third person, Fullagar, has already been discussed, but his involvement was as a 'manipulator' rather than a 'participant', being accused of encouraging others to act.

There are two explanations for the apparent absence of wealthy participants. They were either not involved, or they avoided arrest. The first, although there is little evidence to the contrary, seems unlikely. But how did they avoid arrest? The most likely answer was given by Abraham Baxter, a tanner of Southover, while giving a character reference for one of his employees, Rueben Barnes, arrested for rioting in 1838.

He thought it would be better if gentlemen, instead of prosecuting these poor men, would
prevent their own sons from going out in disguise and letting off fireworks. He saw fireworks let off by gentlemen in the very face of the constables, and no notice was taken of them. He did not like such partiality.(80)

While special constables were at risk from one section of the population they were however in a position to give protection to others of their own class.

The only other evidence of involvement by 'respectable' inhabitants is their willingness to stand surety for the bonfire boys arrested during the celebrations. Clearly Sir Henry Blackman and Plumer Egles may be described as 'gentlemen'. Which tradesmen were employers or employees is more difficult to determine, but using directory entries to ascribe status 16 of the sureties recorded in Figure 5.3 may be described as 'respectable'(81). Once identified, it is necessary to decide how, if at all, this numerically very small group is significant in the present discussion.

The accused and surety were obviously known to each other, either as relatives, neighbours, employees or, as in the case of Donnott, Bridger and Bolton, all involved in the drinks trade, as customers(82). Whether the sureties were acting through other motives is difficult to determine. Seven of the 12 with known political affiliation were Tory-Conservative voters while only two were nonconformists, but again this is inconclusive. The only certainty is that some 'respectable' inhabitants were prepared to support bonfire boys arrested during the celebrations. Whether they did so because they sympathised with the celebrations or for more personal reasons can only be surmised. However it is
### Year | Accused | Surety | Relationship to accused | Address | Occupation | Pol(c) | Rel(d) |
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<td>Jabez Brown</td>
<td>Edmund Brown</td>
<td>Relative (?)</td>
<td>St John's St</td>
<td>Slater</td>
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<td>Ang</td>
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<td>Edmund Brown</td>
<td>Sam Brown</td>
<td>Relative (?)</td>
<td>Spring Gdns</td>
<td>Slater</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Ang</td>
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<td>Fred French</td>
<td>Geo Peckham</td>
<td>Relative (?)</td>
<td>White Hill</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
<td>Whig</td>
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<td>1829</td>
<td>Jos Hammond</td>
<td>Jonas Cooter</td>
<td>Employer (?)</td>
<td>High St, STA</td>
<td>Fork butcher</td>
<td>Tory</td>
<td>Ang</td>
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<tr>
<td>1829</td>
<td>Geo Hayler</td>
<td>Jn Winton</td>
<td>Employer (?)</td>
<td>High St, SM</td>
<td>Hatter</td>
<td>Tory</td>
<td>Ang</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Wm Hensley</td>
<td>Geo Hensley</td>
<td>Father (?)</td>
<td>Lancaster St</td>
<td>Coal porter</td>
<td>Lib</td>
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<td>Ric King</td>
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<td>Sun St</td>
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<td>Tory</td>
<td>Ang</td>
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<td>Benj B Buckman</td>
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<td>Cooper</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Wes</td>
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<td>Jas Palmer</td>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>Wellington St</td>
<td>Fishmonger</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Ang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Jn Diplock</td>
<td>Wm Gander</td>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>Crown Lane</td>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Ang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Robt Drewitt</td>
<td>Jas Brunton</td>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>36 High St</td>
<td>Servant</td>
<td>Con</td>
<td>Ang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Geo Goddard</td>
<td>Fred French</td>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>Spring Gdns</td>
<td>Ag Labourer</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Ang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Wm Gander</td>
<td>Jn Gander</td>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>51 High St</td>
<td>Bootmaker</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Ang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Ric Gander</td>
<td>Wm Gander</td>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>St Nicholas L</td>
<td>Shoemaker</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Ang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Wm Gander</td>
<td>Wm Gander</td>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>High St</td>
<td>Ag Labourer</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Ang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Wm Hoare</td>
<td>Jas Hoare</td>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>Landsdown Terr</td>
<td>Grocer</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Ang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Wm Hoare</td>
<td>Jas Hoare</td>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>Crown Lane</td>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Ang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Wm King</td>
<td>Geo Bailey</td>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>Mount Cotts</td>
<td>Beer retailer</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Ang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Jas Morrison</td>
<td>Stephen Blundell</td>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>Foundry Lane</td>
<td>Gardener</td>
<td>Ang/Presb</td>
<td>Ang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Jn Tucknott</td>
<td>Geo Whitehall</td>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>Crown Lane</td>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Ang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Thos Stanbridge</td>
<td>Jonathon Adams</td>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>Southover</td>
<td>Labourer</td>
<td>Tory</td>
<td>Ang</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Abbreviations:**
- **Pol (Politics):** Con (Conservative), ind (Independent), Lib (Liberal).
- **Rel (Religion):** Ang (Anglican), Bapt (Baptist), Presb (Presbyterian), Wes (Wesleyan).
- **Occupation:** Ag (Agricultural), cik (clerk), j (Journeyman), merc (merchant).
- **Address:** Cotts (Cottages), Gdns (Gardens), L (Lane), Prec (Precinct).
- **Politics:** con (Conservative), ind (Independent), lib (Liberal).
- **Religion:** ang (Anglican), Baptist (Baptist), Presb (Presbyterian), Wes (Wesleyan).
- **Notes:**
  a. Information for this table is from documents contained in Quarter Sessions rolls, E.S.R.O., Q/8/21/0 Jan 1807, Q/9/2/Jan 1830, E8/1/Jan 1842, E9/1/Jan 1847, E9/2/1849.
  b. (?) indicates possible relationship, or information uncertain.
  c. There is difficulty attributing political affiliation prior to 1831 because electors frequently voted across party lines.
  d. Religious affiliation has been ascribed according to parochial registers. Double entries indicate a non-Conformist burial.
significant that no 'respectable' people were among the
sureties following the 1846 and 1847 disturbances, it no
longer being acceptable to be seen giving support to the
bonfire boys.

Although some evidence does indicate a degree of
involvement by respectable inhabitants the extent to which
they influenced the working class elements among the bonfire
boys is difficult to determine. Whether they acted as
leaders or merely participated can not even be guessed at.
Reports suggest that the bonfire boys were led(83) and that
they were organised on a regular basis(84), but there is
little indication of the social status of the leaders. But
these 'leaders' did not necessarily come from the
'respectable' participants, they could equally have come
from the working class element among the bonfire boys.

Unfortunately none of those arrested were described as
ringleaders and there is no evidence to suggest that those
apprehended had been singled out for any other reason other
than that they were close at hand or were recognised. Only
two men arrested for their involvement with tar barrels,
thus filling the role of 'ringleader', emerge. The case of
Joseph Harbour has been discussed. At the time of his arrest
Harbour was living in the Southover area of Lewes. In 1851,
at the age of 28 he was lodging in a house in St John's
Street before moving to Priory Street following his marriage
to Mary Garnham in August of that year. At this time he was
working as a groom. His two children were later baptized at
St Thomas's, Cliffe. Much later, in 1868, he voted for the
Conservative candidate in the General Election. The second individual, Henry Gander, was described as being 'foremost' in the crowd by William Ballard in his evidence at the Assizes in 1842(85). He was a coalporter living with his wife and six children in Priory Street, Southover. He was aged 35. Married in May, 1830, to Harriot Bryant, they eventually had eight children, all of whom were baptized at St John-sub-Castro, except Sarah who was baptized at St John the Baptist, Southover. In the 1841 General Election he voted Conservative. Both men shared much in common, being working class, married, Anglican and Conservative voters.

This evidence suggests that the leaders came from among the bonfire boys' own ranks rather than from a different class. Two types of leader may have evolved. Le Bon describes the emergence of some leaders in emotive terms.

The leader has most often started as one of the led... They are not gifted with keen foresight... They are especially recruited from the ranks of those morbidly nervous, excitable, half-deranged persons who are bordering on madness.(86)

His language is unacceptable but the source of potential leadership suggested Le Bon by is germane. As a situation develops, so a leader will emerge. Such leadership is neither premeditated or predetermined, arising out of a spontaneous situation rather than being appointed beforehand. Of such leadership Rude(87) comments that it is purely local and temporary, the 'captain's' authority being limited to the occasion and has no future or continuity. Equally a second type of leader could have been present. Due
to the recurrent nature of the celebrations a more permanent leadership may have evolved. Although not formalized in the sense of being elected to office, such leaders, through their personality, organising ability or influence could be 'appointed' as a leader. Aspects of the celebrations, notably the bands and barrels, required preliminary preparation and it may have been during such preparations that individuals became acknowledged leaders, retaining that position for a number of years.

Again only limited evidence supports the contention that people took part in the celebrations over a period of years. Seven, possibly eight (88) bonfire boys were involved on more than one occasion. The biographies of these men are illustrative and instructive. They establish the bonfire boys as people, as inhabitants, working and bringing up their families in Lewes. They also provide information that forms a reference point when discussing the larger body of arrested bonfire boys, giving an indication of the type of person who might have been leading the celebrations during these riotous years. But it is important to note that activity over a long period of time does not necessarily imply they were leading bonfire boys.

Edwin Blaber was sent to Assize accused on nine counts of assault and riot in 1828 and in 1829 stood surety for Joseph Funnell. Born in Lewes in 1809, at the time of his arrest he was described as a labourer. Blaber married Eliza Green at Southover Church in 1830, raising a family of six children born between 1834 and 1846. At this time he was
living in Southover and described himself as a gardener. By 1841 he had moved to Foundry Lane in Cliffe, where he lived for the majority of the rest of his life, dying in 1883 at the age of 74, having been cared for in his later life by his daughter Ann. By 1851 he had become a corn merchant's warehouseman, remaining in this employment until his death. He was baptized at St John's, Southover, subsequently marrying and having his children baptized there, but at the time of his death he was a Presbyterian. Originally voting Conservative in 1841, he transferred his allegiance to the Liberal cause in 1847 and continued to vote Liberal until the last public poll in 1868.

Frederick French, a gardener of South Malling, was arrested for fighting in 1829 and sent to Sessions, but no conviction is recorded. In 1841 he stood surety for one of the rioters, George Gadd, who two years later was transported for seven years for stealing 28lb of lead(89). French was 20 at the time of his arrest, having been born in Lewes in 1809. By 1841 he was living in Spring Gardens, St Johns, with his wife, Ann, whom he had married in 1833. He remarried between 1841 and 1851, but does not appear to have had children by either marriage. Later he was employed as an agricultural labourer and then a coalporter. He voted Conservative in 1868, the only time he was listed in a poll book.

In 1829 William Hemsley snr. was charged with assaulting Jeremiah Read, the Headborough of Swanborough, who was on duty during the celebrations of that year. When
arrested he was employed as a bricklayer's labourer, aged 26, and living in Lewes. Born in Framfield in 1803 it seems likely that he moved to Lewes shortly before his marriage sometime before 1827, his first child being born in that year. In 1846 he stood surety for his son, William, who had been charged with riot. William jnr. was only 15 and although he was sent to Quarter Sessions no conviction was recorded. At this time the family was living in Brook Street, William snr. being employed as a sawyer, an occupation he was still pursuing ten years later.

George James jnr., like Edwin Blaber, was sent to Assize in 1827 accused on nine counts of assault and riot. Court documents describe him as a labourer living in Lewes. Two years later James stood surety for Thomas Stanbridge who had been charged in connection with the assault on Jeremiah Read. James was born in Lewes in 1802, married probably in 1827 and baptized his six children at St John-sub-Castro. Over a span of twenty years he was described as a labourer. He voted once, in 1830, when he supported the Conservative candidate.

A third person, Richard Richardson, was also implicated in the assault on Jeremiah Read in 1829, but he was not arrested. However he was arrested on two subsequent occasions. In 1834 he was charged with lighting the bonfire and sentenced to six weeks imprisonment or a 40/- fine plus 10/- costs. In 1841 he was accused of rolling a barrel, and following his non-appearance a warrant was issued, but the outcome of his case is not recorded. Richardson remains an
elusive person, no biographical information being included in court papers or found in nominal records.

Thomas Stanbridge was arrested on three occasions. In 1829 he was acquitted of rioting, but in 1834 he was charged with lighting the bonfire and sentenced to a term of imprisonment or a fine. He was again involved in the 1847 disturbances, being arrested with a barrel a little after 12 o'clock on the morning of the 'Fifth'. His brother, John, who was accompanying him was also arrested. At the Assizes the Judge, noting his previous convictions, gave him the harshest sentence received by the 1847 rioters, six months hard labour. Stanbridge was born at Lindfield, Sussex in 1810 or 1811, probably coming to Lewes during the early 1830's to marry. His seven children were baptized in local parish churches between 1832 and 1847 and although moving frequently he remained in the St Johns area of Lewes(89). He also seems to have often changed jobs, being a brewer's, bricklayer's and finally a stonemason's labourer. He appears in one poll book, 1830, when he did not vote. Stanbridge was still alive in 1881 at the age of 72.

The final person involved over a period of time was James Wimhurst. Arrested in 1847 at the age of 19, he was sent to Assize charged on three counts associated with a barrel offence. He was found guilty and sentenced to six months imprisonment. Born in Lewes, he was a widower by 1851 at the age of 23, but appears to have remarried twice, first to Clara, and then, in 1869, to Emily Dunk. It seems likely he worked in a local iron foundry, being a smith at the time.
of his arrest, a journeyman whitesmith in 1851 and then an iron foundry fireman. He lived close to his work, first in Green Wall in 1851, English Passage in 1861 and in 1871, at 4 Foundry Lane. He voted Conservative in 1868. Wimhurst died in 1901 at the age of 73 and was buried in St John's churchyard. Besides mentioning his long-time membership of the Ancient Order of Foresters, his obituary recorded that for many years he was 'Captain of Tubs' for the Cliffe Bonfire Society(90).

These seven bonfire boys shared other things in common. They were all employed in working class occupations, lived in working class areas of the town and were relatively young when arrested for their bonfire activities, apart for Stanbridge, whose riotous activities continued into middle age. Hobsbawm and Rude(91) note that rioters tended to be local men rather than 'strangers', as was sometimes claimed, and this was so of these bonfire boys, the majority either being born in Lewes or had lived in the town since their marriage. Most were Anglicans, being baptized, married and having their own children baptized in local parish churches. Only Blaber appears to have become a nonconformist in later life. Those who could vote, voted Conservative except Blaber, who switched his allegiance to the Liberal cause in 1847. As a group they were therefore all local working class men living, working and bringing up their families in Lewes.

These active bonfire boys were fairly typical of the others involved in the celebrations at this time. Using two sources, press reports and court records for the period 1806
to 1847 a 'sample' of 114 bonfire boys, including the seven discussed, is formed on which to develop an analysis of the bonfire boys involved, or more precisely, arrested. How typical this sample was of all those taking part is impossible to determine, the partiality of the law enforcers particularly creating a source of bias. The lack of diversity among this sample however suggests that they were representative of many active in the celebrations.

Contemporary commentators agreed on two things, that the bonfire boys were young and came from the lower classes. Those arrested were frequently referred to as 'lads', 'young men' or 'boys'(92). Many of those involved were young, as Figure 5.4 indicates. Where age is known 82.6 per cent (N=71) were either below the age of 31 or were described in terms indicating their youthfulness. Only three people for whom age is known were over 40. Although this figure is

Figure 5.4: Age of those arrested, 1806-1847

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'boy'</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'lad'</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'young man'</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 or under</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 and over</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age not known</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>114</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
Data contained in this table refers to age at the time of arrest.
reduced to 62.3 per cent if the 'Age not known' is taken into account it seems likely that included in this category will be many under the age of 31(93). One explanation for this is the nature of the event being more conducive to youthful involvement.

Documentary sources also confirm the second characteristic attributed to the bonfire boys by their contemporaries, that they were drawn from the 'lower classes'(94). Certain difficulties exist when ascribing social status using primary sources(95), particularly the use of the general description of 'labourer' in court records. Rude(96) notes that the use of the term 'labourer'

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**Figure 5.5: Occupation of those arrested, 1806-1847.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attorney</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>J. Carpenter</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bargemaster</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sawyer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draper/Tailor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>J. Millwright</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>J. Blacksmith</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailor's app.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>J. Whitesmith</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabinet maker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tinman</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clockmaker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>J. Foundryman</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butcher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chimney sweep</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Carrier</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staymaker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Coalporter</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoemaker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Labourer</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hairdresser</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Gardener</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach painter</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Servant</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ostler</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Soldier</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bricklayer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Occ. not known</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
Data contained in this table refers to the occupation that was found closest to the date of arrest.
covers a variety of occupations, but by using a number of nominal records this can largely be overcome.

The occupation of 77.2 per cent (N=88) of the 114 bonfire boys was found and, as Figure 5.5 shows, the majority were artisans, craftsmen or labourers. Only the attorney and possibly the bargemaster came from the middle class. These findings confirm those of Storch(97) who from an analysis of 103 bonfire boys arrested in Sussex, Surrey, Essex and Devon in 23 incidents concludes, 'the vitality of the 'Fifth' in the South rested upon a kind of plebeian solidarity between artisans, lower middle class and labouring elements(98). But while the Lewes sample appears to confirm his conclusion the reliance on a single variable, occupation, excludes others that may equally effect the 'vitality' and social dynamics present within the celebrations.

Figure 5.6: Marital status of those arrested, 1806-1847

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widower</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not known</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>53.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>114</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note
Data contained in this table relates to marital status either at, or close to, the date of arrest.

Other demographic characteristics may also be
considered, but these are sometimes inconclusive. Figure 5.6, relating to the marital status of those arrested, contains information for just under half of those arrested, 47.5 per cent (N=53) of the total. As might be expected from the youthfulness of the majority of those arrested many are single, 60.4 per cent (N=32) of those for whom marital status is known. Similarly little data relating to their political persuasion can be found, only 15 bonfire boys being listed in poll books. Eight voted for Whig or Liberal candidates and seven of Tory or Conservative, the remaining 86.8 per cent (N=99) appearing not to have been enfranchised, thus confirming their low economic status.

Religion was noted as a motivating factor by some contemporary critics, but it remains unclear whether the bonfire boys were confronting the Catholics or the non-conformists, or both. However the majority, 92.3 per cent

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**Figure 5.7: Anglican connections of those arrested 1806-1847.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rite(s)</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baptism</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bapt. and Marr.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bapt., Marr. and Bapt. of children</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bapt. and Bapt. of children</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bapt., Marr. and Bur.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bapt. and Bur.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marr. and Bapt. of children</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marr., Bapt. of children and Bur.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bapt. of children</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bapt. of children and Bur.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burial</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(N=60) for whom data can be found, were Anglican(99), as Figure 5.7 shows. Only five of those arrested, where religious affiliation is known, had nonconformist connections, all these being burials(100). Four had however, previously either been married or had their children baptized in an Anglican church. It could be argued that this apparent change of faith occurred in later life, a long time after their arrest for involvement in the celebrations. Nevertheless the fact remains that the overwhelming majority of those arrested appear to have been Anglicans.

Figure 5.8: Place of birth of those arrested, 1806-1847

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of birth(a)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lewes</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sussex(b)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born elsewhere, but married and/or baptized children in Lewes.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of birth not known, but married and/or baptized children in Lewes.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not known</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>114</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes
a. Data from CEBs and Registers of Baptism.
b. 1841 Census only.

Finally, the place of birth indicates the 'local' character of the bonfire boys. Linked to the place of marriage and the length of residence in Lewes it is possible to show that rather than being 'outsiders' or 'strangers' many of the rioters were long term residents of the town. Figure 5.8 shows that of the 66 men for whom data is known
56.1 per cent (N=37) were born in Lewes. A further 34.8 per cent (N=23) were married and brought up their families in the town. Of all those arrested only William Bailey was an outsider, giving as his address at the time of his arrest, 38 Hereford Street, Brighton (101).

To summarize briefly, the Lewes bonfire boys, arrested during the first half of the nineteenth century, were predominantly young, locally born, single working class Anglican males. Although a certain bias in the sample may influence these findings, they do appear to confirm statements made in the press and by their critics, and in so doing may be claimed to reflect at least one section of those involved in the celebrations. It seems likely that the 'respectable' middle class element is under-represented, but in the absence of data this cannot be confirmed.

The Bonfire Boys' Motives

Having established who they were, the motives of the bonfire boys may now be considered. Why did they annually take to the streets of Lewes ostensibly to commemorate the Discovery of the Gunpowder Plot, yet in so doing were prepared to defy the authorities and suffer the consequences? Why did they so determinedly defend their annual custom? The use of structural determinants to arrive at a causal explanation has been rejected on the grounds that, while giving a partial reason, they do not adequately take into account the purposeful intentions of those involved.
The explanation that the bonfire boys were manipulated has been similarly rejected. Refining his definition of a manipulated mob Thompson (102) introduces a third type, a 'transitional' mob, which, while defending ancient 'rights', may also attack the property of the wealthy or the target to which they were directed by a manipulator. If this did occur in Lewes it was only made possible by the manipulators being able to 'play on' sentiments already held by the bonfire boys. But this did not prevent them from attacking the properties of individuals who represented authority irrespective of their religious or political allegiance (103). Even if they were manipulated sufficient evidence indicates that they were at the same time acting on their own behalf for reasons of their own.

It is the purposeful motives of the bonfire boys that may now be considered. These motives, to use Rude's terms, were indigenous and derived, and to arrive at an understanding of them it is necessary to go beyond actions and statements within a single event, a single social drama, by seeking the roots of these motives in the recurrent nature of the celebrations themselves. In the years leading up to 1847 the bonfire boys slowly developed a custom with its own intrinsic ritual components, accompanied by open defiance and hostility towards law enforcers. No written statement explaining their reasons for celebrating the 'Fifth' exists, but through their actions and the increasing ritualisation of the celebrations, the motives of the bonfire boys can be deduced.
By the 1840's the Bonfire celebrations had become an established custom and was recognised as such. Addressing the Jury at the Assize hearings following the 1841 disturbances, defending counsel, Mr James claimed that the celebrations were 'merely an innocent following up of an old custom', the bonfire boys being not 'so much afraid of the Catholics as impelled by a desire to keep an old custom' (104). The two elements of social custom are described by Phythian Adams (105) and both can be observed in the celebrations; the presence of a central observance, in the form of a ritualised recreation and occasional 'secular' ceremony, and commensality, a communal characteristic. The celebration had become an institutionalised aspect of social life for a particular section of the Lewes populace, and consequently had developed its own legitimacy derived from regular performance rather than legal status. Custom had, to use Thompson's phrase, fulfilled the tendency to 'legitimize practice (or protest) in terms of customary usage or of prescriptive right and perquisite' (106).

As a custom the celebrations thus took on the status of a legitimate activity to be maintained and defended. A sense of 'rightness' was felt among the participants and any attempt to interfere with, or suppress their 'customal right' provoked a sense of social injustice leading to scenes of violence (107). The notion of social injustice as felt by the bonfire boys when confronted with opposition from the authorities, is developed by Moore (108). If people perceive and define their situation as the consequence of social injustice, in this instance an attack on 'customary
rights', they may respond with moral outrage and violence. Social rules and their violation are considered crucial components of this moral anger and sense of injustice. The outcome of this anger may manifest itself in different forms, an assault on a special constable, a brick through the window of a known opponent, or their ritual burning in effigy(109).

The use of violence to maintain custom is frequently described as conservative and 'backward looking'(110). The lack of 'revolutionary' ideals in such outbreaks of protest leads Hobsbawm to conclude that the 'mob' may 'normally... be regarded as reformist, insofar as it rarely if ever conceived of the construction of a new order of society, as distinct from the correction of abnormalities and injustices in a traditional old order'(111). In a more subtle analysis Thompson argues that while being conservative in its form, the protest emanates from a rebellious plebeian culture that is 'rebellious, but rebellious in defence of custom'(112). It is 'popular' in the way defined by Rude, rather than the paternalistic 'popular' conservative ideology described by Malcolmson. While both the bonfire boys and their middle class supporters wished to see the celebrations maintained they did so for different reasons, reasons that arose from their own interests.

The conservative form of the protest frequently involved what Thompson defined as 'countertheatre', 'a war of nerves, now satirical, now menacing'(113). In 1797, faced with opposition the bonfire boys were 'more than ordinarily
ceremonious', a procession being formed and a man dressed as Guy Fawkes put in charge of lighting the fire(114). Commenting on such ceremonial devices Stevenson argues they portrayed the people's 'sense of legitimacy of their actions, endowing them with a ritualism which put them within the context of a form of popular justice'(115). This places a disproportionate emphasis and importance on such incidents which may better be viewed as alternative forms of defiance. Ridicule was employed in 1847 when leaflets lampooning the authorities' intention to suppress the celebrations were distributed among the crowd gathered in front of the County Hall. One read:

Notice - To be Sold by Auction, without reserve by, L. Chichester & Co., Opposite the County Hall, Lewes, in as many lots as can be made, A very choice collection of Combustible Matter, Consisting of Tar Barrels, Resin Casks, Pitch, Tar, Meal Gunpowder, Rocket Cases, Fireballs, &c., with a few first-rate Fireworks, warranted home-made, - The above articles will form several very sporting Lots and deserve particular attention, being the Stock-in-Trade of the late Firm of Guy Fawkes & Co., and will be served without reserve, owing to the Auctioneers being desirious of getting them off their hands.(116)

Thus the bonfire boys used a varied repertoire of protest, including violence, ceremony and ridicule, in defence of their celebrations.

The sense of legitimacy felt by the bonfire boys was undoubtedly further strengthened by the fact that the 5th November had previously been proclaimed a public holiday which gave their celebrations a 'legal' status. Following the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot in 1605 the Government of James I had reacted speedily and punitively against the
co-religionists of Fawkes, two Acts being passed(117) imposing restrictions and exclusions on Roman Catholics that separated them from other Englishmen. A third Act, entitled 'An Acte for a publique Thancksgiving to Almighty God everie yeere of the Fifte day of November'(118), was also passed, but this one was directed towards the Protestant population.

The expressed purpose of the Act was to offer praise to God for 'his power and mercy in the miraculous and gracious deliverance of his Church, and in the protection of religious Kings and states... (from) an invention soe inhumane, barbarous and cruell, as the like was never before heard of... (and) this unfained thankfullnes may never be forgotten, but be held in a perpetual Remembrance... and have in memory this joyful day of deliverance'. The Act stipulated that this annual 'remembrance' was to be in the form of a morning church service at which a special prayer of thanksgiving was to be offered up(119). It is impossible to discover to what extent the act was carried out, but according to folklorists(120) the 5th November became 'a holiday for ever in thankfulness to God for the deliverance and detestation of the Papists' when, in addition to churchbells being rung, cannons fired and the Royal Ensign flown in garrison towns, the day became an opportunity for relaxation, amusement and drunkenness.

That the bonfire boys perceived the day as a public holiday was commented upon on a number of occasions. During the court appearances of those arrested in 1841 Captain Mackay under cross-examination observed that 'the fifth of
November was considered a sort of holiday in Lewes, and he should suppose that the interference of the police was not likely to please, - the people would rather have their own way'(121). Mr Johnson, a defence lawyer, returned to this point in his summing up. Quoting from 'Strutt's Book of Sports' he drew the Court's attention to the fact that the king had ordered bonfires to be lit and Bishop Sanderson had expressed the hope that the 'Fifth' would never be forgotten. It was acknowledged by many that the 'Fifth' was an innocent sport of the people(122). However the day when such an argument was acceptable to the authorities had passed. In response to Johnson's assertions the Judge, Baron Alderson, curtly replied; 'Do you mean to set custom as an answer to the charge? The "custom" will be no defence'(123).

Custom and the idea of the 5th November being a public holiday were inextricably linked with a third legitimizing notion that undoubtedly motivated the bonfire boys. The passing of the Act can be interpreted as the Government's desire to institutionalise popular distrust, if not hatred, of Roman Catholics and Popery in general and the realisation of their objective was clearly in evidence in the 1679 celebration witnessed by Harris. The popular legitimatizing notions of 'patriotism', 'liberty' and the Englishman's 'birthright' thus became closely associated with the commemoration of the Discovery of the Gunpowder Plot. These notions, arising from a 'defensive ideology'(124) promoted a call to resist foreign domination, absolutism and oppression, all of which were threatened by Roman Catholicism and Papal aggression. Although these sentiments
were not manifest during the early celebrations the marked anti-Catholic nature of those following 1853 indicate the probability of their prior presence providing an additional incentive to the bonfire boys' determination to maintain their celebrations.

Discussion so far has focused on derived motives which were expressed through observable behaviour and because of this may be viewed as 'manifest' motives. Phythian Adams(125) argues that customs have 'manifest' and 'latent' functions and consequently serve more than one need. If needs are being satisfied then the participants will have a vested interest in the custom's survival. While preferring the term 'motive' to 'function', this distinction can be usefully applied in the present context. 'Latent' motives are those that are not readily observable and may only be partially acknowledged by the participants themselves. These may be considered indigenous motives, arising out of the immediate situation in which the participants live and interact. When discussing the social conflict surrounding the suppression of street football in Derby, Delves acknowledges such indigenous motives when he concludes, 'the appeal to custom and tradition underlying the resistance to suppression seems to have sprung not from some vague, anachronistic attachment to things past, but from a sense that "traditionalism" protected real and immediate interests'(126).

These real and immediate interests are based on what the participants themselves get from the event. Various
Interests have been suggested by others when discussing similar popular customs(127) that may be applicable in the present context. These include, a source of enjoyment, the safeguarding of a day's holiday, an outlet for hostilities and urges ordinarily suppressed by the group, an opportunity to settle old scores not necessarily related to the celebrations and a social event giving rise to family reunion and reaffirmation of social and communal ties. These indigenous motives are placed in the context of a recurrent event by Turner and Killian(128). The repetitive nature of the event leads to conventionalised behaviour which often has a ritualistic quality. Such conventionalised crowds, Turner and Killian argue, have two functions, to provide a release for the individual and secondly to sustain and strengthen social solidarity. If participants feel the need for one or both of these they will attempt to ensure the continuation of the event. If they can summon in their defence other legitimizing factors that enable them to attract wider support, such support becomes instrumental to the attainment of their objectives.

The question that must now be asked is whether the bonfire boys had such needs, and if they did, whether they were met through the celebrations. The 'Fifth' was perceived as a holiday and evidence indicates that the celebrations were viewed by the bonfire boys as an opportunity to engage in behaviour not normally condoned or tolerated. The law was placed in abeyance and acceptable behaviour was turned upside down(129). In summing up at the Assize Court following the 1847 disturbances the defence solicitor, Mr
Creasy, claimed that 'this is not what is ordinarily termed a riot, but was the keeping up of an old custom and might be regarded more as a frolic'(130). His interpretation was at variance with that of the authorities at this time, who considered the bonfire boys' activities to be riotous. However, behaviour viewed as riotous by some can equally be considered a good time by others, an occasion for relaxation, for a few beers, and for getting into the spirit of things generally. As Thompson argues, the term 'riot', whether used by a contemporary commentator or a historian is a 'blunt tool of analysis for so many particular grievances and occasions'(131).

While manifesting derived motives the bonfire boys, through their overt behaviour, also exhibited the presence of latent indigenous motives. Pleasure, involving lively and drunken behaviour, was an element of the celebrations. During the 1838 court hearings a number of references were made to the defendants being drunk(132). In 1846 a barrel party was described as being 'excited by drink'(133), 'while the effects of intoxication became unmistakably manifest'(134) during the 1852 celebrations. It is significant that four persons, John Donnott, Jonas Cooter, William Bridger and James Bolton (variously described as 'inn holder' and 'beer retailer') acted as sureties during the period leading up to 1847. But in common with other rioters and revellers(135), the bonfire boys viewed their celebrations, among other things, as a lark and a source of enjoyment.
The second function of recurrent events identified by Turner and Killian, to sustain and strengthen social solidarity, is a more complex proposition. Historians and anthropologists argue that annual festivals, whether wakes, football matches or street carnivals, through their integrative function provide a means of reaffirming community solidarity(136). But social solidarity operates on two levels, the total social structure of a given community, or of groups within that society. Malcolmson recognises these levels when describing the communal basis of rituals. On the first level the solidarity of the whole community is expressed while on the second 'ties of kinship, friendship and neighbourliness among the common people were especially important'. But at both levels, the event provides 'the principal occasion for individuals to come together in order to reaffirm their social relationships'(137).

At the level of total communities, an annual festivity in a small rural village might perform a socially integrative function. Bailey argues that the tolerant attitude of the 'governing classes' towards such activities of working people, besides reflecting their own membership of the community, was also instrumentally perceived, their goodwill arising from the acknowledgement of the 'utility of such rites in dissipating popular frustration and thus reinforcing the authority of the rural oligarchy'(138). This explanation does however have normative implications, suggesting a society in a state of social equilibrium where tension is controlled through a spirit of well-meaning paternalism. But for the same reasons as Turner is critical
of Gluckman's analysis of rituals of rebellion Thompson is critical of this model of paternalistic society.

According to Thompson, 'paternalism is a loose descriptive term... (which) tends to offer a model of the social order as it is seen from above'(139). The relationship that 'paternalism' is used to describe is more dynamic. An annual festival may provide an opportunity for the release of social tension through institutionalised ritual, but while possibly reflecting social solidarity, the activities of the participants also emphasise divisions within the community. Plebeian culture may receive 'favour and flattery' from the Tory gentry, but it is not a one-way process, paternalism, according to Thompson, suggests 'some reciprocity in the relationship between rich and poor'(140) By courting this favour working people were ensuring the survival of their customs and thus safeguarding their interests. Paternalism was an instrumental relationship in which the manipulator was in turn manipulated.

The 'Redressive Stage': Use of the Courts

The developing social drama may now be returned to. Following the success of the authorities' action during the period of 'crisis' the third, 'redressive' stage, was entered. The authorities were now in a position to proceed with redressive action designed to prevent a recurrence of the celebrations. To this end harsh sentences were imposed on those arrested. The magistrates' resolve was displayed even before the 5th November when a lad named Lightman was fined ten shillings, or, in default, sentenced to two weeks
imprisonment for letting off a squib in a public street(141). Leniency was no longer included in the repertoire of methods employed to deal with the bonfire boys. The Earl of Chichester promised that anyone convicted of riot or other breach of the peace would 'incur the severest penalties of the law'(142). Shiffner fulfilled this when he imposed 'the full penalty they were enabled to do'(143) when sentencing two young men, George Pinyon and Charles Beach, accused of breaking William Button's windows. What occurred in the courts following the 1847 disturbances fulfilled this promise.

Twelve arrests were made during the celebrations. Eight men, George Ashby, Thomas Attwood, Jesse Fold, George Gosney, Joseph Robinson, James Wimhurst and the brothers John and Thomas Stanbridge were among the barrel party arrested in the police trap during the early hours of the 'Fifth'. Later, during the course of the evening's events a further four men were arrested. William Bailey was charged in connection with a separate barrel incident, Louis Lee was arrested outside the County Hall for shouting orders at the police and a 'lad of 16 or 17' was charged with throwing stones at the police in Cliffe. The fourth man, George Bailey was arrested, but no details of his arrest or subsequent trial appears(144). In the disturbances following the 'Fifth' another four men were apprehended. David Smith and William Mabbott were charged with creating a mob and riotous behaviour, Harry Browne was accused of assaulting a police officer, P.C. Jenner, and Joseph Harbour was charged with the theft of a barrel. They all appeared before both
These 12 bonfire boys appeared before magistrates on Tuesday, November 9th. The hearings provoked 'a great deal of excitement' and more than the usual number of 'respectable persons' were in the public galleries. The seriousness in which the matter was taken was reflected in the magistrates who were present. On previous occasions those arrested appeared before one or two magistrates, but among those on the Bench to hear these cases were the Earl of Chichester, Sir Henry Shiffner, Mr Serjeant D'Oyly, Henry Blackman, John Ellman and J.G. Blencowe, all senior members of the magistracy. The defendants had employed Mr Bennett who endeavoured to show that the evidence against them was circumstantial, but the Earl of Chichester indicated the magistrates' unwillingness to be detracted, stating, 'the Magistrates have made up their minds to commit for the riot'(145).

The Gazette records that discussion proceeded to centre on whether to send the accused to Sessions or Assize. Probably because they felt they stood a better chance of gaining a fairer hearing from a Judge the defendants requested to be sent to Assize. Having been assured by Mr Bennett that the eight defendants in question would be able to find bail, the Magistrates committed them to Assize on bail conditions of £30 each in their own recognizance and two sureties of £15 each. William Bailey, who was brought before the magistrates separately was similarly sent to Assize. Peters and Lee also appeared separately, but
possibly due to their age, were not sent to Assize. Lee was detained for a few hours, reprimanded and then discharged. Peters got off less lightly, being fined 20 shillings with costs, or in default, to three weeks imprisonment(146). Only Harry Browne was sentenced by the magistrates. Appearing before Blackman, Wooligar and Ellman, he was fined ten shillings with costs, or in default, sentenced to 10 days imprisonment, to be served without hard labour due to the defendants's infirmity(147).

Those arrested during the disturbances following the 'Fifth', Mabbott, Smith and Harbour, were sent to Quarter Sessions, but were discharged following the jury's verdict of 'No True Bill'(148). Those sent to the Assizes however received different treatment. Eight(149) appeared before Judge Lord Denman, and the Grand Jury on the 23rd March, 1848(150). They were all found guilty of the three charges on which they were indicted, assault, inciting to riot and conspiracy. Wimhurst and Thomas Stanbridge were sentenced to six months hard labour while the remainder were each sentenced to one month imprisonment. All were bound over in a recognizance of £40 to keep the peace for two years. By passing these harsh sentences the magistrates showed their determination to act against the bonfire boys and to deter them from similar behaviour in the future.

Some of the opponents remained active throughout this period. The presence of Henry Blackman as a sitting magistrate at many of the court appearances and as a member of the Grand Jury at the Assizes, and of Sir Henry Shiffner
and other local magistrates, indicates their preparedness to use their positions to obtain their objectives. Obviously the niceties of impartiality were not to stand in their way. The appearance of petition signatories, John Smith and Bacon, as prosecution witnesses at the trials of Smith and Mabbott exhibited a similar determination(151). Neither did the supporters remain inactive. Those arrested came from among the poorer inhabitants yet they managed to secure the necessary bail and sureties. The apparent ease at which they could raise large sums, in the case of Smith and Mabbott £30 each(152), suggests that wealthy supporters were assisting them financially. Similarly, that the bonfire boys were able to afford the services of two defence lawyers also suggests the receiving of financial support.

The penultimate act during this redressive period took place at the Lewes Quarter Sessions in January 1848. Flushed with their success, the magistrate’s concern was no longer one of how to contain the celebrations, but how to apportion the costs of policing them and decide the suitable punishment for those arrested. Chichester observed that the cost had been between £100 and £200 and that it had been borne by the County, but in future years, he argued, it should be met by the town. In concurring with this Blackman suggested that by asking 'the inhabitants to consider the matter as one of expense'(153) it might persuade them to be more active in their opposition. Referring to those arrested, Alderman Wilson felt that one way to solve the problem was to make an example of a few ringleaders by sentencing them to transportation. Although the penalties
imposed two months later at the Assizes fell short of this extreme, the sentiments that gave rise to Wilson's suggestion was reflected in the severity of the sentences.

The opponents optimism was however to be short lived. Such was the support for the celebrations and the determination of the bonfire boys that suppression was soon superseded by grudging compromise. This leads to the final stage of the social drama, the period of 'reintegration' which spread over six years. During this stage the celebrations were transformed from a night of license and riot to one of organised, if boisterous, street processions and bonfires. This 'transitional' period during which old forms were modified and new ones developed is the subject of the next chapter.

Notes

1. S.A.E., 21.11.46.
2. S.W.A., 17.11.46.
4. The discussions between the magistrates at their meeting during the January Quarter Sessions are reported in the Brighton Gazette, 7.1.47.
6. S.A.E., 10.11.37.
9. Under the Lighting and Watching Act of 1837 five local constables were appointed in addition to six 'petty'
constables and the town's High and Junior Constables.

10. B.G., 7.1.47.
11. SMELSER (1962), Chapt.8.
13. B.G., 25.11.47.
16. According to Poole's Accounts for 1787 to 1790 he donated between 10/6 and £1.1.00 each year for 'Liquer at the Bonfire'. E.S.R.O., Hook Mss 22/5/1, 1787-1804.
19. S.A.E., 6.11.47.
20. B.G., 4.11.47.
23. S.A.E., 25.10.45.
24. The anti-Catholic dimension present in the celebrations is not taken into account in Malcolmson's formulation. The Calvinists of Jireh Chapel were particularly vociferous in their opposition to Catholicism.
25. LOWER (1846), p.4.
26. B.G., 4.11.47.
27. B.G., 4.11.47.
28. S.A.E., 20.11.47.
29. A full account of the preliminary hearings of this case and the ensuing court case appear in S.A.E., 30.10.47. and B.G., 4.11.47.
30. S.A.E., 27.11.47.
31. B.G., 7.1.47.
32. B.G., 7.1.47.
33. S.W.A., 8.11.41.
34. B.G., 10.11.42.
35. B.G., 9.11.43.
36. S.A.E., 2.11.44.
37. B.G., 21.10.46.
38. S.W.A., 10.11.46.
39. S.A.E., 29.5.47.
40. B.G., 7.1.47.
41. The original petition is deposited at the Lewes Area Library, Albion Street, Lewes.
42. S.W.A. 19.10.47.
44. Four employed male servants. The employment of male servants has been used as an indication of wealth. See ARMSTRONG (1972), p.211.
45. At this time the town was governed by an ancient body called 'The Twelve' which was self-appointed rather than elected. From this body two Constables and two
Headboroughs were annually elected. For the years the petitioners held office see SMITH, V. (1972-73), The Town Book of Lewes, 1702-1837, Lewes: Sussex Record Society, vol.69; SMITH, V. (1974-6), The Town Book of Lewes, 1837-1901, Lewes: Sussex Record Society, vol.70.


47. Because of the nature of the sources it is not possible to determine whether they were involved at the same time.

48. SALZMAN, L.F. (1946), 'The History of the Sussex Archaeological Society', Sussex Archaeological Collections, vol.85, p.17. The friendship between some members of this clique is confirmed by John Dudeney, another Lewes schoolmaster, when he recalled 'being in the habit of spending an hour of an evening with my esteemed friends Messrs M.A. Lower and W. Figg. I was with them in some of their conversations in which they first talked of trying to form a Sussex Archaeological Society'. See 'Some Passages in the Life of John Dudeney of Lewes, Schoolmaster, formerly a shepherd, written by himself, 1849', cited by SALZMAN (1946).

49. For an account of the Peelite-Protectionist split in the Conservative Party see HALEVY, E. (1947), The Age of Peel and Cobden, London: Benn, pp.104-134.

50. Reprinted in S.W.A., 19.10.47.

51. S.W.A., 19.10.47.

52. DONAJGRODZKI (1977), pp.52-59.


58. Notice reprinted in S.W.A., 2.11.47.

59. B.G., 11.11.47.


61. B.G., 11.11.47.


63. B.G., 11.11.47.

64. B.G., 25.11.47.

65. S.W.A., 30.11.47.
66. S.W.A., 13.11.1797.
67. B.G., 6.11.34.
68. S.W.A., 12.11.38.
69. CASTRO (1926); RUDE (1964).
73. S.A.E., 25.3.48.
74. S.W.A., 10.11.46.
76. TURNER and KILLIAN (1972), p154.
77. S.W.A., 19.10.47.
78. LOWER (1846), p.10.
79. Whether he was a 'master' or a 'journeyman' is not recorded therefore his status remains unclear.
80. B.G., 8.11.38.
81. For the the use of directory entries to determine social status see Chapter 8.
82. The coal merchant, Blackman, probably employed the coal porters Greenwood and Saunders. Buckman was a neighbour of David Arnold, both living in St Nicholas Lane. James Harris was the father of John and it seems likely that Plumer Egles was in some way related to Edward Egles. There is no data linking 'Edward' to 'Plumer', but 'Egles' is an unusual name not appearing in any other nominal record except a series of poll books between 1816 and 1835.
83. As early as 1797 a 'man appointed to that post... headed about 40 others in procession' (S.W.A., 6.11.1797), but it was with the emergence of tar barrels that more frequent reference is made to leaders among the bonfire boys. Supt. Fagan, in evidence following the 1841 disturbances stated that 'a person was in front leading them on' (S.A.E., 13.11.41.). In 1846 disguised persons in several parties 'appeared to be under the management of some leader' (S.W.A., 10.11.46.).
84. The Gazette, describing scenes in Lewes in 1846, commented that 'as usual an organised gang of blackguards, disguised in various ways and armed with bludgeons, held possession of the town' (B.G., 12.11.46.).
85. S.W.A., 28.3.42.
88. During nominal record linkage three 'George Bailey' emerged. From the information in the initial sources two 'George Bailey' are referred to. In 1841 'Geo. Bailey, lab. and tenant of 2 Park Cott.' was a surety. In 1847 'Geo. Bailey' was arrested with a tar barrel. Lack of other linking items prevents a positive linkage being made between these to the third individual. For
this reason 'Geo. Bailey' was removed from further analysis.

89. Stanbridge lived in Mount Pleasant in 1830, Sun Street in 1851, Spring Gardens in 1861 and Flint Row in 1881.
90. S.A.E., 7.9.1901.
92. For example, in 1847 'five young men (were) taken into custody' (S.W.A., 12.11.27.), while in 1831 reference is made to 'boys and others' being active in the celebrations (S.W.A., 7.11.31.).
93. This point may be made for the 'not known' category for each of the demographic variables discussed here, although it cannot be assumed that the proportions will be the same as in the 'known' category.
94. The press frequently made reference to the bonfire boys coming from the lower orders. Two examples will suffice. In 1841 the defence lawyer, Mr Bennett described the bonfire boys as coming from the 'lower orders' (S.A.E., 13.11.41.). In the build up to the 1847 disturbances the Express was more forthright, stating that the bonfire boys came from the 'lowest and most ignorant portion of the population' (S.A.E., 23.10.47.).
95. For discussion of the use of occupation to ascribe social status, see chapter 8.
99. While there are difficulties using registers to denote both commitment and degree of religiosity it seems reasonable to assume that adults using the services of the Anglican Church, particularly for baptism of their children or for burial were unlikely to have been nonconformist or Catholic. Many chapels, particularly during the early part of the nineteenth century may not have been licensed to perform marriage or burials, but they were entitled to perform baptism or record births.
100. Edwin Blaber and Thomas Jones were buried as Presbyterians in 1883 and 1888 respectively, Alexander Stronach died a Calvinist Methodist in 1865, Rueben Barnes an Independent Calvinist in 1887 and Joseph Bates an Independent in 1868.
101. William Bailey, aged 38, was arrested in connection with a tar barrel offence. Later in the century involvement of Brighton inhabitants in the Lewes celebrations was common, some of the bonfire societies boasting a 'Brighton Branch', but during the period being discussed here there is no evidence to suggest Brighton people were involved in any numbers, celebrations still being held in Brighton at this time.
102. THOMPSON (1968), pp.75-76.
103. In 1832 the properties of Thomas Whitfield and George Hoper had both been attacked. Both were Conservatives and therefore may have been expected to hold the 'conservative' view of popular customs.
104. S.W.A., 28.3.42.
105. PHYTHIAN ADAMS (1975).
Violence surrounding attempts to suppress the celebrations was particularly determined at Guildford and Horsham. See Burstow, H. (1911), *Reminiscences of Horsham*, Horsham: Free Christian Book Society; Green, J.K. (1952), 'Side Lights of Guildford History: Fireworks, Bonfires, Illuminations and the Guy Riots, 1756-1868', Reprint by permission of the "Surrey Times".

Although there is no recorded example of the burning of opponents in effigy prior to 1847, in 1853 the editor of the Sussex Weekly Advertiser, George Peter Bacon, an outspoken critic of the celebrations, had his effigy carried by the bonfire boys during their procession, later to be burnt at the firesite.

These leaflets are contained in 'Munt's Scrapbook' deposited at S.A.S.

'This special prayer of thanksgiving was included in the provision of the Act, and was added to the Book of Common Prayer from 1606 until 1853, when the service was abolished by a special ordinance of the Queen in Council.


Turner and Killian (1972), pp.142-147.

130. S.A.E., 25.3.48.


132. S.A.E., 10.11.38.

133. S.W.A., 10.11.46.

134. S.W.A., 9.11.52.

135. Miller observes a similar ingredient in the Pope burning processions during the late seventeenth century. He comments that while 'they were a response to anti-Catholic tensions... they were fun... they remained a national festival, a pageant, a ritual, an entertainment', an occasion when 'ale and wine flowed freely'. MILLER (1975), pp.143-144. See also SLACK (1984), p.12; HARRISON (1965), p.233.


137. MALCOLMSON (1973), pp.52-53.


141. S.A.E., 23.10.47.

142. S.A.E., 23.10.47.

143. S.A.E., 20.11.47.

144. The report of his arrest appeared in S.A.E., 13.11.47. An error may have been made, William and George being the same person, but both persons are mentioned separately in the same report suggesting that they were different people.

145. B.G., 11.11.47.

146. S.A.E., 6.11.47.

147. S.A.E., 27.11.47.

148. E.S.R.O., QR/E928.

149. There is no mention of the appearance or sentencing in the Assize records or the press of the ninth person, William Bailey, who was originally sent to Assize.


151. E.S.R.O., QR/E928.

152. B.G., 25.11.47.

CHAPTER 6

NEW FORMS: THE EVOLUTION OF THE BONFIRE SOCIETIES AND THEIR CELEBRATIONS, 1848-1913

Compromise and an Opportunity Seized

Turner(1) describes 'reintegration' as the period when protagonists will either drop their differences or recognize the schism existing between them. In the context of the Bonfire Night celebrations the source of conflict remained, ideological differences continuing as a source of conflict. In 1847 sufficient influence was exerted by one of the contesting middle class factions to persuade the authorities to act firmly against the celebrations, but during the following years their opponents, the bonfire boys, found ways of countering this pressure. They succeeded with a mixture of adaptiveness, innovation, compliance and opportunism. This chapter will trace the changes to the celebrations that occurred during the next ten years, the most significant being the formation of the bonfire societies. During this period the celebrations were transformed from a disorderly annual occurrence into an organised street carnival. However, reintegration was only partially achieved through a grudging compromise obtained as a consequence of a process of negotiation during which neither contestant gained total victory. The celebrations were modified, but they continued.

During 1848 and 1849 those urging suppression were in

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the ascendancy. According to the Gazette(2) rockets were let off without intermission in the street until 7 p.m. when a crowd of 2,000 was enticed away by a band followed by the committee. So led, they proceeded to a firesite in Wallands Park where they harmlessly amused themselves. The report concluded that the town was thereafter quiet. The opponents had successfully removed what they considered a nuisance from the High Street, but theirs was not a lasting victory. The removal to an alternative site was frequently canvassed as an alternative to suppression. In his summing up, following the 1841 disturbances, the defence lawyer noted that this policy had been successful in Brighton(3). Bacon, through the Advertiser made this suggestion in 1843 when he claimed that 'we are very far from wishing in any degree to curtail the amusements (few enough) of the lower classes, but we cannot but think that equal enjoyment might be obtained were the venue laid out of town'(4). Even Baxter, who consistently supported the celebrations was of the same opinion(5).

After the 1847 riots a move from the High Street to the safety of Wallands Park was actively encouraged by leading inhabitants, including some previously opposed to the celebrations. According to the Express the Constables of the Borough, Smart and Neal, approached the magistrates requesting that the town should be left in their charge(6). A committee of local tradesmen, chaired by Benjamin Flint, was formed to make the necessary preparations, assisted by two local magistrates. John Ellman supplied the field for the firesite while Sir Henry Shiffner gave faggots for the
Meanwhile a subscription raised by Smart and Neal 'for the same purpose was opened, to which several of the gentry and the inhabitants of the town contributed willingly and generously'(7). In his diary Charles Wille recorded, 'The usual festival held on Wallands, faggots, beer and band being given by gentlemen to keep the fireworks out of the town'(8).

Wille's remarks expose the motives of those subscribing to the fund and helps explain why two magistrates previously active against the celebrations were now promoting this alternative. The motives of the Constables, apart from maintaining the peace of the town, are less clear. Both were members of the Jury throughout the 1840's with sizable business interests in the town, Smart being a miller and Neal a bootmaker. Both were resident in the High Street, but while both were Anglicans, Smart voted Liberal while Neal was an active Conservative(9). Because of his political allegiance Neal may have been more sympathetic towards the celebrations, but this remains conjecture. However, for many this was probably viewed as a compromise, an attempt to mitigate the bonfire boys' defeat the previous year.

The Advertiser, not seeking compromise, was the lone voice raised in protest in 1848, lamenting the letting off of rockets on Sunday as a 'disgraceful outrage' and 'a revolting desecration of the Sabbath'(10). The paper maintained this critical stance in the following year when its report of the celebrations differed significantly from that of the Express. The Express gave the impression that
the celebrations were orderly and confined to the Wallands, noting how the crowd congregated at the White Hart before being led by the town band to Wallands Park for the fire and firework display(11). The Advertiser, while acknowledging how well organised the Walland's display was, concluded that 'their efforts (were) so entirely disregarded by the persons for whom they had chiefly been made'(12). The Express had reported the town quiet, but the Advertiser described how, 'in the course of the evening a mob - in its worst sense - sallied forth, shouting like a parcel of savages rushing along the High Street, through which they endeavoured to roll a lighted tar barrel'(13). Similar events, including a fire, were reported to have taken place in the Cliffe. The Advertiser lamented that no 'measures were adopted in that locality to put a stop to these disorderly proceedings'(14). The number of arrests suggests that either the Advertiser was exaggerating or the police were exercising leniency. Only five men were arrested, three for firework offences, one for riot and one, John Isgar, accused of assaulting Henry Card on the way back into town from the Wallands. The latter case was not proved, and although the person accused of riot was sent to Assize there is no record of him ever having appeared.

These differing reports are indicative of the stance taken by the two newspapers, and presumably their respective readerships. The antagonism existing between them is reflected in Bacon's editorial. He observes that, 'a contemporary - and we mention it with extreme regret - has published a version of the proceedings, which can only be
characterised as a gross perversion and misrepresentation of the actual facts'. Rounding on the assertion made by the Express that the celebrations were a recreation for the town's youth and evidence of true Protestant feeling, Bacon asks 'whether "true Protestant feeling", or true religious feeling of any kind, can in any way be advantaged by the riotous and brutalising orgies celebrated by a class of men taken from amongst the lowest ranks of society?'(15) Events in 1850 suggest that the Advertiser misjudged the strength of 'Protestant feeling'.

On the 29th September, 1850, a Papal Bull proclaimed the restoration of the Catholic hierarchy in England and was followed the next day by Wiseman being created Archbishop of Westminster by Pius IX. The ensuing controversy provoked by this act of 'papal aggression' led to popular agitation throughout the country, 'No Popery' rhetoric in 'The Times' and a Parliamentary statute(16). In Lewes the editorial of the Express echoed the public's indignation, by reprinting the full text of Lord John Russell's letter to the Bishop of Durham in which he concurred that 'the late aggression of the Pope upon our Protestantism' was 'insolent and insidious'. The paper reported that copies of this letter were distributed throughout Lewes, the expense being met by Rev. John Vinal, the pastor of Jireh Chapel(17). An open letter addressed to the Bishop of Chichester, signed by 23 leading Anglicans including the vicars of all the Lewes parishes (See Figure 6.1), and dated November 5th, 1850, expressed 'sorrow and indignation' at the Pope's claim to 'the spiritual Government of the Kingdom of England'(18).
A town meeting was held on the 29th November at which, according to Wille(19), 'Dissenters and Church met on the Platform' (See Figure 6.2). The meeting's purpose was to consider 'the propriety of addressing a Loyal Address to Her Majesty the Queen and Petitions to both Houses of Parliament condemnatory of the recent exercise of Papal authority in the Country'(20). The agreed text of the address was similar in content and tone to the clergy's letter, but widened the source of protest to include nonconformists. The address stated that,
Although differing among ourselves upon various points of Christian Doctrine and Polity, we unitedly regard this Proceeding upon the part of the Romish See as an Act of unwarrantable interference in the Prerogative of your Majesty and we deeply regret that the secession and remaining tendencies of the several Clergymen of the Church of England together with several unhappy concessions to Romish Influence on the part of successive Governments should have given encouragement to this Act. (21)

Figure 6.2: Persons Attending the Town Meeting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Rel</th>
<th>Pol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H. Davey</td>
<td>Sadler/basketmaker</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Con(a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.W. Lower</td>
<td>Bookseller</td>
<td>Tab</td>
<td>Lib</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev J. Scobell</td>
<td>Rector</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Con(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev E. Jones</td>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>Tab</td>
<td>Lib</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev H. Lawrence</td>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>Bapt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev F. Chalmers</td>
<td>Curate</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.E. Baxter</td>
<td>Newspaper owner</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Con</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Button</td>
<td>School master</td>
<td>Tab</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev C.S. Green</td>
<td>Rector</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Con</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Molineux jnr</td>
<td>Banker</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Lib</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Neal</td>
<td>Bootmaker</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Con</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Figg</td>
<td>Land surveyor</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Con(a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Jones</td>
<td>School master</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Lib</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.H.T. Griffiths</td>
<td>Auctioneer</td>
<td>Ang</td>
<td>Con</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Vinall</td>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>Jir</td>
<td>Con</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbreviations:
Rel (Religion): Ang (Anglican), Bapt (Baptist), Jir (Jireh), Tab (Tabernacle).
Pol (Politics): Con (Conservative), Lib (Liberal).
Notes:
a. Voted for the Peelite candidate in 1847, then subsequently Liberal.
b. Voted for the Peelite candidate in 1847.

It is clear from the lists of persons signing the Bishop's letter and attending the town meeting that the 'No Popery' sentiment was shared by the majority of local churchmen and leading inhabitants and in the wider national context reflected the general reaction throughout the country(22).
People with opposing views towards the celebrations in 1847 now found themselves making common cause, a number of individuals previously signing the 1847 petition now being active in condemning 'Papal Aggression'. The solicitors, Edgar and John Blaker signed the Bishop's letter, while R.W. Lower, Button and Figg took an active part at the town meeting. The extent to which their opposition to the Papal Bull over-rode their previous differences may be seen by the coming together of Button, one of the leading Liberal nonconformist adversaries of the bonfire boys, and W.E. Baxter, one of their Anglican Conservative supporters, to jointly move a motion at the meeting(23). Although not recorded as being present at the town meeting, a fellow 1847 petitioner, M.A. Lower expressed the same views in his Preface to 'The Sussex Martyrs' which was published in 1851(24) Lower states,

I do not hesitate to assert my conviction, that the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century was, next to the introduction of Christianity itself, the greatest blessing ever experienced by our beloved country... But the times are changed; and many men, who hold lucrative benefices in that very establishment of which the heroes of the Marian persecution must be regarded as the virtual founders, do not scruple to protest Protestantism, to vote the Reformation "a mistake", and to exert all their energies in the reintroduction of dogmas and practices which a Hooper and a Latimer abhorred, and which "here in Lewes", drove Carver and Woodman to the stake!(25)

Such attitudes towards Catholicism expressed by the bonfire boys' opponents in 1850 were probably held in 1847, but that they should oppose the celebration with its anti-Catholic undertones emphasises their antipathy towards the manner in which they were conducted. While respectable protest, as
carried out by themselves, was perfectly acceptable the riotous proceedings of the bonfire boys was not.

The announcement of the Papal Bull and the subsequent arousal of anti-Catholic feelings throughout the town presented the bonfire boys with an opportunity to re-assert their 'rights' by returning to the High Street. Had it not been for the popular outcry, those opposing the bonfire boys seem likely to have continued their resistance thus ensuring the celebrations remained confined to the town's outskirts. However the reaction to the Papal Bull coinciding with the 5th November created a climate of toleration, if not open encouragement for the bonfire boys to rekindle the 'spirit of olden times'. According to the Gazette, 'on Sunday last the ministers of several of the places of worship in the town were loud in their denunciation against the interference of the Court of Rome in connexion with this country, and hoped that the Papal conspiracy would be celebrated with even more spirit than heretofore' (26).

The bonfire boys needed little encouragement and seized their opportunity. In the Cliffe, barrels appeared in the streets in the early evening and by 7 o'clock a fire was kindled at Cliffe Corner. In the High Street a fire was lit outside County Hall and a crowd of 3,000 gathered to hear an oration delivered by a 'representation of "Cardinal Wiseman" dressed in red from top to toe' (27). He addressed them thus,

Brother Bonfire boys - I am not sent to you by the Pope, if I was I might expect a warmer reception than you have given me; but, believe me, my mission will be equally effective -- for there's no more chance of this Wiseman converting you from
your hatred of Popery, than there is of my persuading you not to squib his Reverence's representative. I shall take the earliest opportunity of telling my brothers in tribulation, that at present it is no go, and that, however fond any of you may be of kissing, you are not at present disposed to kiss the Pope's toe. Now my friends, we have had a joyous night, and if you will let me be your bugleman, we will give four times four for Queen Victoria, three times three for the magistrates, and thank them for their indulgence. Three times three for the town and trade of Lewes, and now boys down on your knees, and four groans for the Pope.(28)

The speech captured the mood of the time, but more significantly for the first time represented the overt expression of anti-Catholic rhetoric during the celebrations, and in so doing gave vent to popular prejudice. But the extent to which this was seen by the bonfire boys and then manipulated to their own advantage is difficult to assess. 'Wiseman's' speech suggests the 1850 celebration was carried out with the tacit support of the magistrates and town officials, who remained in the Record Room throughout the evening(29). From this year on the non-interventionist policy was reverted to, the police and Borough Constables remaining 'in waiting, according to custom, at the Corn Exchange'(30), the police having explicit orders not to interfere.

Having seized this opportunity to return to the streets the bonfire boys did however display a readiness to adapt to new circumstances. The authorities, backed by a large body of opinion, had by their actions in 1847 set a base line delineating the threshold of tolerated public behaviour. To transgress this would lose the bonfire boys their new found support and provoke further repressive action by the
authorities. Although they did not encounter opposition in 1850, apart from the now customary invective from the Advertiser, the bonfire boys displayed their awareness of the changed situation by transforming their celebration into a new acceptable form, and as a consequence retained sufficient support to ensure the survival of their celebrations.

What occurred in Lewes during November 1850 indicates the influence national events can have on local popular customs. But as Storch rightly argues, the suppression or reform of such customs also 'depend on a local constellation of circumstances and on the degree to which (and speed with which) a consensus among elites and petty property-owners could be forged'(31). Such a consensus appeared at the time of the Papal Bull. Some, like Bacon, continued to voice their opposition to the celebrations, but many others withdrew from active opposition, responding to the bonfire boys' expression of 'No Popery' or their willingness to refrain from rioting. By 1853 the Express concluded that 'there is no festival in which high and low - rich and poor - so heartily, so honestly, and really join, as this 5th November Anniversary... It is the sympathy and support, secret and avowed, of the whole town that has enabled our great yearly festival to stand its ground, amidst the opposition, which it has occasionally encountered'(32). Meanwhile the Advertiser lamented the continued support of 'the sons of our most respectable inhabitants' who 'openly sanctioned the proceedings both in purse and in person'(33).
The 'sons' of respectable inhabitants had frequently been cited as supporters of the celebrations, but, as has been noted, little evidence is available to test this claim. Apart for Benjamin Flint, only three others are identified, but this was many years later. Following the reproducing of Henwood's print of the 1853 Bonfire Society procession in the Sussex County Magazine in 1928(34) two correspondents identified Thomas Monk, the eldest son of Edward Monk, a local brewer, as one of the leading figures(35). Earlier the Express(36) included an account by a bonfire boy active during the 1840's and 1850's. According to this source the 'Captain' of the procession had been Peckham, a prominent man at the old brewery near Castlegate and his lieutenants were F.V. and T.J.M., 'sons of leading townsmen and now themselves influential residents'. It seems likely that T.J.M. stood for Thomas Monk, while F.V. may have been Francis Verral, a brewer from Southover, who later regularly supported the Southover Bonfire Society. The bonfire boy concluded by noting the other leading figures, besides himself, 'were most of them sons of Lewes tradesmen'.

An Emerging Traditional Form, 1850-1853

In the three years following 1850, the bonfire boys evolved an increasingly formalized celebration. Adapting to changed circumstances, symbolic embellishments were added while activities previously included were abbreviated or omitted(37). Street fires and squibbing continued, but rioting and confrontation ceased. Tar barrels and disguise
were retained, but they became an integral part of the processions and instead of physically assaulting their opponents they burnt their representations in effigy. Anti-Catholicism, previously hinted at, now became a central object of the celebrations.

Anti-Catholicism was expressed in a number of forms. The addressing of the crowd by 'Cardinal Wiseman' introduced one element. An annual oration by a clergyman was given at the firesite, but in 1852 the impersonation of a specific individual was replaced by a symbolic representation of the Roman Catholic clergy in the form of the 'Bishop of Newtown'. A second element introduced at this time was the effigies. In 1851 the effigies of the Pope and Wiseman were paraded around the town before being burnt on the fire outside the County Hall. In 1852 the Pope suffered a similar fate alone, but by 1853 he was being accompanied by another enemy of England, the Emperor of Russia. The final element of anti-Catholicism introduced at this time was the 'famous banner, with the memorable inscription "No Popery"' which was carried at the front of the processionists.

Apart for an isolated incident in 1852 outside the house of William Figg, an 1847 petition signatory(38), the singling out of opponents of the celebrations took on a ritualised form. Although opposition to the celebrations abated Bacon continued to denigrate the celebrations and the bonfire boys in the most abrasive terms, referring to the 'unmanly, senseless, degrading, and tumultuous exhibitions'(39) which accompanied the 'usual outrage of law
and order' during this 'disgraceful saturnalia' (40). Even the bands that now accompanied the procession were not spared, Bacon tersely remarking, 'a band of music - if such discordant noises deserved the term' (41). In response, and as an alternative to smashing his windows the bonfire boys employed a more imaginative and probably more effective mode of retaliation. Bacon reported his own demise, writing that 'we understand that an ingenious representation of the Editor of this journal in the shape of a pig - being the nearest and most available mode of "illustrating" the name "Bacon", also shared the honours of the conflagration' (42). He was similarly honoured the following year when the 'pig' was joined by a banner proclaiming 'Pity poor Peter the Papist'. According to a letter from Samuel Elphick, a corn merchant trading in Cliffe, to a relative in Australia, 'old Bacon the printer don't like it much and sent out in his paper a lot of abuse and lies about it so the boys sent him a parcel of potato peelings and cabbage leaves for his hog' (43). Such lampooning of opponents became a ritual feature of the celebrations and recurred on frequent occasions.

The parading of effigies involved considerable ceremony with the bonfire boys forming costumed processions which perambulated an increasing number of Lewes streets. At 10 p.m. on 5th November, 1851, a 'formal procession' carrying the Pope and accompanied by a band proceeded from St Micheal's to the Star, returning to the White Hart where the fire was pitched. In the following year the procession route was extended to include Albion Street, Great East
Street and Market Street. By 1853, obviously gaining in confidence, the bonfire boys had two processions. At 6 p.m. they proceeded down the High Street and St Mary's Lane and on into Southover High Street, returning to the White Hart by the same route. A little later the second procession passed down the High Street, School Hill, into Albion Street, and then back to the firesite via East Street and Market Street. By 1853 these processions were well organised and marshalled by a committee, including a commander-in-chief or 'Captain' who led the procession.

The introduction of processions saw the development of one aspect of the celebrations and the decline of another. The random rolling of barrels through the streets was replaced by them becoming an integral part of the procession, being dragged along by chains at the rear of the procession. Costumes on the other hand, were becoming a central feature of the procession. Previously worn as a disguise the Express commented that costumes were now being worn for effect(44). In 1852 the bonfire boys in the town adopted the 'Guernsey', a black and white striped jersey, and white trousers. In Cliffe they 'appeared with white frocks outside and red inexpressibles - a more effective uniform but not so neat as that adopted in the town'(45). The following year saw the bonfire boys of both the town and Cliffe 'dressed with considerable uniformity in the Guernsey' marching three to four abreast in their respective localities(46).

The development of territorial affiliation by the
various bonfire boys also dates from this period. A full discussion of this aspect of the celebrations is developed in Chapter 9, but it is important to note here the affinity to territory emerging during these formative years. Reports of the celebrations during the 1840's indicate that the inhabitants of the Cliffe were equally active in celebrating the 'Fifth' as their fellow townsmen in the Borough(47). Between 1849 and 1852 they developed in a similar manner and in 1853 the Express reports that,

The demonstration in the Cliffe is represented as being certainly equal, if not superior, to that exhibited in the town, whilst the order and regularity observed were really admirable. A brilliant German band(48) from Brighton headed the procession, which was loudly cheered as it emerged from South Street with some neat banners, and especially one, "The Cliffe expects that every Bonfire Boy - This night will do his duty". The Cliffe guernseys were dressed in admirable style, and their grotesque masks excited the laughter of the crowd. Several bore half a tar barrel lighted over their heads on poles, in addition to the usual lighted tar barrels, which were drawn by the Guernseys, and, of course, amongst the banners figured the famous inscription "No Popery". The procession went up the High Street to the top of the Bridge, and on reaching the top it wheeled round; after letting off a variety of fireworks, it returned to Cliffe Corner. There the lighted tar barrels were heaped into a grand bonfire and a team of boys suddenly emerged from South Street, drawing a quantity of furze, added it to the burning pile which blazed up fiercely, and shed a rich light over the whole street. The band struck up a merry polka, and the Guernseys danced round the bonfire with great glee. Squibs were let off as usual, and the whole affair was brought to a satisfactory termination at an early hour.'(49)

Thus, between 1848 and 1853, the manner in which the celebrations were carried out changed considerably, but reintegration was not completely achieved. Bacon, through the Advertiser, continued to voice the 'puritan' ideology,
but the proponents of this view were not able to sustain the dominant position of influence they had enjoyed in 1847. They remained sufficiently powerful to create a climate of opinion that demanded a modification of the celebrations, but the bonfire boys, through their willingness to compromise and develop alternative forms were able to retain sufficient support from influential inhabitants to ensure the survival of their celebrations.

Unforeseen external factors that coincided with the attempted suppression aided the bonfire boys' defence of their celebrations. Had Pius IX not reintroduced the Catholic hierarchy into England when he did it seems likely that the authorities in Lewes, responding to public pressure, would have forced home their advantage and permanently expelled the bonfire boys from the streets of Lewes. In turn the middle class promoters of the alternative celebrations on the Wallands would have retained the initiative, neutralised the celebrations and turned them into what Cannadine has termed a 'consensual festival'(50). The riotous elements would have been submerged and 'elements of contrived social orderliness'(51) imposed. The Pope's action, ironically, enabled the bonfire boys to regain the initiative and thus determine for themselves the evolving form of the celebrations.

Discussing the process of struggle that might occur during such times of tension, Yeo(52) notes that 'resistance and adaption to cultural revolution... may be seen not only as preventing something happening: it is also, by the same
token, allowing other things to happen'. Besides transforming the form the celebration took during the evening of the 'Fifth', an equally significant development was the switch from intermittent association among the bonfire boys to the more formal continuous association of voluntary organisations, the bonfire societies. Their formation displays both the bonfire boys' preparedness to compromise, but also their determination to continue.

The Bonfire Societies

Although the press made no mention of the formation of the bonfire societies in 1853, the Lewes Borough and the Cliffe Bonfire Societies both claim to have been formed in this year. Certainly the reference to committees suggest that some form of formal organization existed in that year, but it was in 1854 that definite evidence in the form of a printed programme of the 'Lewes Bonfire Society'(53) marked the major step in the transformation of the celebrations, the establishment of voluntary associations with the single purpose of organising and carrying out the Bonfire Night celebrations. The formation of the societies marked a change in the celebrations that was to continue through until 1906 when action by the authorities forced further changes. In the intervening years the bonfire boys' annual commemoration, in its outward manifestations, appeared to exhibit an unchanging form.

In 1854 the Lewes Bonfire Society programme (Figure 6.4) publicised the society's eight processions, their
commencement times, their routes, the number of barrels to be dragged in each, the banners and effigies to be carried and the society officers responsible for the proceedings. Thirty-two years later the programme of the same society (Figure 6.5) set out a similar order of proceedings and apart from a greater elaboration of events the format was the same. Nor were the similarities over time confined to one society. The other societies, apart from different processional routes, celebrated the 'Fifth' in identical manner. The 1870 programme of the Cliffe Bonfire Society (Figure 6.6) noted that the society would be holding seven processions between the hours of 5.30 and 11 o'clock, all commencing from Headquarters and each including barrels, bands, banners and costumed members accompanied by the society officers.

Fuller, more colourful descriptions of events are contained in the local press which, as the century progressed increasingly devoted more space to reports of the annual celebration. Each report was usually prefaced by a long preamble including historical notes, comments on celebrations elsewhere in the county, and recognition of the good and patriotic character of the Lewes Bonfire Boys. This was followed by detailed reports of the activities of each society which usually included information of the order of the 'Grand Procession' as set out in the societies' programmes and a verbatim record of each societies' 'Bishop's' speech which was presumably passed to the press in written form prior to publication. To this were added procession routes, costumes worn by groups and individuals,
THE ORDER OF PROCESSIONS,

Of the Lewes Bonfire Society, for the Sixth of November, 1854.

All to meet at the Pelham Arms, at six o'clock precisely.

1.—To form a procession four abreast, with the Band, and start at half-past six, to go down the Town and St. Mary's lane, to the Swan Inn, Southover.

2.—The procession to start from the Swan Inn, Southover, quarter before seven, with the Band, Banners, 25 Torches, 2 large Tubs, and 4 small Tar Barrels.

3.—Four small Tubs and 12 Torches to start from the Pelham Arms at half-past seven, to proceed to the Bridge, one to be thrown into the river, the remainder to be brought back to the County Hall, and put on the fire.

4.—Three small Tubs at quarter past eight, to proceed down Town, through Albion Street, back to the County Hall.

THE GRAND PROCESSION,
To start at nine o'clock.

CAPTAIN

Lieutenant, Lieutenant
Seven Lieutenants with Torches
Pope Guy Fawkes
Bishop of Newtown
Banner No Popery

Band

One Hundred Torches
Banner Bonfire Boys Arms
Four large Tubs (drawn by Harberds party)
Six small Tar Barrels
Banner God save the Queen

6.—Two large Tubs and 4 small ones to be lighted at the County Hall, and drawn to the Bridge, with Band, Banners, and thirteen Torches.

7.—Two small Barrels, down the Town, through Star Lane, down West Street, up Market Street to the County Hall.

8.—One large Tub and 2 small ones, to start from the Pelham Arms, to the County Hall, with Band, Banners and the whole strength of the company singing and the Band playing GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.
GUNPOWDER PLOT ANNIVERSARY.

LEWES, BOROUGH BONFIRE SOCIETY,
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5th, 1886,

PROGRAMME OF PROCESSIONS,

A BAND FROM BURMAH (IN NATIVE COSTUME),
will be in attendance, and have part in each Procession.

THE LORD BISHOP OF LEWES

The Field Marshal, Staff-Bearer, Commander-in-Chief, and Staff
INSPECTORS GENERAL.

+ SOUTHWATER + GRAND + PROCESSION, +

The entire town will assemble at 8:30 P.M., to witness the grand illumination. The procession will start from the Southwater Green, and proceed to the Town Hall, where the bonfires will be lighted. The bonfires will be arranged in a semicircle, with the Town Hall in the center. The ceremony will conclude with a display of fireworks.

THE TOWN GRAND PROCESSION

will start at half-past nine o'clock.


THE LORD BISHOP OF LEWES

Association of the Young Men of Lewes.

LADIES' BAND OF THE TOWN.

The Grand Procession will be led by the Town Hall, followed by a procession of ladies and children.

TWELVE LARGE HOGSHEADS AND TEN TAR BARRELS.

This procession will consist of twelve large hogsheads, each containing a barrel of powder, and ten large tar barrels. The hogsheads will be carried on the shoulders of the bearers, and the tar barrels will be carried in a special wagon.

The Procession will pass through the Town Hall, then proceed to the Town Hall, where the bonfires will be lighted. The bonfires will be arranged in a semicircle, with the Town Hall in the center. The ceremony will conclude with a display of fireworks.
Figure 6.6: The 1870 Cliffe Bonfire Society Programme

CLIFFE BONFIRE SOCIETY, 1870

PROGRAMME OF PROCESSIONS

For the Celebration of the Gunpowder Plot, November 5th, 1870.

THE SOCIETY'S CELEBRATED BRASS BAND

Will be in full uniform, and form part in every Procession in the Full Costume of the Society.

1st.—The Members of the 9th Loy, to assemble at Head Quarters at Halfpast Five, and, start inner Parade for the Bridge, and meet the Society's Celebrated Brass Band, with 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Bands, playing the ''Ride of the Caledonian'' as they return, Band playing ''Brigade Order''.

2nd—To start from Head Quarters at Halfpast Nine, with Band in full uniform. Procession down South Street, and back to the Fire; Band playing ''Slap, bang, here it we again''.

3rd—The company to start from the Town Pump on Halfpast 7, up Malling Street, down South Street, to join the Rising Generation Band Society's Grand Procession.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF WITH HIS NUMEROUS OFFICERS.

Banner: "Cliffe Bonfire Society".

LIEUTENANTS WITH COLOURED LIGHTS AND ROMAN CANDLES.

The Members of the Brighton Branch of C.B.S. with their Splendid New Banner, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity"

BANNERS: "Union in Strength—Honour to the Brave".

LARGE NEW BANNER, "Bonfire Boys' Arms".

For the Celebration of the Gunpowder Plot, November 5th, 1870.

This Procession will start up South Street to the Bridge and back to the Fire, where the officials will be destroyed by Fireworks, and then return to prepare for

THE GRAND PROCESSION.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF ATTENDED BY NUMEROUS OFFICERS.

Banner: "Cliffe Bonfire Society".

LIEUTENANTS WITH COLOURED LIGHTS AND ROMAN CANDLES.

Splendid Banner, "God Save the Queen".

The Society's Brass Band in Full Costume.

THE SOUTH STREET RISING GENERATION SOCIETY.

With F possessions, and others.

EFFIGIES OF GUY FAWKES AND POPE PIUS IX.

BANNER: "GOD SAVE THE QUEEN".

LIEUTENANTS WITH COLOURED LIGHTS AND ROMAN CANDLES.

LIEUTENANTS.

Effigies of Guy Fawkes and Pope Pius IX.

BANNERS: "Army and Navy".

THE ELITE IN FULL CATHEDRAL.

Band playing "Peace and Plenty".

LIEUTENANTS.

This Procession will pass up Malling Street to the Bridge, being joined at the corner by the Rising Generation Society, down South Street and back to the Fire, where the Band will deliver his annual address, concluding with the national tunes, and then be destroyed by Fireworks, (required by P. W. Murray, of Lewes) the Band playing "Rule Britannia", after which Bonfire Process will be delivered by the Lord Mayor, and the Members will then return to the Fire.

6th—To start from Head Quarters, down South Street, up to the Bridge, & back to the Fire, with Band, Dancers, Torches, Hotelers, & The Bellman. Time—To start from Head Quarters at Halfpast Eleven, and proceed to the Bridge, down South Street, and back to the Fire, with Band, Dancers, Torches, Hotelers, and the entire length of the Society, the Band playing, and the company singing "GOD SAVE THE QUEEN".

An immense Fire will be kept up throughout the evening until 12 o'clock, when it will be extinguished by the Contributions Fire Brigade.

As the celebration has been got up at a very great expense, it is hoped the Public will subscribe liberally to the Box, and thereby enable the Committee to meet the expenses.

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names of persons whose effigies were burnt, the subject and
description of the tableaux, including explanations of their
significance, and any other detail that added information or
colour to the report.

From these sources a description of the manner in which
the Bonfire Boys celebrated the 5th November throughout this
period can be constructed. At midnight the 'Fifth' was
ushered in by a "salvo of artillery" from Cliffe Hill(54),
and the singing of 'Rule Britannia' and the 'National
Anthem', and the reciting of the 'Bonfire Prayers' outside
County Hall(55). During the course of the day effigies of
Guy Fawkes were paraded from pub to pub by groups of
youths(56) and by four o'clock people whose houses abuted
the processional routes were taking the usual precautions
against fire by barricading their lower windows and covering
their cellar gratings with wet straw(57). Not long after,
special trains from 'Brighton, Eastbourne, Uckfield, and
other places'(58), including London(59), begun bringing
visitors to swell the crowds of local spectators. During
this time the costumed members of the various societies were
making their way to their respective headquarters in
readiness for the first processions. This is picturesquely
described by a reporter in 1878(60).

Dusk deepens into darkness, and the bangs
become more numerous. What strange looking little fellow is that who now passes us; he is not more
than five or six years old, but he is attired in a
disguise of white and red, striped in a slanting
direction, with a showy cap, having in front a
large feather. Now a grown up person passes us in
the dress of a gay cavalier; again we look round,
and we find that Neptune is at our elbow, in his
shimmering costume of sea-green and silver... and
the number increases in the darkness.

Before the processions commenced each society pitched their fire in the main thoroughfare or road junction of their locality where it remained the focal point for the societies' activities throughout the remainder of the evening. The same reporter describes the manner in which this was done;

A number of sturdy fellows, taring madly along, with immense tar-barrels flaring and spluttering behind them, dash down by the County Hall, down School-hill to the Bridge, and then return again to the County Hall, opposite which what is left of the tubs is piled in the centre of the road, and faggots are added, the flames leaping high in the air, and announcing that the proceedings have commenced.

Once the fires were established the first processions formed up ready for the off. Initially the scene of a certain amount of confusion, the processions soon took on a regimented order.

The Commander gives his order to his lieutenants, who pass it on to another, and so on, until there is a regular din, to which is added the continual reports of troublesome "rousers", which were by this time being discharged pretty freely. Eventually the order was given "light up", and instantly numerous torches and coloured fire lit up the thoroughfare. The band struck up a popular air, and as the procession moved forward it was indeed a very picturesque sight. Half a dozen or more gaudily-attired Indians acted as pioneers, and behind these followed the staff, several wearing beautiful dresses, the Commander-in-Chief occupying a prominent centre position. He wore the dress of a hussar, which was very appropriate to his office. He was supported by a Court page, and jester as his lieutenants; a body of seven or eight Hungarian hussars formed his body guard, whilst among his aide-de-camps were two very fastidious looking mashers, who, to judge from their appearance, did a little work that night for the first time in their lives. Then came the band, in front of which
marched the captain, wielding his staff, and following the musicians were other members, &c carrying torches and other lights. The whole was brought up by two sledges of tar barrels, which threw out tremendous heat and caused the spectators to draw back as they passed.'(61)

Having processed a number of times around their locality of the town the societies each converged on their firesite where the 'Bishop' of each society gave his annual oration to the gathered crowd and the effigies and tableau were ignited and burnt. Again the press gives an illustrative account of this stage of the proceedings. Describing the scene in Commercial Square in 1895(62) it was reported that;

The Archbishop, with becoming stateliness, took stand above the surging crowd, and, amidst the greatest enthusiasm gave forth a stirring and zealous address... Orders were now given, and the effigies of the Pope and Guy Fawkes were consigned to the flames, their combustion being welcomed with cheers and shouts of pleasure, as the mysteries of the bodies came to view. This however only tended to awaken the impatience of the crowd, whose enthusiasm burst forth as the mysteries of the tableau, a massive representation of the Traitor's Gate, in the Tower of London, were made manifest.

The report continued by giving a firework by firework account of the tableau's destruction and the crowd's response,

...on the roof a massive axe, the trunk of a human body, and a disjointed head. Gradually the axe disclosed its contents of squibs... then the body, with a mass of red fire rushing from the neck... but when the head was found to have a hat that whirled round 'midst a cloud of fire, and suddenly rose high into the air with aloud report, the hearty cheers of the masses around almost drowned the strains of "Rule Britannia", and, joined in the explosion of "Jack-in-the-box" and a "mine of serpents", the scene was brought to a close.
The evening was concluded by 'one more procession to use up the surplus torches, tubs, and other combustibles, followed by 'Bonfire Prayers' and "God Save the Queen", after which the Borough Fire Brigade extinguished the fire'(63).

It has been established that the Bonfire Night celebrations were a recurrent ceremonial drama with its own intrinsic rituals and procedures which were gradually evolved during the riotous and transitional periods, before being adopted by the newly formed bonfire societies. These ritual elements did not however remain unchanged. Each became increasingly more elaborate as the century progressed, but while they continued to provide a means for the bonfire boys to express defiance, humour, ridicule, innovation and 'artistry', their symbolic meaning or practical purpose changed.

Street fires remained the focus of each society's activities, the firesite being the rendezvous for both spectators and processionists, where not only the fire was built, but also where the 'Bishop' delivered his annual oration, the societies' firework displays were held and the final exuberant dancing of the bonfire boys was enjoyed. Built during the initial stages of the celebrations from the remains of tar barrels which had been previously dragged through the streets, the fires were replenished with faggots throughout the evening. The Borough retained the traditional site outside County Hall, Cliffe held their fire at Cliffe Corner and Commercial Square at the intersection of five streets from which the Society took its name. Waterloo held
their fire first in Waterloo Place (64) and then outside their headquarters, the King's Arms in North Street (65). Later Southover established their firesite outside the King's Head in Southover High Street and the St Annes Society outside the Black Horse in Western Road.

The danger of street fires was recognised by most observers, a London reporter noting the roadway between County Hall and the White Hart as being only 36 feet (66). Although critics of the celebrations expressed their opposition to the street fires such was the support for the celebrations that the Express commented that 'the Fifth of November in Lewes without bonfires in the streets of the town would be as unsatisfactory as mustard without meat' (67). Only following a major fire in the High Street in 1904 (68) did this attitude change.

The tar barrels similarly became an integral part of the celebrations, the early programmes suggesting the sole purpose of processions being to provide parties of bonfire boys with the opportunity to drag barrels through the streets. Press accounts record this practice occurring early in the evening when each society held barrel runs from their head-quarters to designated points, returning to their firesite where the remains of the barrels were pitched to form the bonfire. The Borough 'run' from the Pelham Arms to County Hall via Cliffe Bridge, Cliffe from either South Street or Malling Street via Cliffe Bridge to Cliffe Corner and Southover from the Society's headquarters to the Manor House in Southover High Street.
This emphasis on barrels is recorded in the 1854 programme where considerable detail is included giving the number and size of barrels to be used. But Figures 6.5 and 6.6 suggest that their importance diminished as the century progressed, other elements of the celebrations being enlarged and elaborated upon. Barrels continued to be dragged in the processions but now their numbers were fewer and they were borne on sledges (69). However large quantities continued to be used by all the societies, the Borough drawing 60 on new sleighs in 1898 (70). In 1906 their use was forbidden by the County Council. Thus, while during the early years of the societies' existence the barrels may be interpreted as a symbolic act of defiance against those previously attempting to suppress the celebrations, they became, as opposition declined, a ritual element of bonfire custom, their changing significance reflecting the changing circumstances of the celebrations.

A symbolic significance of tar barrels was however retained with the Borough's continuing practice of throwing a burning tar barrel from Cliffe Bridge into the River Ouse. This practice was first recorded in 1855, but no explanation is given, the report simply stating that 'two sugar hogs heads, six tar barrels, and 25 torches... to proceed to the bridge, one to be thrown into the river as usual' (71). Initially this was carried out as an act of defiance, the Express explaining that a business man bore a scar on his face as a consequence of a fierce struggle "to keep up the charter", that is, to run a tar-tub down the High-street, and then with three cheers throw it over the Bridge into the
Later the symbolic significance of this ritual changed. It was customary for the Borough and Cliffe societies to exchange fraternal greetings on Cliffe Bridge when their two processions met, in recognition of the territorial boundary between the two societies. But following the postponement of the 1874 celebrations to the 31st December due to a typhoid outbreak in the town(73) the press reported that this was dispensed with 'but a daring "old hand", catching hold of a large tub, in one mass of flames, lifted it above his head, and hurled it over the railings, and into the river "Ouse"'(74). Two years later, following the usual exchange of fraternal greetings, 'in a token of amity and in accordance with custom, a lighted barrel was thrown over the railings'(75). Like the dragging of barrels, the significance of this custom appears to change with the passing of time.

One of the most significant developments following the formation of the bonfire societies was the introduction of processions of costumed members carrying torches, banners and effigies, dragging tar-barrels and tableaux, accompanied by bands, which paraded around the locality of the town within which the society was based. The processions developed as an integral part of the celebrations, they were timetabled, organised and marshalled. Specific groups were introduced including pioneers, clergy and bands, and finally, after the formative years, took on an unchanging form.
From the time of their introduction, according to society programmes(23), processions adhered not just to designated routes, but also to a prescribed timetable. Each society held six to eight processions, commencing between 5.00 and 5.30 pm, then at various intervals throughout the evening until the final processions around 11.00 pm. Only the Waterloo and Southover Societies did not follow this pattern, in 1878 the Waterloo holding only four processions between six o'clock and half past eight. Following their firesite display, a procession proceeded by way of the High Street to Rotten Row, where it joined the Borough Society's Grand Procession'. Similarly, Southover, in 1891, held only three processions, at 6.00, 6.45 and their 'Grand' at 7.30 pm. Waterloo and Southover were small societies and it seems likely their early termination of activities resulted from their members' joining the 'senior' societies for the main festivities.

There appears to have been a certain inter-dependence between the societies. They all held one procession which they referred to as the 'Grand Procession', which immediately preceded their firesite displays. The press records that it became the custom for societies to support each others 'Grand' processions. In 1857 the Commercial Square joined the Borough's Grand Procession(77) and in a few years this was formalised with the Commercial Square marching annually from their headquarters to Rotten Row to join the Borough's 'Grand'(78). This arrangement continued until 1905(79) when the loss of their traditional firesites caused the two societies to amalgamate. Support from the
other societies never became established to the same extent. Waterloo, during their brief existence, supported the Borough, while Cliffe and Southover did the same from the middle of the 1880's to 1902(80). This support was not reciprocated by the Borough until 1894 when Commercial Square was supported by both Borough and Cliffe, this support continuing until 1902 when Southover also joined.

The bonfire boys actively encouraged such opportunities for mutual support by co-ordinating their individual society timetables. While acknowledging this the Express also provides an explanation for this co-operation.

Although all the societies have their separate series of processions, they all work together on friendly terms, and several opportunities for amalgamation were taken advantage of during the evening. The grand processions were also arranged so as not to clash with each other... This arrangement has gone on for years, and works exceedingly well, because it not only enables all the spectators to see all the interesting incidents of the evening, but it also gives the opportunity for the societies to assist each other in making the display more imposing.(81)

When such arrangements failed the societies took steps to remedy the situation, as in 1899(82) when it was reported that the secretaries and principal officers of the societies had met to draw up a timetable so that events did not last too long. They were responding to complaints that the Borough's effigies were going off after the public had left the town.

Part of the arrangement between the bonfire boys and the authorities that emerged during the transitional period was that the bonfire boys would become responsible for
ensuring that the celebrations were conducted within acceptable parameters of behaviour. The introduction of processions was a direct response to this arrangement. To ensure that the processions remained orderly the societies appointed officers to lead and marshal them. Initially these officers were referred to as 'Captains' (83) but as the societies became more established the numbers and titles of officers became increasingly high-sounding. In 1869 the Borough officers included a Staff-bearer, a Commander-in-Chief and an Inspector-General of Processions (84). By 1899 the Commercial Square's processions were marshalled by a plethora of officers; Commander-in-Chief, Chief Pioneer, Staff Officers, Staff Marshal, Staff Bearer, 1st and 2nd Lieutenants, Grooms in Waiting, Chief of Staff, Staff Bugler, Field Marshals, Staff Surgeon, Aides de Camp, Inspector General, Ambulance Staff, Yeoman of Tableau, Captain of Ranks, and Lieutenants of Ranks (85). Exactly what each of these officers did remains a mystery, and there are indications that some were honorary posts given to wealthy or influential supporters. This practice was referred to in 1880 when the Express observed, 'an ordinary mortal would have imagined that the Commander-in-Chief of all the Forces would be entitled to the place of honour, but the precedence appears to be given to the Field-Marshal and the Staff. It may be, however, that these gentlemen only hold honorary rank, and that the Commander-in-Chief is really the head and front of the whole affair.' (86)

Officers during the formative years were identified by their insignia of office, in 1853 the wearing of red
sashes(87) and later by badges denoting their rank(88). As their numbers increased and fancy dress began to replace the uniform guernsey, officers were frequently seen wearing elaborate costumes which distinguished them from other processionists. By 1860 'two or three individuals of evidently high rank in bonfire organization had a naval uniform, dark blue, the breast being literally covered in yellow braid' were observed in the Cliffe processions(89). Often the costumes of the officers complemented their military title emphasising a militarist characteristic often found among the bonfire boys. Describing the costumes of two of the Borough's leading officers the press noted:

The latter personage (Commander-in-Chief) wears the red frock coat, trimmed with gold, black nether garments with top boots, sash of gold and silk, and silver helmet and plume, which everybody knows, or ought to know, is the ordinary every-day garb of a general of the British army... One of the aides-de-camp sports the gay uniform of the R.H.A. - blue tunic with gold facings, busby with double plume, breeches, jack boots and spurs.(90)

The extent of the formalized organization of the processions is best illustrated by Figure 6.8. The 'Order of Procession' graphically illustrate first, the degree to which the bonfire boys transformed their celebrations from riot to 'military' parade, secondly how set forms evolved during the early 1860's were retained throughout the century, and thirdly how the societies replicated each others format.

The regimentation of the processions must have been greatly assisted by the use of bands. First introduced during the 1840's, bands were employed to accompany processions and supply specific musical items at different
Figure 6.8: The Cliffe Bonfire Society's 'Order of Procession', 1863 and 1895

CLIFFE GRAND PROCESSION,
which started at half past eight, was in the following order:

Commander-In-Chief and Staff.
Splendid Beryl and Coloured Lights, Bonfire Candles, 
1. The Rifle Volunteer and Town Band
2. The Lord Bishop of the Cliffe,
3. Grand Tableau, 'The British Empire,'
5. Members carrying Torches and Coloured Lights.
6. Banneret, 'Success to our Subscribers.'
7. Banneret, 'Unity, Peace and Concord.'
8. Banneret, 'Army, Navy and Volunteers.'
9. Banneret, 'Girls be true to your Boy's Boys.'
10. Banneret, 'No Popery.'

STAGES DURING THE EVENING'S EVENTS. The names of the bands suggest that the musical accompaniment was of good quality.

In 1858(91) the Brighton Town Band and the Lewes Saxhorn Band marched in the processions of the Cliffe and Commercial Square Societies respectively. In 1862(92) the Borough were joined by the band of the Brighton Rifle Corp and the Commercial Square were supported by the Volunteer and Town Band. Some bands appear to have been formed from among the bonfire boys themselves, in 1867 it being reported that 'the fife and drum band, consisting of members of the society'(93) marched with the Commercial Square Society.

Towards the end of the century a humorous note was

(Brighton Gazette, 6.11.63.) (Sussex Ag. Express 5.11.95.)
Introduced, the Borough's band being referred to as 'The Society's specially trained original fire-proof band'(94).

While the bands aided the efforts of the officers to impose a more regimental organisation the regular use of particular tunes introduced another facet to the growing ritualisation of the event. First mentioned in 1855(95), 'See the Conquering Hero Come' became the traditional tune played during the Grand procession of most of the societies, in 1893(96) the programmes of Borough, Cliffe and Southover announcing the playing of this march. Other tunes also became associated with particular processions or events during the proceedings. 'Slap, bang, here we are again' was 'the familiar old tune which always announces the first procession of the different societies'(97). 'Rule Britannia' usually accompanied the burning of the effigies of Guy Fawkes and the Pope while the proceedings of all the societies were concluded with the playing of 'God Save the Queen.'

Unlike a number of towns in the south east where other voluntary associations participated in the bonfire processions, those in Lewes consisted almost exclusively of bonfire society members. The presence of the Ancient Order of Druids, the Working Boy's Club and the Mutual Benefit Society at Folkstone(98), the cyclist clubs at Ticehurst and Petworth(99) and the local fire brigades at East Grinstead and Cranbrook(100) suggest that the celebrations in these places had been 'sanitised'. Their absence from the Lewes processions suggests that the bonfire boys retained the
initiative. The only exceptions were contingents of Brighton bonfire boys, the attendance of nautical groups also from Brighton, and the occasional participation of the local fire brigade.

As early as 1861 Commercial Square boasted a Brighton branch and in the following year the Society processed to the railway station to meet them(101). In 1863 the Borough Society, enroute for the Swan stopped at the station where '40 or 50 of the Brighton bonfire boys, chiefly attired in guernseys covered with stars, and white turbans ornamented with beads... fell in, in the rear of the procession(102).

By 1870 the Cliffe also received support from Brighton, its Grand procession including 'The Brighton Branch of the Cliffe Bonfire Society, with their splendid new banner - "Brighton Coat of Arms".'(103) The nature of these 'branches' is unclear, but a report of a supper held by the Brighton Branch of the Cliffe Bonfire Society in Brighton 'to which about 50 sat down, including several members of the Cliffe Society'(104) suggest that they were organised groups based in Brighton. Support from Brighton ceased in 1879 with the formation of the Brighton Borough Bonfire Society(105). However this support was replaced by bonfire boys from other towns, the order of the Borough's Grand procession including 'Members of Eastbourne, East Grinstead, Hastings, Horsham and Tunbridge Wells Bonfire Societies'(106).

Contingents of naval volunteers from Brighton also attended. In 1897(107) the processions of Borough and Cliffe
were supported by the Royal Naval Cruising Club with 70 members and their gatling gun and the Brighton Naval Volunteer Cruising Club with their Nordenfeldt gun respectively. The same club joined Cliffe in the two succeeding years (108). In 1899 'a large contingent of the Brighton Naval Volunteer Cruising Club, with bugle band' was reported marching with the Commercial Square. The significance of their participation becomes clear when other aspects of the celebrations are considered, namely the expressions of patriotism and militarism that were present throughout the period. This will be returned to later when the ideological content of the celebrations is discussed.

The third outsider group that was involved in the processions was the local fire brigade. More usually employed staying on duty in case of fire, the Cliffe Fire Brigade appear to have briefly taken a more active part in the celebrations, marching with the Cliffe Society in 1881 and 1882. The nature of the celebrations ensured that the interests of the bonfire boys and the fire brigade were not unrelated and in Lewes there is evidence of some members of the volunteer fire brigade also being members of a bonfire society (109).

The increasing adoption of a wide variety of costumes by the processionists resulted in further structuring of the processions. Initially the 'guernsey' was worn by all society members, but it was not long before the press was reporting the introduction of other costumes. Reports in 1859 indicate other fancy dress costumes being introduced.
Describing the Borough Society's procession in that year, the Express observes that while the Guernseys were in great force other costumes included a Greek warrior and a Chickasaw Indian, a helmet, more or less fanciful, being a very favourite appendage. Initially only the leading officers wore elaborate costumes, the remainder either wearing the Guernsey or other fancy costumes, but by the 1880's the guernseys had disappeared and were being replaced by a wide variety of costumes. The following were observed in the Commercial Square's 1884 procession:

As to the dresses, they were in greater variety than ever. Take for example, the head of the procession, with scarlet Mephistopheles and "masher" niggers for pioneers, an oriental prince for staff bearer, a gallant general in Life Guards' uniform, this being no less an exalted individual than the Commander-in-Chief; two others similarly attired, with a harlequin and a Sir Walter Raleigh for his principle lieutenants, devils, clowns, pantaloons, Salvation Army representatives, Shakers, cavaliers, sprites, jesters, courtiers, troubadours, tambourine girls in Italian costume, Zouaves, artillerymen, chasseurs, sailors, niggers, and a host of others.

Although in 1893, to mark the 40th anniversary of the processions, a return to the traditional Guernsey occurred in the Commercial Square Society, the variety of costumes continued to be retained by all the societies.

While innovation occurred with the introduction of fancy dress costumes, these were used to create further formalization within the processions. Groups attired in the same costume and known as 'pioneers' led the processions under the direction of the Pioneer Chief. Pioneers were first reported in 1862 when the Cliffe, Borough and
Commercial Square Societies all had groups of members dressed 'in Garibaldian costume, red shirt, white trousers, and top boots'(113). The source of inspiration for this theme was to be found in the popular support for Garibaldi's struggle in Italy. Other groups also had contemporary relevance, including Zulu and soldiers at the time of the Zulu Wars in 1879(114), a squad of Bengal Lancers in 1897 reflecting England's India campaign(115), and in 1904, the year of the Russo Japanese War the pioneers of the Southover society 'formed a picturesque and effective group of the Nippon Teikoku Kaigun, or Japanese Imperial Navy, sailors, marines, hospital attendants with stretchers and nurses, together with a sort of siege howitzer long-tom'(116). Other pioneer costumes seem to have been chosen for more ephemeral reasons, red indians being particularly popular with both the Commercial Square and Borough Societies(117).

The importance being placed on the costumes towards the end of the century was evident by the introduction of fancy dress competitions by Commercial Square in 1898 when the Mayor, Councillor Gates, and fellow councillors Carpenter and Weston acted as judges(118). This emphasis on the individual wearer was a long way removed from the anonymity of disguise during the 1840's and reflected a significant shift in the character of the celebrations. No longer were they an open act of defiance, but had developed into an acceptable street carnival.
Notes

1. TURNER (1957).
2. B.G., 9.11.48.
3. S.A.E., 13.11.41.
4. S.W.A., 17.11.43.
5. S.A.E., 7.11.47.
7. S.A.E., 11.11.48.
9. Neal nominated Lord Henry Loftus in the 1847 General Election.
10. S.W.A., 7.11.48.
11. S.A.E., 10.11.49.
12. S.W.A., 13.11.49.
13. S.W.A., 13.11.49.
14. S.W.A., 13.11.49.
15. S.W.A., 13.11.49.
17. S.A.E., 9.11.50.
18. Open Letter 'To the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Chichester'. A printed copy of this letter is deposited at Lewes Area Library, Lewes.
23. The 'Town Book' (pp.70-71) records the following motion: 'Moved by Mr William Edwin Baxter, Seconded by Mr William Button and carried unanimously that an humble address be presented to Her Majesty praying her to resist this dangerous Aggression upon the Crown, the Constitution, the Church and upon the whole Protestant people of this Nation and adopt such Measures as may be suitable to this occasion there by putting an end to this intolerant and intolerable Invasion of our liberties and Conscience by the See of Rome.'
24. The date of publication of Lower's book, 1851, appears seen as significant. By drawing attention to the burning of Protestant Martyrs in Lewes during the Marian Persecutions it could be that his intention was to fuel the already aroused anti-Catholicism of that time.
25. LOWER, M.A. (1851), The Sussex Martyrs: Their Examinations and Cruel Burnings in the Time of Queen Mary; Comprising the Interesting Personal Narrative of Richard Woodman, Lewes: Baxter & Son.
26. B.G., 7.11.50.
27. S.A.E., 9.11.50.
28. S.A.E., 9.11.50.
29. S.W.A., 12.11.50.
30. S.W.A., 8.11.53.
32. S.A.E., 12.11.53.
33. S.W.A., 8.11.53.
34. Correspondence from G. Holman, Sussex County Magazine, vol.2, no.12, (Dec.1928), p.594.35. George Holman claimed 'the centre one of the three leading figures in the procession (carrying the staff) represented Thomas Monk, who was Commander-in-Chief that year'. Although a subsequent letter from J.T. Glandfield disputes which figure was Monk, he nevertheless concurs that he was present.
35. Correspondence from J.T. Glandfield, Sussex County Magazine, vol.3, no.1, (Jan.1929), p.66. According to Glandfield 'the one on the left of the procession (nearest the fire) with an Eton (?) cap was Mr Monk. He is wearing a sash, which denotes an officer, whereas the centre figure is not so decorated'.
36. S.A.E., 7.11.93.
37. See PHYTHIAN ADAMS (1975) for discussion on the changing characteristics of custom.
38. S.W.A., 9.11.52.
39. S.W.A., 9.11.52.
40. S.W.A., 8.11.53.
41. S.W.A., 9.11.52.
42. S.W.A., 9.11.52.
43. The letter, dated '17 Nov 1853' and addressed to 'Richard' remains the property of the Elphick family.
44. S.A.E., 12.11.53.
45. S.A.E., 11.11.52.
46. S.A.E., 12.11.53.
47. S.A.E., 11.11.43.
48. During this period visiting German bands touring England were quite common. The 1851 Lewes Census records a German band numbering nine members lodging in a house in White Hill. It included two married couples. All were born in Frankfurt, except one born in Barton, Germany.
49. S.A.E., 12.11.53.
50. CANNADINE (1982).
53. A copy of this programme is in the possession of Mr B. Beckingham.
54. S.A.E., 9.11.69 and 7.11.91.
55. S.A.E., 9.11.75. The 'Bonfire Prayers' is a traditional rhyme recited by the bonfire boys and is as follows:

Remember remember the Fifth of November,
The Gunpowder Treason and Plot,
I see no reason why Gunpowder Treason
Should ever be forgot.
Guy Fawkes, Guy Fawkes,
T'was his intent
To blow up the King and the Parliament.
Three score barrels of powder below
Poor old England to overthrow;
By God's providence he was catch'd
With a dark lantern and burning match
Holla boys, holla boys, make the bells ring
Holla boys, holla boys, God save the Queen.

A penny loaf to feed the Pope,
A farthing o' cheese to choke him,
A pint of beer to rinse it down
A faggot of sticks to burn him!
Burn him in a tub of tar,
Burn him like a blazing star,
Burn his body from his head
Then we'll say old Pope is dead!
Hip, hip hoo-r-r-ray.

56. S.A.E., 9.11.72.
57. S.A.E., 8.11.87.
58. S.A.E., 9.11.69.
59. S.A.E., 18.10.92.
60. S.A.E., 9.11.78.
61. S.A.E., 9.11.89.
62. S.A.E., 5.11.95.
63. S.A.E., 6.11.88.
64. S.A.E., 7.11.57.
65. S.A.E., 9.11.58.
66. Daily Telegraph, 6.11.75.
67. S.A.E., 6.11.94.
68. The repercussions of this fire on the bonfire societies
is discussed Chapter 7.
69. As early as 1858 the Borough had ceased to literally
drag the barrels and had placed them on sledges
(S.A.E., 9.11.58) and by 1872 the 'hogs heads' were
being drawn in an iron cage at the rear of the
procession (S.A.E., 9.11.72).
70. S.A.E., 7.11.98.
71. S.A.E., 10.11.55.
72. S.A.E., 8.11.62.
73. Although a local doctor, Lewis Smythe, in a letter to
the 'Express', claimed that rumours of typhoid were
'not only inaccurate, but they are greatly exaggerated'
(S.A.E., 7.11.74.), there was sufficient pressure on
the bonfire societies for them to decide to postpone
their celebrations until the 30th December. While the
Commercial Square and Borough Societies formed a
sub-committee to organise this the Cliffe initially
announced that following a well attended general
meeting they were going to continue as usual (S.A.E.,
31.10.74.). However a notice later appeared in the
press announcing the reversal of this decision as a
result of the wishes of the 'Commissioners and
subscribers generally' (S.A.E., 2.11.74.). On the 5th
November the streets of Lewes were 'policing' by members
of the Commercial Square and Borough Societies to
prevent any squibbing etc while the Cliffe went to
Ringmer, a village two miles from Lewes, to support
their celebrations (S.A.E., 7.11.74.). Apart for
reduced numbers of spectators the press reports the
celebrations being carried out on the 30th December as
though it were the 'Fifth' (S.A.E., 2.1.75.). This was the only occasion between 1853 and 1913 that the celebrations were not held on the 5th November.

74. S.A.E., 2.1.75.
75. S.A.E., 6.11.77.
76. The following times of processions were taken from various society programmes held privately.
1854 Borough B.S. 6.00, 6.30, 6.45, 7.30, 8.15, 9.00 (Grand) and three further processions for which no time is given.
1870 Cliffe B.S. 5.30, 6.30, 7.30, 8.00, 9.00 (Grand), one procession with no time given, 11.00.
1873 Commercial Square B.S. 6.00, 7.00, 7.30, 8.15, 10.30 (Grand), 11.15.
1877 Borough B.S. 5.30, 6.30, 7.30, 8.15, 9.30 (Grand), one procession with no time given.
1878 Waterloo B.S. 6.00, 6.45, 7.30, 8.30 (Grand).
1891 Southover B.S. 5.30, 6.45, 7.30 (Grand).
1899 Cliffe B.S. 5.00, 5.30, 6.15, 7.00, 8.15 (Grand), 10.30, 11.15.
77. S.A.E., 7.11.57.
78. S.A.E., 9.11.61.
79. S.A.E., 11.11.1905.
80. For reports of the various times when the societies supported each others' Grand processions see S.A.E., 7.11.76., 9.11.86., 6.11.88., 5.11.94. and 8.11.1902.
81. S.A.E., 6.11.88.
82. S.A.E., 8.11.99.
83. In 1860 the Commercial Square's processions were led by the Captain and Staff' (S.A.E., 10.11.60.) and the annual dinner of the Cliffe Society was chaired by the Captain' (S.A.E., 1.12.60.). In 1867 the Cliffe Society was still being led by a Capt Pryor', but the other societies had for a number of years adopted the rank of Commander-in-Chief (S.A.E., 9.11.67.). It was not until 1869 that the Cliffe's processions were led by this officer (S.A.E., 9.11.69.). However there is some evidence to suggest that the title was interchangeable, reference being made to a Commander-in-Chief leading the Cliffe as early as 1860 (S.A.E., 10.11.60.).
84. S.A.E., 9.11.69.
85. S.A.E., 8.11.99.
86. S.A.E., 9.11.80.
87. GLANDFIELD (1929).
88. It is clear from a photograph of the officers of the Commercial Square Society in 1879 that they are wearing card badges with their office printed on them. Similar badges are worn by Southover members in a 1904 photograph.
89. S.A.E., 10.11.60.
90. S.A.E., 9.11.80.
91. S.A.E., 9.11.58.
92. S.A.E., 8.11.62.
93. S.A.E., 9.11.67.
94. S.A.E., 5.11.95.
95. S.A.E., 10.11.55.
96. S.A.E., 7.11.93.
97. S.A.E., 9.11.78.


99. For references to Ticehurst see: S.A.E., 11.11.93.; 10.11.94.; 9.11.95.; 17.11.96. For Petworth see: S.A.E., 12.11.92.

100. At East Grinstead the Volunteer Fire Brigade marched at the front of the procession during the late 1860's through to the early 80's (S.A.E., 9.11.67., 9.11.69., 8.11.70. and 7.11.82.). Similarly the local Petworth brigade took part in their town's celebrations in 1869 (S.A.E., 9.11.69.) and in Cranbrook the fire brigade marched in the 1885 procession (S.A.E., 7.11.85).

101. S.A.E., 9.11.61. and 8.11.62.

102. S.A.E., 6.11.63.

103. S.A.E., 8.11.70.

104. S.D.N., 29.11.72.

105. S.A.E., 8.11.79.

106. S.A.E., 8.11.81.

107. S.A.E., 6.11.97.

108. S.A.E., 7.11.98. and 8.11.99.

109. In 1870 the Captain of the Cliffe Volunteer Fire Brigade was Benjamin Thorpe. Thorpe was the Commander-in-Chief of the Cliffe Bonfire Society in 1873. Another member of the Brigade and the Cliffe Society at this time was T. Downey.

110. S.A.E., 8.11.59.

111. S.A.E., 8.11.84.

112. S.A.E., 7.11.93.

113. S.A.E., 8.11.62.

114. S.A.E., 8.11.79.

115. S.A.E., 6.11.97.

116. S.A.E., 12.11.1904.

117. In 1872 the Borough was led by a pioneer front consisting of Red Indians (S.A.E., 9.11.72.), a costume that was to become popular with the other societies, the Commercial Square retaining a pioneer group of Red Indians for a number of years during the 1880's and 1890's.

118. S.A.E., 5.11.98.
CHAPTER 7

ANTI-CATHOLICISM, POLITICS AND FIREWORKS

The 'Bishops' and 'No Popery'

Other repetitive features of the celebrations, while developing as ritualistic elements, have a greater significance in the context of understanding the attitudes and motives of the bonfire boys and those opposing them. Through the annual orations of the various 'Bishops' and the topics depicted by the firework displays the bonfire boys overtly expressed their political and religious views. In this chapter these attitudes are considered and related to the local and national context, any shift in emphasis or opinion being noted and explained. Secondly, the social, religious and political characteristics of the bonfire boys and their supporters are analysed and compared with the pre-1853 activists. Finally, the ever present opposition to the celebrations is discussed with particular reference to the social drama surrounding the second concerted effort to have the celebrations suppressed between 1904 and 1906.

During the early evening processions the mock clergy of each society marched among the ranks of members, but following the 'Grand' processions they took control of the proceedings, amidst considerable clamour, at their respective firesites. Initially referred to as 'Bishops' they adopted increasingly grandiose titles, the leading
clerics of the Borough, Cliffe and Commercial Square
becoming known as the 'Lord Bishop of Lewes', 'The Lord
Bishop of the Cliffe, attended by the Clergy of the Diocese'
and 'His Grace the Archbishop of St John-sub-Castro'
respectively. From a vantage point overlooking the fire(1)
the 'Bishop' welcomed the crowd and then proceeded to
subject them to a lengthy speech, which the press observed
was usually inaudible(2). This finished, he then introduced
the effigy of the Pope, Guy Fawkes and any other notoriety
destined to suffer the same fate. Once condemned each was
destroyed. The topic of the tableau was then elaborated upon
before it too was ignited and destroyed. On the completion
of the firework display the 'Bishop's' final task was to
give three cheers for 'her Majesty, the Mayor and
Corporation, and the subscribers'(3) before thanking the
crowd for their attendance. Throughout their time on the
platform the clergy were cascaded with squibs and rockets
from the crowd.

Through their orations the 'Bishops' became the
official mouth-piece of the societies and it was through
them that the views of the bonfire boys were expressed. The
origin of the speeches were the religious antagonisms
exposed and generated during the 1850 Papal Bull controversy
when 'Cardinal Wiseman' gave vent to popular anti-Catholic
sentiments. This speech set the tone and content of clerical
speeches for the rest of the century. The full text of these
speeches began to be recorded in the press during the early
1860's and provide the only source for the public statements
of the bonfire boys. Two typical speeches are illustrated in
Gentlemen, Brother Bonfire Boys and visitors, - we are again met to celebrate the anniversary of the overthrow of the Gunpowder Plot, and we, the Borough Bonfire Society, give you all a most hearty welcome to our annual celebration, and we trust that at its close you will return to your homes in a peaceful and orderly manner so that there will be no cause for the interference of the police authorities.

Gentlemen, - I must make one or two remarks on the present state of affairs in and out of the country, Garibaldi has entered the Roman territory, and we, the Bonfire Boys of Lewes, heartily wish for the success of his mission, namely, the overthrow of the Pope, which he will either do or die under his banner. Gentlemen, - You say that we need not alarm ourselves by thinking that Popery will ever again have the power which it has had in this country. We learn from an American authority that Roman Catholicism has made very rapid strides in England and Scotland during the last half century. Fifty years ago there were only about half-a-dozen chapels in Scotland belonging to the Roman Church at the present day there are nearly 200. In 1835 the whole of England and Scotland contained only 497 chapels and 1 colleges, but in 1861 the number had increased to 1019 chapels, 212 convents and monasteries, and in the five following years 188 chapels, 53 religious houses and 13 colleges were built. The number of Priests in Great Britain in the year 1830 was 447, now the number considerably exceeds 1600. Thirty-five years ago neither the first monastery nor the first nunnery had been commenced, now there are upward of 50 monasteries and 210 nunneries. The county of Lancashire alone contains 180 chapels, 33 conventual establishments, and nearly 150 schools. The House of Commons has 32 Roman Catholic members, and the House of Lords 26 Roman Catholic peers. Now, gentlemen, to what shall we attribute this numerical increase. Why to this, and this alone, the unfaithfulness of the Church of England, and all the time the Church of England holds out a helping hand to Rome she will continue to increase the number of her dupes. What would our forefathers say if they were to return from their graves and go into some of the old churches. Even in this town they would think they were in some Theatre or Playhouse instead of the grand-old Protestant churches, where they were used to worship their maker. I say that it is high time there was a Reform in the Church of England. It is a shame and a curse that the parishioners should be called upon to pay superfluous lighting of the churches as is carried out at the present time for that practice which is not only a shame but a disgrace to our country.

Gentlemen, - I will not detain you any longer upon these points, but refer you to the answers of the questions which have been given, and leave you to judge for yourselves which is right and which is wrong. Gentlemen, - The effigies which we now burn represent the POPE and GUY FAWKES (burn them).

Gentlemen, - I now wish for your attention for a short time, to say a few words on the barbarous King Theodore, of Abyssinia, whose effigy we have here before us.

Gentlemen, - you all know that he has illegally detained in his power an number of Englishmen, to free whom troops have been sent out, and we, one and all, wish them every success. It is for this act, and the barbarous manner in which he has massacred thousands of his own subjects, that we commit his effigy to the flames. And now gentlemen, for the other two figures. The represent the two Fenians, Deasey and Kelly, and are burned to show the feelings of the Borough Bonfire Boys towards those who have so cowardly disturbed the peace of Old England, and may so perish all enemies to Great Britain and peace. Gentlemen, - allow me to propose three hearty cheers for our "Queen", three for our future King the "Prince of Wales", three for the "Army, Navy, and Volunteers", three for the "High Constables of the Borough of Lewes", and to conclude three hearty cheers for the "Supporters of the Borough Bonfire Society".

Source: Sussex Agricultural Express, 9.11.67.
Brother Bonfire Boys and Citizens, - It seems but the other day I was standing on this spot addressing you on the occasion of our annual carnival, but another year has passed and once more we are met to celebrate, I hope in rational fashion, the anniversary of the discovery of that dastardly plot which was by providence of God frustrated so many years ago, but which still leaves recollections of abhorrence in the breasts of all right-thinking citizens. But even in our own day there are many plotting and planning to get England again under the cruel yoke of the Papacy, and, no doubt the recent specious letter of the Pope to the English people was intended as a means to this end. Therefore, I call upon all true Bonfire Boys to emphatically repudiate the overtures contained in this letter. We are happy to know our country still maintains happy relations with the other great powers, and the termination of the war between China and Japan cannot fail to give satisfaction to the peace-loving nations of Europe. There is one subject I must touch upon, that is the Armenian question. You will doubtless have read of the dreadful treatment and slaughter of these poor innocent Christians by the diabolical Turk, and I trust Lord Salisbury's Government will succeed in bringing that country's rulers to book, and compel them to make reparation to the people they have cruelly persecuted, and to carry out the reforms so greatly needed in that benighted country. In order to show our detestation of such cruel and blood-thirsty doings, I now order the effigy of the Turk you see before you to be destroyed. (The effigy was cast into the flames amidst the execrations of the crowd.)

It would be ungracious on our part were mention no made of the noble and honourable manner in which our worthy Mayor (Councillor Wightman) has carried out his duties during the past year, and the Cliffe Bonfire Boys, together with, I am sure, the whole of the inhabitants, most heartily congratulate him on being again elected Mayor, and wish both him and the Mayoress many years of health and happiness. (Three hearty cheers were here given for the Mayor and Mayoress.) Many improvements, I am glad to say, have been carried out recently in our town by the corporation, such as the Southover drainage and other matters, and must congratulate our local legislators on not having to increase the rates. There is another subject to which I allude with the deepest possible regret - the death of our dear old Bishop of Chichester, which I am sure all of you will deplore, and trust that an equally zealous supporter of the Protestant cause may be appointed as his successor. Our hearty thanks are also due to our most respected Chief-constable (Major Lang), and I call upon you to give three hearty cheers for that gentleman. (These were duly responded to.)

I understand that a fund is being raised with the object of erecting a suitable memorial in Lewes to those noble men and women, the Lewes Martyrs, who in our own streets in cruel Mary's reign laid down their lives for the truths of Protestantism, and I trust this will be heartily supported. I am not desirous of wearying you with a long address and therefore, order the effigy of the representative of the Romish Church to be committed to the flames to show that we desire no union with Rome. I will also direct that the arch traitor, Guy Fawkes, be committed to the flames as a token of our loyalty to our Queen and Constitution. While thanking the subscribers for generously contributing, I trust that nothing will occur to bring discredit on our celebration, and that all will do their best to maintain order, so that the commemoration of "the Fifth" may be long carried out in this our good old town in that orderly and creditable manner which has always been characteristic of the Cliffe Bonfire Society (cheers)

Source: Sussex Agricultural Express, 5.11.95.
Figures 7.1 and 7.2. The first was delivered in 1867 by the 'Lord Bishop of Lewes, in full canonicals' in front of the County Hall(4), the second, 28 years later, by the 'Lord Bishop of the Cliffe' accompanied by his staff from the balcony over Bosher's shop at Cliffe Corner(5).

The most significant factor to emerge from a comparison between these speeches is their similarity. Although they originate from different bonfire societies, and nearly thirty years separate them, the central political and religious views expressed remain constant; an almost paranoic fear of Roman Catholicism and its threat to Britain, the promotion of British imperial interests and support for the monarchy and constitution. While Bonfire Night was held ostensibly to commemorate an event that occurred in 1605, the bonfire boys used their annual celebration as an opportunity to express a strand of popular politics which, although in part having its origins rooted in the religious antagonisms surrounding the Gunpowder Plot, also arose directly from the contemporary situation. Such statements give a verbal interpretation to the symbolism of the effigies and tableaux themes and the cryptic inscriptions that appeared on procession banners. These outward manifestations provide insights into the religious and political opinions of a section of Lewes inhabitants that would otherwise go undetected.

The expression of anti-Catholicism may be considered first. The bonfire boys' opposition to the Papacy and Roman Catholicism was symbolically expressed each year through
two concrete forms, a banner and the Papal effigy. The press referred to 'the large and famous banner of "No Popery", which at once stamps the character of the proceedings, and is eminently suggestive of the hatred which all true bonfire boys bear to the head of the church of Rome'(6) while the 'Lord Bishop of St Johns', when alluding to the purpose of Guy Fawkes and his fellow conspirators, explained the reason for the presence of an effigy of the Pope. He concluded: 'Of course you are all aware the object was to establish the sovereignty of the Pope in these realms. Now in order that this may never be erased from the minds of all Christians, we, and I think every true born Englishman is of the same opinion, have decided on burning the effigy of the Head of the Roman Catholic Church'(7). The symbolism of the latter seemed however to reflect both a feeling towards the past and to the present. Three Popes were burnt in effigy during this period. Initially Pius IX, whose long pontificate lasted from 1846 to 1878, then that of his successor Leo XIII, but finally from 1893, Paul V, the Pope at the time of the Gunpowder Plot.

Indeed the commemoration of a past event was not perceived as the single purpose of the celebrations. The 'Archbishop of St John's' commented in 1883 that 'we may well congratulate ourselves upon the spirit with which these demonstrations are kept up, not so much because they remind us of a dastardly plot, but because they serve to keep before us the fact that Protestants have a duty to perform and that duty is to heartily support the religion to which they cling'(8). The bonfire boys, while commemorating past
Catholic defeats perceived Roman Catholicism as a continuing threat that had not changed over the centuries. This opinion was forcefully expressed by the 'Bishop of Cliffe' in 1874.

What the Catholics aspire to is universal dominion all over the world, with the Pope at their head. We must remember that they are now what they always were in ancient times when they had given themselves up to all sorts of atrocities and licentiousness, and had they the power they would put an end to Protestantism. They are now what they have always been, unchangeable.

The 'Bishop's' frequently warned that if Papal aggression was not resisted 'the dogs of persecution would be let loose with all the pitiless vigour of old' when 'the fires of Smithfield were blazing and martyrs were being burnt in their own streets'. Addressing the crowd gathered outside of County Hall in 1893 the 'Archbishop' of the Borough Society commented,

It is not necessary for me on this occasion to remind you that though the lives and acts of our present Pope and Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church are not so openly reprehensible as in bygone ages, yet the work of the Church of Rome is the same - striving to enslave the minds and consciences of the people, instead of enlightening them, struggling only for political, temporal power.

Any event that diminished Papal power was applauded. Both the 'Bishops' of Cliffe and Commercial Square celebrated the successful expulsion of the Pope from the Vatican by the Italians under the leadership of Garibaldi, the 'Archbishop of St Johns' observing, 'we have heard of the infallibility of the Pope, but very evidently the poor old gentleman is not infallible'. The red shirts of
Garibaldi were worn by many bonfire boys in 1862(15), banners proclaiming 'Garibaldi and Liberty' and 'Success to Garibaldi' appeared in various processions and the Borough marked the occasion with a tableau entitled 'Wounded, but not Conquered'(16). Similar support was again manifest during the early 1870's when the Italians were achieving further successes against the Papacy(17).

A country's fortunes were frequently attributed to the extent of Papal influence through the work of priests and Jesuits. During the 1880's the bonfire societies' clerics regularly attributed Irish unrest on the work of the Catholic priesthood. In 1879 Parnell's effigy had been burnt at the Borough Society's firesite and in 1883 the 'Lord Bishop of Lewes' stated,

> No where is the detestable work to be seen so much as it is at the present time in Ireland, where the ignorant followers of a fanatical priesthood are led to commit the foulest of crimes. For do we not see that at every Nationalist meeting the president or his supporters are Roman Catholic priests. They are now trying to invade the loyal Protestant province of Ulster, but there they will and have met with determined opposition. The present Government is too weak or too much mixed up with the Irish party to stop it, therefore we have the Orange Lodges of the province coming forward for that purpose, and we hope that under such men as Lord Rossmore and Lord Ernest Hamilton they will be able to stay the torrent of disloyalty and Papery, and more firmly to establish the Protestant faith and that love towards the Queen and a Constitutional Government which must be for the prosperity and happiness of the country.(18)

The 'Lord Chancellor of Southover' in 1896 alluded to the deviousness of the Jesuits when he claimed that they adopted any guise to achieve their end. He stated,
Therefore draw the portrait of the Jesuit as he seems in London and you will not recognise it as he is in Rome. In Spain he may be a very bigoted Papist indeed; in France, a Socialist freethinker; in Turkey, a strict Mohammedan; in India and China, a pious Brahmin or Buddhist; while in England he may be a hard-working clergyman of the Established Church, or even a highly-respected member of the Society of Friends.(19)

This fear of the Jesuits was given added impetus following an influx of Roman Catholics from France in 1902 resulting from the French government's anti-clerical measures(20). 'It would seem,' claimed the the Borough Society's 'Bishop' in 1903, 'to be Rome's design to take advantage of the expulsion of her active propaganda from France and concentrate her forces in our Protestant Island'(21). The bonfire boys' belief that the British government should act by preventing this influx of continental Catholics was figuratively represented in the bonfire societies' tableaux(22). In 1903 the Borough's tableau, "Returned with Thanks", was given the additional title "The solution of the alien question especially as regards monastic orders" and depicted two monks from different orders leaving a monastery while John Bull stood in their way. A similar theme was portrayed by the Cliffe Society in 1908 with their tableau, "John Bull Asserts His Rights".

Anti-Catholicism and Local Controversy

The threat to Protestantism posed by the growth of Roman Catholicism in Britain was a constant theme of the bonfire boy's anti-Catholicism. The 1867 speech (Figure 7.1)
records this concern, national statistics being used to illustrate the growing number of Catholics in the country. Events during the latter half of the 1860's were to focus the bonfire boys' attention specifically on Lewes. As a result of the Prison Act permitting Catholic prisoners access to their own priests the Reverend Drinkwater moved into Priory Crescent early in 1866. His arrival provoked a spate of placards stuck around the town proclaiming 'No Popery. Protestants of Lewes, beware of the Crescent'(23). Besides administering to his flock at the prison the Reverend Drinkwater also set up a chapel at his home. This action provoked hostile crowds to gather outside his residence on Sunday evenings, police having to be called to disperse them. In 1867 the Borough Society's procession stopped opposite Priory Crescent while an effigy of Drinkwater was exploded(24) and in the following two years the Pope's effigy was ignited at the same spot(25).

By 1869 the Roman Catholics were building their own chapel in the High Street, ironically next door to the Pelham Arms, the headquarters of the Borough Bonfire Society. In that year the Society's 'Bishop' lamented,

When I told you three years ago that the priest was come into Lewes to make converts, I was told that such was not the case, he was only here for the benefit of those who might be sent to our prisons. What do you say now there is a chapel being built? Protestants of Lewes, let not this work prosper here, but stand fast by your church, protect your Queen and country.(26)

The 'Bishop of Cliffe' echoed these words(27). The Borough
Society's tableau endorsed their 'Bishop's' statement, representing a Romish priest, with bell, book, candle, and crucifix, in the act of laying the foundation stone of a Roman Catholic chapel.

The new Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart was opened the following year, on the 25th January, 1870. The event was marked by what the East Sussex News described as a 'disgraceful disturbance' when a mob, numbering something approaching 1,000 persons, assembled outside the church. This mob, composed of the lowest roughs in the town kept up an incessant yelling and hooting during the whole service, shouting out several popular ditties usually heard on the night of the 5th November. The presence of the police restrained the mob from committing acts of violence and a full muster of "bonfire boys" at their headquarters close to the Roman Catholic Church were deterred from their demonstrations by the intervention of the officials of the parish(28).

As the congregation left the service a number of Protestants who had attended 'out of curiosity' were jostled by the crowd and had to seek refuge in various houses. In the ensuing court cases five men, including John Carey, the Borough Society's 'Bishop', were charged with offences arising from the disturbance. Carey and Richard Huggett, a huckster, were both fined five shillings with costs, Alfred Luckins, a carpenter, was fined ten shillings, and Charles Sales, a labourer, and Frederick Whapham, a printer's apprentice, were both discharged through lack of evidence.
In his summing up the Chairman of the Bench, Lord Chichester, threatened heavier fines if such disturbances re-occurred and instructed the licensee of the Pelham Arms not to permit bonfire society meetings to coincide with services at the chapel(29).

The bonfire boys did not refrain from expressing their opposition. The 1870 clerical speeches were not reported, but in a speech at the Borough Society's annual dinner soon after the 'Fifth' J.C. Lucas, a subscriber to the Society, referred to the opening of the chapel. He was of the opinion that although the Catholics had opened a chapel they had not achieved very much because the Pope had been driven from his throne(30). In the following years the speeches directed the attention of the crowds to the growth of Catholicism locally(31). In Lewes the fortunes of the Catholic Chapel were followed closely and with suspicion. In 1873 the 'Bishop of Cliffe' claimed that the Catholic congregation was not increasing(32), but when in 1875 the Commercial Square Society's 'Archbishop' reported 20 converts to Roman Catholicism being recently baptized at the chapel, he suggests this was achieved through the deviousness of the priest(33).

The introduction of Romanist practices into the Church of England were equally condemned and attacked by the bonfire boys. Many attributed the success of the Catholics in Lewes to Puseyism. The 'Archbishop' of Commercial Square expressed this view in 1871.

Gentlemen, I believe that the Roman Catholic
Chapel would never have been erected had it not been for the Puseyism which exists in some of the Protestant churches in Lewes, which has crept gradually into the services like a wolf in sheeps clothing, and which we ought, perhaps, to more deeply regret than the fact of the erection of the chapel to which I just now referred. I allude now more particularly to a certain church where, on one occasion recently, no less than 61 candles were lighted round the altar, and the rector, advancing to the communion table and holding a plate containing the money which had been collected from the congregation above his head, knelt down and bowed three times to a cross which had been placed among a quantity of decorations above the table. Gentlemen, I feel almost inclined to believe that the reverend gentleman - the Protestant clergyman of a Protestant parish in Lewes - was endeavouring to follow the practices which are observed at the Roman Catholic Chapel of the Sacred Heart and St Pancras.(34)

Such condemnation of the High Church movement continued. In 1896 the 'Bishop of the Cliffe' returned to the same theme when he remarked,

If ever the condemnation of his holiness, in connection with this celebration, was justifiable, surely that time is now, when Romanism and its twin-sister Ritualism, are stalking through the land and, by their subtle superficial artifices, they are captivating thousands of giddy converts, and striving their utmost to undermine the Protestant Faith.(35)

A number of local religious controversies brought the bonfire boy's opposition to Ritualism into focus. In 1858 an effigy of 'Old Neale' accompanied those of Nana Sahib, Guy Fawkes and the Pope(36). The effigy represented the Reverend John Mason Neale who had founded an Anglican sisterhood at St Margaret's in East Grinstead. One of his converts, Emily Ann Elizabeth Scobell, was the eldest daughter of the Rector of Southover and All Saints, the Reverend John Scobell. Scobell attempted to prevent his daughter joining the
sisterhood, being strongly opposed to the Tractarian movement of which Neale was a member. Scobell's anger at his daughter's defiance was further exacerbated when, following her death from scarlet fever shortly after entering St Margarets, he learnt that his daughter, in her will, had left a sum of money to the sisterhood and appointed Neale and a fellow member of the Sisterhood as executors. Honouring her wishes to be interred in the family vault at All Saints, Neale and eight Sisters accompanied the coffin to Lewes on Wednesday the 18th November, 1857.

Their arrival aroused 'considerable excitement'. A crowd gathered and provoked by the semi-Papistical emblems that adorned the coffin shouted 'No Popery' slogans. Tempers were further roused when Neale attempted to gain access to the vault against the wishes of the Reverend Scobell. Neale was manhandled by the crowd and had to seek refuge in the Kings Head until the police could escort him back to the railway station. Neale returned the following day and after unsuccessfully attempting to gain access to the vault was again forced to seek refuge in a local hostelry by a crowd of up to 300 before again being returned to the station by the police. There he 'pertinaciously protruded himself bare-headed from the window' and as a consequence was struck by a stone thrown from the crowd. Charles Rooke, a 48 year old builder living in East Street, was arrested and sent to the Assizes. Describing Neale's behaviour as 'very injudicious' the Judge acquitted Rooke, a verdict that so delighted the crowd that the town band was brought out(37).
In 1877 a tableau drew attention to a second priest who provoked the wrath of the bonfire boys. Entitled "Showing our disapproval of the attempt of the members of the Holy Cross Society to introduce the Confessional and the use of the Book called "The Priest in Absolution" in the Church of England" the tableau criticised the appointment of the Reverend E.H. Cross as the new Rector of St Michael's. Immediately following his appointment a letter appeared in the Express(38) drawing the readers' attention to the Reverend Cross's membership of the English Church Union and the Society of the Holy Cross, two ritualistic societies supporting the introduction of confessionals into the Established Church and the use of the book 'The Priest in Absolution'. Questions were asked in the House of Lords, but the Lord Chancellor and the Bishop of Chichester both claimed to be unaware of Cross's membership of the societies(39). Shortly after, a letter from Mr W. Watts, Churchwarden of St Michael's, announced that the Reverend Cross had withdrawn from the Society of the Holy Cross(40). This did not allay the fears of Lewes Protestants, a petition against Auricular Confession in the Church of England held at 54 High Street, the house of a leading Lewesian, James Pelling, being signed by five of the town's parish priests(41). His resignation from the offending societies similarly did not convince the bonfire boys, the 'Archbishop' of Commercial Square doubting whether Cross could change his spots(42).

A second Rector of St Michael's, the Reverend Belcher, again attracted the attention of the bonfire boys in 1898.
A crowded meeting of the Lewes and District Branch of the Protestant Alliance heard John Kensit, an itinerant Protestant lecturer, compare, at considerable length, the similarities between the interior and form of worship at St Michael's and the Catholic chapel (43). The firesite clerics adopted the same stance, the Borough's 'Bishop' praising the work of Kensit while the 'Bishop of Cliffe' embarked on his own anti-Ritualistic campaign (44). The Reverend Belcher however, appears to have been made of sterner stuff than his predecessor, continuing to champion his cause by writing on the subject of ritualism in the 'Church Times' (45).

During the 1890's moves to promote unification between the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church became a central theme of the clerical speeches. The Borough's 'Bishop' reiterated the familiar arguments against papal intentions towards Britain in his 1894 speech.

The desire of Cardinal Vaughan and other leaders of the Romish Church for the ascendancy of the Church over the state and their pretended desire for the reunion of Christendom is not religion at all, has nothing to do with religion, but is a lust for power, none the less shameful and evil for being a conspiracy of men holding so called sacred office. (46)

In the following year he returned to the same theme, referring to an 'evangelical letter recently sent by the Pope to the people of England inviting us to bow with meek submission to priestly rule once more' (47). The 'Bishops' of Cliffe and St Anne's similarly condemned the letter and in 1896 the Borough's 'Bishop' again warned that it would be to the degradation of the country for the Church of England to
ally itself to Rome.(48).

The religious character of the celebrations was emphasised at this time with the inauguration of a Thanksgiving Service at Southover Church(49). The first service held on the Sunday prior to the 5th November, 1893, was attended by members of all the bonfire societies. Ostensibly to give thanks to God for delivering England from the Gunpowder Plot the service, like the Bonfire celebrations, was used as an opportunity to attack Popery. Richardson annually warned congregations of the dangers to civil and religious liberties that accompanied any growth of Roman Catholicism and rejected calls for the Re-Union of Christendom(50). The Reverend D. Lee Elliott, Richardson's successor, emphasised that 'Protestantism was the raison d'etre of that service, and the celebrations this week should be for the purpose of bringing forward and maintaining the Protestant character of our Church and Country'(51). The Thanksgiving Service evidently met with the approval of the bonfire boys, the Reverend Welland of Jireh, following his first service in 1905 receiving letters of thanks from Cliffe, Commercial Square and Southover Bonfire Societies, and also from the local Loyal Orange Lodge(52).

The strong anti-Catholic character of the celebrations has been attributed to the fact that Lewes was a nonconformist centre during the nineteenth century(53). There were numerous sects in the town some of which, like the Baptists and Methodists, had large congregations(54),
but as Figure 7.3 shows, the overwhelming majority of bonfire boys for whom religious affiliation is known were Anglican. Only 10.9 per cent (N=48) came from the nonconformist sects and over half of these were Independent Calvinists at Jireh Chapel who openly supported the bonfire boys' anti-Catholicism. Many leading nonconformists, as

Figure 7.3: Religious Affiliation of the Bonfire Boys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denom.</th>
<th>Society members</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Supporters</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ang.</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>89.6</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>87.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jir.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wes.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tab.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bapt.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbreviations:
Denom (Denomination), Ang (Anglican), Jir (Jireh), Wes (Wesleyan Methodist), Tab (Tabernacle), Bapt (Eastgate Baptist), Con (Congregational), Unit (Unitarian).
Notes:
a. The total of 441 represents 68.5 per cent of all bonfire boys. The religious affiliation of 163 Society Members (30.9%), 24 Others (30.4%) and 16 Supporters (42.1%) remain unknown.

is discussed elsewhere, actively opposed the bonfire boys' activities and the predominance of Anglicans among the societies' membership suggest that rather than being a reflection of nonconformity the bonfire boys' anti-Catholicism is rooted in the 'Church and King' tradition of popular Protestantism(55), in which the Church of England was seen as the national church and a bulwark against the political and religious aspirations of the Papacy.
Pyrotechnic Artistry

The bonfire boys' attitude towards political events formed the central theme of the firework displays, but they also indicate the time, effort and ingenuity the bonfire boys took in preparing and carrying out the 'Fifth'. Fireworks had always been a feature of the celebrations and with the establishment of the bonfire societies elaborate displays were carried out each year immediately after the clerical oration. Large effigies representing Guy Fawkes and the Pope, and other contemporary notorieties, stuffed full of fireworks were annually ignited at the firesites. But before discussing the political significance of the firework displays their place in the emerging recurrent ritual being evolved by the bonfire boys may be considered.

Firework displays initially consisted only of effigies. The effigies varied in size, but were generally between six to ten feet tall, and were borne on the shoulders of processionists during the societies' 'Grand' processions. At the firesite they were ignited and the remains, following the explosion of the fireworks contained within them, were thrown onto the fire. The two main effigies were described in 1867. The Pope wore a mitre with a red cross and his white robes were trimmed with decorations of a similar colour. Guy Fawkes' attire consisted of a black Spanish doublet and cloak, breeches of a similar hue, high jack boots and his head was surmounted with the orthodox slouch hat(56). The manner in which they 'went off' was similarly reported in the press. In 1870 the Cliffe's 'Guy went off
capitally, his whole inside proving to be a mysterious repertory of gigantic squibs, whizzing, fizzing, and gyrating marvellously, and throwing out torrents of sparks in all directions; whilst his head proved to be the appropriate abode of Roman candles, which went of with great effect'(57).

The effigies of Fawkes and the Pope, because of their annual appearance became traditional effigies, intrinsic to the ritual re-enactment of the celebrations. However the bonfire boys were not content to have only effigies. They soon developed the 'tableau', a large three dimensional model, often incorporating more than one effigy and additional scenery and structures, all of which were stuffed with fireworks. It was mounted on a cart and either drawn by hand, or by horses(58) in the 'Grand' processions to the firesites where they were ignited after the destruction of the effigies.

The first indication of this development was in 1860 when a local notoriety suffered the same fate as the effigies. Joining the 'King of Naples', the 'Emperor of Austria', Fawkes and the Pope was the local school teacher, Thomas Hopley(59). Hopley had appeared at Lewes Assizes during July, accused of beating a pupil to death. He was found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to four years penal servitude, but popular opinion felt this was insufficient(60). The destruction of his effigy on the 5th November probably more accurately reflected the punishment most felt he deserved. The description of Hopley's
'execution' indicates that tableaux were being developed. Effigies were carried on a pole, but Hopley, 'a figure dressed in tight fitting suit, with a stick, apparently thrashing a lad borne on the same platform as himself'(61) was drawn on a cart to the firesite outside County Hall.

From this date the subject of the Borough's tableaux were annually reported, but the Cliffe appears not to have introduced a tableau into their celebrations until 1869 when the 'Order of Procession' included 'A Grand Tableau, containing the effigies of a Priest and a Nun'(62). The Commercial Square's first reported tableau depicting the 'Capture and Execution of Capt Jack, the Modoc Indian' appeared in 1873(63). It seems likely that once introduced the tableaux became a regular feature of the firework displays although press reports and a few surviving programmes mention few(64) until the early 1890's when the titles of the tableaux of the three large societies, Borough, Cliffe and Commercial Square were annually recorded. Southover, although formed in 1886, did not introduce tableaux until 1897.

The extent of the artistry involved in the construction and presentation of the tableaux may be assessed from descriptions appearing in the press. The Borough's tableau of 1864(65) entitled the 'Franco-Italian Treaty' was drawn by hand on a wagon adorned by the "great key" of the ancient borough, surrounded with evergreens, on which an enormous clerical figure with "Rome" on its breast stood accompanied by two individuals, one attired in a cocked hat, boots and
a tasteful military uniform, and the other in a slouch hat, red shirt, and white trousers. Both were armed with swords. These characters were reported to be Louis Napoleon! Rome! and Garibaldi. The 'Bishop' introduced the tableau and explained that Napoleon was trying to hold possession of Rome against the effort of Garibaldi. He then proceeded to explain that a desperate struggle would ensue, in which Napoleon would be wounded, the Italian Liberator victorious, and the Papal tyrant of Rome hurled into the flames. The press continued,

The event came off precisely as described by the eloquent orator of the evening. A struggle did ensue, between Napoleon (Mr. E. Wilmshurst) and Garibaldi (Mr. John Smith) but we very much doubt its "desperate" nature. They crossed swords a few times, in the approved melo-dramatic fashion, and then Garibaldi, rushing in, gave Napoleon a hug, which appeared to be a sort of "stage embrace", and poor Napoleon fell, or rather, sat down.

No mention is made of fireworks being involved but it is likely that the large papal figure was stuffed with fireworks.

Thirty years later, in 1895, the Borough Society's tableau representing a Turkish mosque was '24 feet high and mounted on a portable platform. The roof and supports were gaily coloured, and on top of the golden dome was a disc platform on which was seated the "Unspeakable Turk" coolly smoking a chibouque. On the corners of the roof were four attendant imps, all in effigy; but within the structure itself were four live and very active friends - in green, red, yellow and blue - and their grotesque antics created great amusement'. At the firesite outside of County Hall,
following the 'Bishop's' oration,

The conflagration of the mosque and the destruction of the effigies by the ignition of their internal elements were great successes. At a signal from a dignitary in the tribune, the parti-coloured demons already mentioned - who appeared to be a kind of bailiffs in possession - got to work in earnest. In a twinkling the disc on the platform on which "The Turk" was seated revolved amidst a blaze of fireworks, and a fountain of golden rain broke out over his head in the shape of a fiery umbrella. Coloured fires and Roman candles burst into active eruption, all over the structure; and finally the chibouque of the Turk and the sublime gentleman himself were blown to atoms by artistic mines called "Jack-in-box". The attendant imps made their exit in a similar respectable and congenial way, greatly to the delight of the spectators.

Comparison between the two accounts show that while the subject had changed, the form remained the same.

Photographs taken at the turn of the century show groups of bonfire boys proudly standing in front of the tableaux. Undoubtedly among these were the 'tab men' responsible for the tableau's construction. But apart from press reference to two people, Mr Beeching and Harry Philcox, little is known of the early tableaux makers. Outside assistance is suggested in 1869 and 1870 when the effigies were constructed 'by a celebrated Artiste from Madame Tassauds'(67). By 1883 credit was being attributed to the bonfire boys, the tableau and effigies being 'manufactured by the Boy's own Artists, and stuffed with fireworks by Messrs C.T. Brock and Co., assisted by various Amateurs'(68).

The two firework experts mentioned are less illusive. Beeching and Philcox were local tradesmen who, as members of
the bonfire societies had become involved in preparing the firework displays. Frederick Beeching was a master baker trading in West Street, just off Commercial Square. From 1861 until his death in 1879 he was frequently granted a firework license to supply and manufacture(69). His seasonal occupation is recorded in the 1871 census where he and his son, James, besides being bakers are also described as firework makers. In 1858 Fred ignited the Commercial Square Society's firework display(70) and in 1862 he was the chief pyrotechnist of the Society(71). By 1872 he was also responsible for stuffing the Cliffe's effigies(72) and in the following year also those of Borough(73). John, a second son, also a baker of North Street, Cliffe, was similarly granted a firework license in 1862(74). Following his father's death(75), James continued to organise the Commercial Square's displays(76).

Following the 1889 celebrations the Express included a rare reference to another effigy maker, reporting that 'the effigies went off in splendid style, and reflected great credit on the skill of Mr Harry Philcox and those who assisted him in making and stuffing them'(77). Harry Philcox was a Cliffe Society activist, being referred to in the press on numerous occasions between 1873 and 1898(78), frequently for chairing the Society's annual dinners. He was chief marshal in 1873, Commander-in-Chief in 1875 and a committee member in 1891. He was a watchmaker and shopkeeper trading in Waterloo Place, having moved there from South Street following his second marriage to Francis Cook in 1885(79). Other people(80) were associated with fireworks
either as firework makers or agents for the main manufacturers, Brocks, Pain & Son and Wells, but it is difficult to determine whether these people were actively involved in the bonfire societies.

Exploding Popular Conservatism

Returning to the subjects depicted by the effigies and tableaux. Besides the traditional effigies of Fawkes and the Pope many other characters and topics were introduced by the bonfire boys, and as the first tableau indicates, these were not confined to subjects related to the Gunpowder Plot. While commemorating a historical event the bonfire boys also used their celebrations as a vehicle for political expression. The effigies and tableaux were symbolic representations of their feelings towards local and national events, feelings that were also frequently expressed in the fireside speeches of the mock clergy and occasionally inscribed on new banners carried in the procession.

The introduction of political themes to the firework displays occurred during the formative years of the bonfire societies. In 1855 effigies of the Emperor's of Russia and Austria and the King of Prussia were destroyed. This theme was reflected in the banners and clerical speeches, banners proclaiming British Crimean victories being carried by both bonfire societies, the Inkerman victory occurring as it did on the 5th November subsequently being referred to on various occasions throughout the remainder of the century. The mood of the bonfire boys was captured in the
clerical speech in the same year.

The fifth of November... in times to come will be a day doubly set apart for thanksgiving and rejoicing by every Englishman, for on the fifth of November, 1854, did a handful of Britain's brave sons of freedom, defy the countless hordes of the Russian despot, and by their indomitable valour save not only the Queen and her parliament, but their country at large from the degradation of yielding to the serf-soldiers of the enemy. Henceforth and forever the battle of Inkerman, which crowned with glory those of our lion-hearted warriors who survived the sanquinary field, must ever make the day on which it was fought a red letter day in our calendar. (82)

Interest in British fortunes overseas was again witnessed in 1857 when attention was turned to events in India, where mutineers were perpetrating atrocities on British troops and civilians. The bonfire boys' responded by destroying effigies of the King of Bombay, the Cliffe Society's effigy being luridly described, 'Nana Sahib with child in one hand and bloody dagger in the other'(83). In the following year "Lucknow" and "Delhi" were added to the Crimean battle honours on the Society's banner.

The topics of the tableaux, along with clerical pronouncements and costumes indicate a continuing interest in the progress of British imperial expansion among the bonfire boys. Their support for imperialism suggests a sympathy towards the Conservative Party that, under the leadership of Disraeli, earnestly pursued an Imperialist policy. Conversely Gladstone and the Liberal Party were consistently opposed to such a policy(84). The bonfire boys support for Imperialism was continually manifest in their celebrations, the extent of which may best be illustrated by
a number of specific incidents (85).

In 1878 the arrival of a Russian military mission in the Afghan capital, Kabul, resulted in successful British military intervention during which the Russians were expelled and the Afghans defeated. This victory was the topic of the firesite speech at Commercial Square, Afghan costumes were worn in Borough's procession and the Waterloo tableau depicted 'Britannia in the middle and in each corner the heads of the Ameer of Afghanistan, a Zulu king and the heads of two well known criminals' (86). In 1880, following the defeat of Disraeli's Government, Gladstone's withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan 'before the work they had been sent to perform was completed' (87) was deprecated by the Borough's 'Bishop'.

Two years later Britain's foreign interests were again jeopardised by nationalist movements in Egypt. Arabi Pasha's revolt against foreign involvement in his country forced Gladstone reluctantly to despatch troops who subsequently defeated Pasha at the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir. The 'Bishops' of Borough and Commercial Square praised this campaign, the Borough's 'Bishop' proclaiming Arabi Pasha to be a rebel, not a patriot (88). The Society's tableau, 'Arabi Pasha Surrendering to the British General' glorified the British military success while generals' uniforms and Egyptian costumes were worn by Borough and Cliffe members (89).

At the turn of the century British Imperialist expansion again led to war, this time against the Afrikaans in Southern Africa. British settlers, or uitlanders, were
being treated as second class citizens by the Boers in Transvaal and, following negotiations between Kruger and the Conservative Government of Lord Salisbury, war broke out when Boers invaded Natal and the Cape(90). Although vehemently opposed by Liberals and Radicals(91) the bonfire boys gave it enthusiastic support, the Express commenting that 'this fact may probably be regarded as a reflex of the great wave of patriotism which has flown over the whole country consequent on the war in South Africa, now happily approaching a triumphant conclusion for the Imperial Forces.'(92) Earlier in the year a spontaneous procession of bonfire boys followed the news of the Relief of Ladysmith(93).

Support for the war was manifest through tableaux of Borough, Cliffe and Commercial Square in 1899, entitled respectively 'Briton or Boer', 'Kruger Delivering His Last Speech from the Praeed Kraal' and 'The Wheel of Fortune and War'(94). In the following year Cliffe's tableau represented 'recent events in SA' while Southover destroyed an effigy of Kruger(95). The accompanying clerical speeches took up the same patriotic theme, the 'Bishop' at Borough's firesite remarking that the bravery of Inkerman was being repeated in South Africa, concluding, 'Today our mighty Empire, drawn together by the bonds of love and loyalty, proves to us the blessing of a Protestant Constitution.'(96) Speeches made at the societies' annual dinners also took up the cause of the war. In the patriotic toast at Commercial Square's dinner W.J. Tapp alluded to the Naval action off Natal(97), and at Cliffe reference to Ladysmith was made during the toast to
'The Army, Navy and Reserve Forces' (98). Support for the war was also expressed through the costumes, the dresses worn by the bonfire boys during this period being particularly militaristic. In 1899 Borough's pioneers were '17th Lancers in blue and New South Wales Lancers in khaki'. Commercial Square also had New South Wales Lancer pioneers while the Cliffe's procession was led by a squad of lady lancers (99). Even the bands alluded to the South African War, with 'The Kimberly Silver Saxophonists' marching with the Borough (100).

A corollary of the bonfire boys' support for Imperialism was their support for the armed forces. In 1884 a banner proclaiming 'Our Army and Navy, may Success ever attend them' was carried in the Commercial Square's procession (101) and following a successful campaign in Matabeleland the Society's 'Bishop' in praising the conduct of the war commented that,

however much we regret the great slaughter of the enemy, we must rejoice at the evidence afforded us by the little war of the fact that the courage, endurance and determination which have characterised the English race in the past have not died out. That march through an almost unknown country, of a small force, surrounded by a horde of savages... was performed with indomitable pluck, and ended in a decided victory. (102)

This support for the military was regularly stated with the 'Army, Navy and Reserve Forces' or 'Imperial Forces' being toasted annually at all the society dinners. These toasts were frequently proposed by bonfire boys serving in the local Volunteers (103). Some bonfire boys served in the army overseas. The son of the licensee of the Elephant and Castle
and a member of the Commercial Square Society, A.L. Diplock served in Bechuanaland during 1884(104) and was a trooper in Lock's Horse in 1901(105). During his 1900 fire site speech the 'Bishop' of St John-sub-Castro referred to several bonfire boys serving in South Africa(106).

The bonfire boys support for the military was reflected through their commitment to the Volunteers. Besides numerous expressions of support by way of banners and speeches(107), bonfire boys were also members of the Volunteers as is shown in Figure 7.4. Lewes had a number of thriving volunteer

Figure 7.4: Bonfire boys' membership of the Volunteers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>BBS</th>
<th>CBS</th>
<th>CSBS</th>
<th>ABS</th>
<th>SBS</th>
<th>Dual Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rifle Vols.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery Vols.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Sussex Regt.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sussex Imp. Yeo.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Soc. Members</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
a. The discrepancy between the BBS, CBS and CSBS totals arises from four members belonging to both the Rifle Volunteers and the Royal Sussex Regiment.

companies during the latter half of the nineteenth century(108) and some bonfire boys recorded long service in them. W.T. Gearing, a founding member of Borough and their 'Bishop' for over 40 years, was a Sergeant in the CPRV in 1893, being promoted to the rank of Colour Sergeant the following year. Four years later he retired from the
Volunteers at the age of 55 after 33 years service (109).
Following his retirement H.E. Philcox, a leading officer of the Cliffe Society was promoted to Colour Sergeant. In 1894 other long-serving Volunteers included R. Barber, who responded to the Loyal toast on behalf of Volunteers at Borough's dinner in 1871 and 1872 (110), and who held the rank of corporal after 25 years 10 months service; Staff Sergeant T. Buckman, a Cliffe member with 21 years 6 months service; Sergeant B. Thorp, a past Commander-in-Chief of Cliffe (111) with 27 years 7 months service; Private T. Jenner snr., a founding member of Commercial Square who chaired the Society's annual dinner for over thirty years (112), with 24 years 9 months; and Lance Corporal J. Pelling who attended various society dinners during the 1890's, with 26 years 8 months service (113). W.N. Barnard, who made the St Anne's effigies in 1889 (114) was a Volunteer in 1890 and by 1905 had become the Sergeant Bugler. Other leading bonfire boys were also Volunteers. A secretary of Borough, G.T. Baker, and the Society's Treasurer, H. Broad were members of the Artillery Volunteers. C.S. Wood, H. Holman and H.E. Philcox, all at various times Commander-in-Chief of Cliffe, belonged to the Rifle Volunteers. H.H. Wells, a principal officer of Commercial Square during the 1890's, and S.J. Stevenson was both Secretary and Treasurer of the Society during the 1900's were also members of the Rifle Volunteers.

The patriotic fervour expressed by the bonfire boys and their support for the military was matched by an equal adoration of the monarchy. Various banners proclaiming their
loyalty to the throne were carried in the processions. 'Long May Victoria Live' was held aloft by Cliffe in 1859, in 1869 the Borough demanded 'Protect our Queen and Constitution' and in 1883 proclaimed 'Long Life and Happiness to our Sailor Prince and Princess of Wales'. Queen Victoria's Golden and Diamond Jubilees in 1887 and 1897 were both occasions when the bonfire boys reaffirmed their loyalty to the monarchy. In 1887 the Commercial Square Society's tableau took on a Jubilee theme and in his speech introducing the tableau the 'Archbishop' praised the success of Victoria's reign in eloquent style, referring to the benefits that her long and Constitutional reign had conferred upon the country(115). Similar expressions of loyalty were given at the Cliffe and Commercial Square firesites(116).

The bonfire boys were also active in organising torchlight processions for other commemorative celebrations in Lewes, many of them royal occasions. The marriage of the Prince of Wales in 1863 was the first time the bonfire societies co-operated in this way(117) and in 1893 the marriage of Duke of York and Princess May of Teck was similarly celebrated(118). In 1887 and 1897 both the Queen's Silver and Diamond Jubilees were commemorated by torchlight processions organised by the bonfire societies(119). The celebrations for the Coronation of Edward VII in 1902 were particularly lavish, with a sum of £20 being voted by the town's Coronation Committee to meet the costs of the torchlight procession being organised by the four bonfire societies(120). Combined weekly meetings under the
chairmanship of J.T. Glandfield, a leading officer of Southover, were held at the Elephant and Castle to make the necessary arrangements (121). The Coronation of George V in 1911 saw the bonfire boys again involving themselves in a similar display of loyalty to the crown (122).

The bonfire societies claimed not to be political organisations, the 'Lord High Chancellor of the Manor of Southover', responding to such an accusation by a local tradesman in 1893 stated, 'We know no politics as bonfire boys, but heartily welcome all, whether Radicals, Liberals, Conservatives, Tories, Home Rulers, Unionists, or Imperialists, the only stipulation being that they must profess steadfast loyalty to our beloved Queen, and also will uphold, with their life blood, if need be, our common Protestantism' (123). While this may have been so their support for Conservative policy reflected in aspects of the celebration appears to have influenced recruitment.

Prior to 1872 22 members and supporters appeared in poll books and of these 10 voted Conservative while the other 12 voted Liberal. This balance significantly altered following that date when of the 71 members and supporters reported attending political meetings, 59 were at Conservative Party gatherings. Although the political persuasion of only 14.4 per cent (N=93) of bonfire boys is known, a significant proportion of these, 74.2 per cent (N=69), either voted or supported the Conservative Party.

Indeed on a few occasions the partiality of the bonfire societies was clearly indicated by their support for the
policies of the Conservative Party. In 1877 the Borough's 'Bishop' expressed his pleasure that England was under a Conservative Ministry and was thus not rushing into war in Bulgaria(124). A few years later the same cleric told the crowd that he would not drag them through the weaknesses of the past Liberal Government(125) while the Commercial Square's 'Archbishop' attributed the successful 1898 Sudan campaign to the 'resolute action of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' under Lord Salisbury.

Although critical of Liberal policies the bonfire boys reserved their political venom for Socialism. In 1887, Jubilee year, the Borough's 'Bishop' expressed their opposition to Socialism when he urged the spectators 'to disregard the clap-trap of Socialists, and to remain loyal to the Queen'(126). The clerics were quick to seize on the evils of Socialism, real or imagined. Introducing the effigy of President Garfield's assassin, M. Guiteau, the Borough's 'Bishop' hoped that the time would never come, 'notwithstanding the efforts of Nihilists, Socialists, and Irish agitators, when our dear land shall be stained by such a dastardly deed'(127). The clerics of Borough, Cliffe and Commercial Square all responded in similar vein when the anarchist, Czolgosz, assassinated President McKinley in 1901(128).

The bonfire boys' spokesmen again accused Socialist agitators during the miners' strike of 1893-4, the 'Bishop' of Cliffe observing,

We have seen a prolonged struggle between the
Scotch miners and the coal-owners, the outcome of which it is difficult to foresee; suffice it to say that an immense amount of suffering has been entailed on innocent women and children, and that an immense amount of money has been taken from the pockets of the wage-earners, and, after all, who reaps the benefit? Why the agitators, with glib tongues, who live on the fat of the land while their dupes are starving. So much for Socialism. (129)

It appears that the bonfire boys did not confine their opposition to Socialism only to their speeches. In September, 1907, a visiting Councillor from Brighton, W. Evans, with four supporters, intended to hold a Socialist debate under the light at the top of School Hill but he was greeted by a rowdy crowd who taunted him with shouts of 'Burn him' and proceeded to drown his speech with the 'Bonfire Prayers' and the singing of Rule Britannia (130). This behaviour of the crowd suggests the presence of bonfire boys, a Socialist street meeting presenting another opportunity for them to voice their opposition to Socialism and in so doing restate their own Conservatism.

The bonfire boys expressed firm opinions in political and religious matters, but in complete contrast they rarely commented on local affairs and when they did they were generally favourable. Comments made by the Cliffe's 'Bishop' in 1893 were typical. He congratulated the town on the fact that Alderman Hillman had consented to take the Mayorality for another year and 'he thought they might also congratulate themselves on the fact that they would still be represented on the Town Council by their three tried councillors. In conclusion, his lordship referred to the new
municipal buildings. He said he hoped and believed that the ratepayers would not find them such a "white elephant" as some discontented spirits would have them believe'(131).

In the following year the 'Bishop' of Commercial Square echoed these sentiments, praising the government of town, the success of the new Town Hall, the support for the hospital fund and the recent improvements at the swimming baths. He went on to commend the formation of the Lewes Swimming Club and the success of the football club and the volunteers(132). In 1895 the same 'Bishop' drew attention to the generosity of a leading inhabitant and past Mayor, Mr Aubrey Hillman, who had presented to the town 'that historical ground known as the Dripping Pan'(133). Such praise had, during the 1890's, become common practice by all the societies' 'Bishops', who at the end of their speeches frequently congratulated the new Mayor and called for three cheers for the Mayor and the Corporation.

Criticism of local matters was muted. The 'Archbishop of St John's' requested more fiction books for the library in 1901(134) and in 1913 observed the need for speed and noise limits on motor cyclists, especially on Sundays(135). Any hint of local controversy was quickly refuted. It was claimed in 1893 that Cliffe's tableau, "The Car of Mystery", 'reflected upon affairs and individuals of a local character'. But this was quickly denied, the Society's secretary, J.W. Briggs, claiming that 'the committee desired it to be known that they would not countenance anything that had a local bearing(136).
Continuing Support and Opposition

The reason for this reluctance to become embroiled in local political controversy may be two-fold. Firstly the town was often controlled by a Conservative dominated council and a number of Conservative councillors were either members or supporters of the bonfire societies(137). Between 1881 and 1913 22 councillors were involved, the majority attending society dinners or acting as judges at Commercial Square's fancy dress competitions. Only two appear to have been more actively involved, P.W. King and Frank Taylor, both leading members of Commercial Square. Percy Wood King was the Society's chairman for a number of years between 1893 to 1913. Frank Taylor succeeded him as chairman in 1913. Taylor was involved with the Society from about 1908 and was the only Liberal councillor to be associated with the societies(138).

Secondly, the involvement of councillors and other leading townsmen may be seen as part of a strategy evolved by the bonfire boys to protect their celebrations. By courting their support they were nurturing influential allies who could be called upon if their celebration was threatened with serious opposition. Six councillors were frequent supporters, four being long serving Conservative councillors and past Mayors(139). Of the remaining 32 supporters the political persuasion of another 13 is known, all but one being Conservative(140). Four were prominent local Conservatives. William Edwin Baxter, proprietor and editor of the Express, was a Borough subscriber during the
early 1870's. Edward Carlisle Willoughby wrote a letter to 'The Times' supporting the celebrations in 1884. His obituary referred to him as a staunch Conservative who gave speeches at the Lewes Corn Exchange. John Clay Lucas, a local merchant, was a Borough subscriber and delivered a speech at their 1870 dinner. Francis Verrall, the Lord of the Manor at Southover, a local brewery owner and an East Sussex County Councillor was Southover's chairman in 1902. His father and grandfather had also been Conservatives and Southover supporters. Both Lucas and Verrall were chairmen of the local constituency party.

Although such support was received it is difficult to determine whether it was the result of the celebration's overt Conservatism and anti-Catholicism or the bonfire boys' manipulative powers. While both may in part be given as an explanation, in view of previous action against the celebrations and continuing opposition the need to curry favour must have motivated the bonfire boys to encourage such support. How successful they were may be seen from their ability to withstand opposition.

The celebrations always provoked opposition and much of this arose from their religious rather than political character. The bonfire boys' support for British Imperial ambitions reflected the general patriotic, jingoistic sentiments present in the country during this period and received approval from within the town, particularly among Conservatives. No report of opposition to this aspect of the celebrations is recorded, but the bonfire boys'
There was support for their views from within the town, the local Anglican clergy, as has been noted, opposing ritualism on a number of occasions. The Reverends Richardson and Elliott took a more active role by promoting a Thanksgiving Service to commemorate the Discovery of the Gunpowder Plot. Nonconformist ministers similarly upheld the Protestant cause. The Reverend J. Nelson Foley of Providence Chapel held Thanksgiving Services similar to that later held at Jireh(147) while J.P. Morris, the Eastgate Baptist minister, erected a plaque at his church commemorating the Lewes Martyrs(148). The societies also received support from the Loyal Orange Lodge(149), two of the societies' leading spokesmen, J.T. Glandfield, 'Lord High Chancellor of Southover', and W.T. Gearing, 'Lord Bishop of Lewes', being members of the Lodge. Neither disguised this dual membership, wearing their Orange regalia over their bonfire costumes and espousing the objectives of the Orange Lodge during the firesite speeches(150). In 1909 the Orange Lodge presented the Borough was with a new 'No Popery' banner.

The support for ultra-Protestantism was not confined to members of the local clergy and the Orange Lodge. There existed in Lewes a large number of Protestant organisations including the Calvinist Protestant Union, the Lewes and District Branch of the Protestant Alliance, the Womens' Protestant Union and the Protestant Reformation Society. Under the auspice of these organisations numerous public
meetings and lectures were held, the topics of which being generally critical of Papal practices and intentions(151). The regular holding of Protestant meetings from the early 1860's through until the 1900's indicates the bonfire societies' persistent anti-Catholic stance reflected a body of opinion within the town.

The high point of Protestantism in Lewes occurred in 1901 when the Martyrs Memorial dedicated to the seventeen Protestant martyrs(152) who were burnt at the stake in Lewes between 1555 and 1557 during the Marian persecutions was unveiled(153). Efforts to erect some form of monument were first made in 1889(154) and for the next decade the desirability of such a memorial provoked considerable controversy. The Town Council declined to become involved while leading opponents like Alderman Kemp and the Rector of St Michaels, the Reverend Belcher, claimed it would offend Roman Catholic inhabitants(155). Writing in 'Parish Notes'(156), Belcher stated,

Here we had an illustration how the intolerance that kills will, after the lapse of centuries, appears as the intolerance that would like to kill - but raises monuments instead, amidst a storm of furious language and a spread of furious literature... to disturb the ashes of the ancient dead, to blacken their memories, to preach hatred, to sow discord, to intrude upon your neighbour's peace, to insult your neighbour's conscience, to concoct slanders and to call them history. - To fit the cap of an ancient shame upon your living brother.

Belcher's views epitomised the religious tension present in Lewes. However Glandfield, in his firesite speech refuted such claims, stating that the intention of the Martyrs'
Memorial was 'not as a "slap in the face" to our Roman Catholic townsmen (as was stated by one of our Protestant opponents) but a silent, yet speaking witness for the truth'(157). Councillor Kemp's consideration for the sensibilities of local Catholics exhibited a mood of toleration while the continuing anti-Catholicism of the celebrations represented a more antagonistic attitude.

This feature of the celebrations provoked an undercurrent of opposition which surfaced at times of religious controversy in the town. Two such controversies centred on the opening of the Catholic Chapel and the unveiling of the Martyr's Memorial. The exploding the Papal effigy outside Priory Crescent by the Borough resulted in a letter from 'An Out-and-Out Protestant' appearing in the Express which condemned this 'gross outrage upon the religious feelings of Roman Catholics'(158). The Borough's committee responded, claiming that the burning of the effigy at Priory Crescent was 'not done as a personal insult to the reverend gentleman whose private residence is connected with the chapel, but as a further proof of our utter abhorrence of the practices connected with the Roman Catholic religion'(159). This provoked a further letter from the same gentleman in the next edition(160) reiterating his original accusation, but the identity of the letter's author appears to have become known because in the following year the Borough Society's 'Bishop' remarked that 'the bonfire boys have strong reason to believe that this "Out-and-Out Protestant" is no other than a clergyman of the Church of England, and if clergymen of the Church of England have such
sympathy with the Pope of Rome, we need not wonder any longer how it is that Catholicism is gaining ground so fast' (161).

Opposition in 1870 also came from a second quarter. The 'boys were somewhat dismayed' to learn the intention of a 'club consisting principally of the learned men of the town' to 'amuse themselves and display their oratorical and argumentative powers' by discussing 'the advisability of continuing the Fifth of November celebrations in Lewes' (162). The bonfire boys were particularly angry when 'it became known that some gentlemen who had already displayed hostility to their doings were to take a leading part in the discussion'. In response they organised their own 'monster meeting' at which, following discussion of the club's intended debate, they decided the members of the club, 'were not likely, from their wisdom, to be very formidable antagonists, nor to have much influence with the powers that be, and therefore resolved, let the club decision be what it might, to go on as usual' (163).

The issue of the Martyrs' Memorial provoked religious antagonism in Lewes from 1889, when the subject was first raised, into which the bonfire societies were drawn. In 1891 the Reverend Francis Flynn of the Naval Prison initiated a series of attacks on the bonfire societies when 'he said some people avoided the acceptance of Christ by hiding under the porch of Protestantism. There were a lot of "No Popery" people in Lewes who made dislike of Romanism and Ritualism a kind of religion' (164). This attack was renewed later when a
letter from a 'Catholic' refuted the claim made in the Express that the 'Fifth' was 'a day which all denominations may enjoy'. 'I think', stated the correspondent, 'that this burning of the Pope in effigy every year, especially when it has any kind of official recognition is not a thing of intelligent Englishmen to be proud of. It is... a very unfriendly act to Catholics thus to insult the head of their Church' (165). A year later, in 1896, the Literary and Scientific Institute Debating Society took issue with the bonfire boys over their Pope-burning. It was argued that Catholics should no longer be considered disloyal or traitors, the celebrations 'served to keep alive old religious feuds' and were generally offensive(166).

Pope burning continued to cause controversy after the turn of the century. The matter was raised in the House of Commons in 1902 by Mr J. Tully, member for South Leitrun when he asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention had been directed to the occurrences at Lewes and whether any complaint had been received from the Roman Catholic inhabitants of those districts as to the treatment they received on that occasion. Mr Aker Douglas replied that it was a matter for the local police(167). Tully was dismissed as 'one of the Papal brigade in the House of Commons' by the 'Chancellor' of Southover during his firesite speech the following year(168), the Express also making light of such criticisms. Reporting 'a young lady living in London' as having said 'it is impossible in this enlightened twentieth century that such absolute twaddle can appeal to anyone of average intelligence', the
Express went on to report 'bigger crowds than ever in Lewes on Thursday night'(169).

In 1903 the bonfire boys were accused of being 'a lot of narrow-minded and ignorant bigots' by a Roman Catholic who had read an account of the celebration(170). The Express had previously defended the bonfire boys against such accusations, stating in 1884,

Those who imagine that the youth of Lewes taking part in this yearly orgy are animated with unquenchable hatred towards the members of an alien Church are very wide of the mark. Religious fanaticism is happily less rampant than ever, and if his Holiness the Pope and the consistory of cardinals were to pay a visit to the town on the "Fifth" they would, doubtless, meet with an enthusiastic welcome, as an interesting adjunct to the show. The fact is the celebration has lost all religious and political significance and the anniversary of the defeat of the gunpowder plot is taken advantage of merely as an opportunity for indulging in a few hours comparatively harmless, but perhaps not strictly legal license, with a good deal of fiery fun and frolic.(171)

A number of years later the author of a historical account of the celebrations concurred with this, claiming that only a few families holding with Knoxian tradition still placed religious significance on the celebrations(172).

Such defensive statements appear however to be at variance with the evidence. Towards the end of the century there is a detectable shift away from overt anti-Catholicism by one of the societies. At the 1902 Commercial Square dinner E.L. Tappin remarked that 'no doubt they were all aware their Society was the only one which did not burn the effigy of the present pope, but that of Pope Paul V, who was the head of the Romish Church at the time of the
Gunpowder Plot' and A. Brooker commented that 'he was sure the demonstrations had no political or religious aspect, but was treated simply as a carnival'(173). During a debate at the Tabernacle's Social and Literary Society in 1912(174) Edgar Flint, Commercial Square's secretary, claimed that the anti-Catholicism expressed by the 'Bishops' was not representative of the sentiments of many of those participating. The truth of his statement is difficult to verify, the only evidence of the bonfire boys' sentiments being the clerical speeches and firework displays, but the fervent anti-Catholicism of the Borough and Southover Societies may have been the result of their clerics being Orangemen. The bonfire boys earlier defended their anti-Catholicism on the grounds of the continuing threat of the Papacy to England's political and religious interests. As the century progressed and popular anti-Catholicism declined so a shift in attitude among some of the bonfire boys became detectable(175).

A Second Social Drama

This gradual change in hostility towards Catholicism did not placate the opponents of the celebrations, but as in 1846, it took a specific incident around which this opposition could focus for them to gain enough influence to effect the celebrations. During the early hours of Tuesday the 4th October, 1904, smoke was observed coming from the premises of Dusart's shop at 85 High Street. By the end of the morning the building had been razed to the ground at an estimated loss of £5,000. The adjoining properties were
saved as a result of being constructed of brick and the timely arrival of the Brighton Fire Brigade, the local appliance having proved totally inadequate(176).

The fire occurred at an unfortunate time for the bonfire societies, coming only one month before their celebrations. The press asked,

Stand 'Bonfire' where it did? That is the question many are asking in Lewes ... The people who live in the wood and plaster houses which line both sides of the High Street have become alarmed ... "Our position is not a bit safer that their's" they say and "once given a start we may be without home or habitation".'(177)

The societies responded by issuing notices condemning the use of the notorious homemade squib, the 'Lewes Rouser'(178), and restricting the size of the tar barrels to be dragged through the streets(179). Although the Southover and Borough Societies experienced a decline in donations, prompting Borough's secretary, G. Huggett, to appeal for funds through the press(180), the 1904 celebration followed the traditional pattern, including fires in the principal streets of the town. No accidents occurred, leading the press to observe the bonfire boys congratulating themselves and thinking that 'the "nervous" people will have quite got over the shock of Dusart's fire this time next year'(181).

This optimism was not however to be realised. Despite an uneventful 'Fifth' opposition to street fires continued. Writing to the Express immediately afterwards R.M. Harvey, a High Street resident, asked,
Is it reasonable or right that bonfires should be made in the middle of the public streets? Is it reasonable or right that little bits of boys, as well as those who ought to know better, should be given a free hand to fling fireworks at any and everybody they come across? Is it reasonable or right that residents should be put to the inconvenience of barricading their windows, to satisfy the desire of enthusiastic bonfire societies?(182)

Other opponents were more actively mobilising support, and by October, 1905, the press reported a rumour that the celebrations would be stopped or modified owing to a petition 'that a prominent inhabitant recently drew up'. The petition, signed by 94 inhabitants including, it was reported, ten magistrates(183) was submitted to the Joint Standing Committee of the East Sussex County Council in October, 1905. The Committee met on the 24th October, but resolved to defer consideration of the matter until their next quarterly meeting. This decision was taken on the advice of the Chief Constable, Major Hugh Graham Lang, who stated that due to preparations being so advanced 'there could probably be some difficulty if it were summarily put down this year'(184). The success of the 1905 celebration led the Express to conclude that 'the splendid order and good humour which was observed throughout the evening was an effective answer to those who urge that the celebrations should be suppressed'(185).

Prior to Dusart's fire tension surrounding the celebrations was manifest through the press at times that, as has been shown, coincided with particular events. None, since the assault of Henry Blackman in 1846, threatened to result in the celebration's suppression, but the dispute
arising from the fire did present such a threat. As in 1847, the opponents of the celebrations realised the situation could be exploited to their advantage. Again, as for the 1847 dispute, the adoption of the social drama approach allows the underlying divisions present in the town to be exposed through a consideration of the actions and statements of the protagonists. The fire produced the 'breach', creating a climate in which the 'crisis' could develop, the opening stage being the submission of the petition.

The opponents provoked hostility from the outset of the crisis by submitting their petition directly to the County Council, thus by-passing the Borough Council. A letter appearing in the press signed simply 'One of the People' asked, 'Why County Council? Have the town authorities been approached or is this another attempt to override the municipal rights and privileges of governing town affairs?'. J.T. Glandfield echoed this sentiment during his firesite oration while Southover's chairman expressed the opinion that the Town Council supported the celebrations. In 1905 the Mayor was John Miles, a regular supporter of Commercial Square, having judged their annual fancy dress competition from 1899 to 1903. On the latter occasion he had been accompanied by three other respectable Lewesians; David Roberts, the Borough Surveyor, Richard Weston and J.R. Fothergill. The petitioners' concern regarding the partiality of the Town Council may also be attributed to the Council's reaction to Dusart's fire. Following the fire no resolution was put to the
Council meeting, it being accepted that the bonfire boys should be left to take their own precautions. This decision was conveyed to representatives of the four bonfire societies when they met the Mayor in his parlour later the same evening (190).

From the outset of the crisis the bonfire societies co-ordinated their response. That they were able to do this was indicative of their formal organisation and the relationship existing between them. During the 1847 petition crisis no formal organisation represented their interests, but in 1904 this situation had changed. The bonfire societies had been in existence for fifty years, during which time they had become well-established organisations with extensive networks of members and supporters. The extent of their organisation is seen, not only through well-rehearsed activities, but also through more formal procedures and regular meetings. During September and October each year general meetings were held at which committees and officers were elected (191). Successful fund-raising was achieved by way of donations from subscribers, street collections during the celebrations and probably contributions from the members themselves. It became customary for the societies' financial state to be reported at their annual dinners and for properly audited accounts to be kept (192). Co-operation between the societies was also well established. Officers met to co-ordinate activities, representatives attended kindred society dinners and general members fraternised at combined general meetings held at the various headquarters of the societies (193).
Thus, when the challenge came in 1905 the bonfire boys were able to meet it with far more organisation and support than they had in 1847.

The news of the existence of a petition led to the topic being discussed at the societies' early general meetings (194), and by October a joint meeting had been called. Held on the 12th October at the Royal Oak it was attended by representatives from all four societies. According to the Express 'the situation was discussed in an animated manner and in the end a member from each society was elected onto a sub-committee to draw up a letter to the Standing Joint Committee answering the charges of drunkenness, immorality, etc. made in the petition' (195). In the meantime a 'monster meeting' attended by 'over two hundred bonfire enthusiasts' was held at the Elephant and Castle (196). However, once it became known that the petition had been signed by 94 inhabitants of Lewes, the bonfire boys realised that they had to respond in like manner, a single letter now being considered inadequate. At the dinner of the Commercial Square Society the Society's secretary, Stanley Stevenson, a local corn merchant, 'ventured to say that more than nine hundred could be found ready and willing to sign a petition in its favour' (197). Eventually a counter-petition, signed by 492 inhabitants of Lewes and 287 persons from surrounding villages requesting that no action should be taken against the celebrations, was submitted by the bonfire societies to the Joint Standing Committee (198).

The Joint Standing Committee at their quarterly meeting
on the 23rd January, 1906 set up a Subcommittee to deal with the matter, its brief being 'to report on the matter after conferring with representatives of the petitioners on both sides'(199). The subcommittee members were Aldermen W.H. Campion (Chairman) of Hassocks, J. Farncombe of Eastbourne, E. Eager of Hove, W.V.K. Stenning of East Grinstead, Rear Admiral E. St John Garforth (appointed by Quarter Sessions) and Major Lang, the Chief Constable. No doubt the original petitioners felt assured of a more impartial hearing from this august body than they did from the Town Council. Their report(200) is the only source providing the names of the personalities who spoke on behalf of the petition and counter-petition. From the statements recorded in the report an understanding of the motives of those involved and how these reflected more general tensions present in the town can be gained.

The wording of the petition, as noted in the report, indicates that the fear of fire was not the only concern. The petitioners not only 'requested the total suppression in the streets of the town of bonfires and explosives' but also 'invited greater activity in the arrest of drunken persons; stating... that the law was openly and flagrantly broken during the annual bonfire celebrations, and the town was thronged with noisy and objectionable visitors from neighbouring places'. The petitioners viewed the 'Fifth' as an 'occasion for much immorality and drunkenness'. Charles Morrish, a High Street draper, alluded to this when speaking on behalf of the petitioners. He claimed his windows were frequently broken by squibs thrown into his house.
Considerable expense was incurred by householders having to barricade their property. Morrish's complaints were echoed by R.H. Powell, an estate agent with offices in the High Street. Such complaints were probably well founded, but the bonfire boys denied responsibility for damaging property, the Express commenting that 'those who are taken in the act of doing damage are punished on the spot in a summary manner, on a rough principle of retributive justice'.

Spokesmen for the bonfire societies, including A.W. Hillman, J.W. Briggs, W.T. Gearing, P.W. King and S.J. Stevenson, speaking in support of the counter-petition attempted to counter such criticism by asserting that the celebration 'was a good advertisement of Lewes, and was good for trade, bringing a large amount of money into the town, 4,000 to 5,000 visitors for the evening and hundreds who remained for several days and caused a great increase in takings of grocers, bakers, etc.' By making such a claim they were obviously attempting to defend the societies' interests at the hearings.

The petitioners accused the bonfire boys of drunkenness and immorality. Some local clergymen, while sympathising with the bonfire boys' attitude towards Catholicism and Ritualism nevertheless opposed the celebrations due to manner in which they were conducted. One such opponent was the Reverend William Kingo Armstrong of Eastgate Baptist Church who provoked considerable controversy by his criticism of the celebrations. Speakers at both Borough and
Commercial Squares' 1879 suppers referred to the attack by Armstrong from the pulpit (205), but this did not deter him from continuing his opposition in a series of correspondence that appeared in the Times and Express during October, 1884 (206). Armstrong commented that he was 'saddened' by what he saw in 1879 and as a consequence had made it the subject of his address the following Sunday. He described seeing men dressed as women and women as men and how 'as the night wore on drunkenness and profane language increased... (which) is a fearful cause of demoralisation among the children and young people of the town... There is no lack of earnest Christian workers, but their efforts are paralysed and frustrated by this carnival of sin' (207).

Similar opinions were expressed by other clergymen. In 1899 the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the County Council received a letter from the Rural Dean of Lewes containing a resolution passed by the Ruri-decanal chapter of Lewes expressing concern regarding the fire hazards associated with the celebrations, but adding that 'this chapter is also of the opinion that much injury is done to the moral life of the town by the general license permitted on this occasion' (208). Even clergymen supporting the celebrations sometimes mildly rebuked aspects of the bonfire boys' behaviour. Addressing the bonfire boys at the Thanksgiving Service at Southover in 1901 the Reverend D.L. Elliot warned that, 'if they took that opportunity of giving rein to their carnal appetites by excessive drunkenness, or if on the other hand base extravagances showed itself to be bitterness of feeling, then the cause which they had at
heart, and which they were supposed to champion and uphold, would greatly suffer.' He went on 'to appeal to them not to degrade the dignity of the subject with which the celebration was associated by giving way to sinful lust' (209).

The temperance movement at this time was particularly active in Lewes (210) attracting support from among the local clergy who, by speaking out against the celebrations showed a stronger commitment to temperance than 'No Popery'. The Reverend John Penfold Morris, the Eastgate Baptist minister, while attending a number of militant Protestant meetings (211), was also active in the temperance movement (212) and a spokesman for the petition. Other temperance supporters among the petition's spokesmen were the Reverend Duncan-Pierce of St Annes, and the leading Quaker, Caleb Rickman Kemp.

Only Matthew Welland, pastor at Jireh Chapel, defended the bonfire boys. He stated, 'I am sure of one thing, Lewes boys, and men and women, too have to much self respect to do anything wrong, to insult anybody, or anything of that sort. As far as I am concerned I maintain that this carnival should not die' (213). Welland's strong anti-Catholicism obviously overcame any qualms he may have had regarding the bonfire boys' behaviour. One of his flock also took the side of the bonfire boys. Appearing on behalf of the counter-petition Hugh John Vinall, a local solicitor, commended the celebrations as 'loyal, Protestant, orderly, and religious and conducted with marked sobriety'. However his membership
of the Loyal Orange Lodge explains his partiality.

The Conservative bias of the Express accounts for their open support for the societies during the subcommittee hearings. The petitioners were taken to task in an editorial,

There can be no doubt that in Lewes as in other places, there are well-meaning but straight laced individuals, who mistake a little exuberance of spirits or jollification for rowdiness and they at once jump to the conclusion that drunkenness and immorality accompany all outbursts of popular enthusiasm. In doing so they take a very low view of human nature, and often misjudge their fellow men. It is a gross libel to accuse those who organise and take active part in the demonstrations of such offences. The members of the bonfire societies are loyal and patriotic citizens and are too jealous of their town's good name to be found guilty of anything which would bring discredit on it.(214)

The bonfire boys also attempted to refute these allegations. S.J. Stevenson stating, during his Commercial Square dinner speech, that 'it was lies and entirely false, and he should like to see them attempt to prove their statement' (215).

The bonfire boys' social activities centred on the public house(216) and while this did not automatically imply drunkenness and immorality the opportunity to make such a claim was seized upon by their temperance opponents. All the societies had their headquarters in public houses and held their annual dinners and other social gatherings there. Support from the licensed victuallers was considerable and had existed from the time of the societies' formation(217). This support was reciprocated, the bonfire boys vigorously condemning licensing laws designed to restrict drinking
hours or refusals by magistrates to requests for extensions for their various activities. In 1872 the 'bishops' of all the societies condemned the new Licensing Act (218) and in 1894 Cliffe's 'Bishop' condemned 'the attempt of some of the goody-goody classes to curtail the enjoyment of the working classes by posing as prudes and endeavouring to prevent the licensing of places of amusement where many like to resort' (219).

Despite all the denials, evidence to support the opponents contention that drunkenness occurred on the night of the 'Fifth' does exist. The public houses were a focal point during the evening's festivities. Speaking at the Tabernacle's debating society in 1912 Mr C. Channon referred to conversations he had with bonfire boys from which he concluded that their main interest was beer. According to him the pubs were full with long queues outside and if they were shut, the celebrations would die a natural death. He also claimed to have observed a drunken bishop delivering his speech (220). Certainly individual excesses occurred, one incident being graphically described in the press,

Only this week there was a case before the Lewes Bench arising out of the eventful night - one of drunkenness. The young fellow in question, it was stated, was acting as Pope-bearer to one of the bonfire societies, and though, possibly, the duties of this "enviable and honourable position" (as the solicitor for the defence expressed it) may involve the necessity for sundry potations, this individual seems to have let too zealous a spirit animate him, with the result that, instead of assisting in the coup de grace, he was engaged in fighting, or rather trying to fight, several people, among whom was one, a policeman. The sequel is obvious. Their worship, however, viewing the case with leniency, only imposed a small fine, which will, however, no doubt have its due effects. (221)
Only seven similar convictions were reported between 1892 and 1908(222) and although probably there were others who avoided arrest it seems unlikely that drunkenness was of the scale claimed by the petitioners.

Two other clergymen spoke on behalf of the petitioners, the Reverend R.H. Belcher of St Micheals and the Rural Dean, Reverend Prebendary Perfect of St John-sub-Casto. Belcher complained of personal injuries resulting from the careless throwing of squibs, a complaint substantiated by the number of persons arrested for firework offences, 31 between 1893 and 1913. However, other motives probably prompted Belcher, and perhaps Perfect, to oppose the celebrations. Belcher's distaste for expressions of anti-Catholicism were displayed by his comments following the unveiling of the Martyrs' Memorial and his sympathy for the ritualist movement probably sharpened his feelings towards the bonfire boys.

If a single individual epitomised all that was said against the celebrations it was Caleb Rickman Kemp, the petitioners' leading spokesman. His presence added considerable weight to their cause. Although the subcommittee's report does not record his statement at its hearings Kemp's background indicates the views he must have expressed. Although not born in Lewes, he had been a resident for 48 years and took an active part in its civic and commercial life. He was elected an alderman in 1881, and between then and his retirement in 1902, was Mayor in 1883-4. He represented Lewes on the East Sussex County Council and at the time of the hearings was a serving...
magistrate on the Lewes Bench, being appointed in 1887. Originally a chemist, he became a partner in the local firm of Newington & Co, prospering as a merchant employing over 80 men. During his years in public life he became a public benefactor, representing the Council on local charities and largely financed the opening of the Fitzroy Memorial Free Public Library. In proposing Kemp as Mayor in 1883 his political adversary, W.E. Baxter, noted that 'there is hardly any association in this town having the religious and moral welfare of the inhabitants at heart that he is not connected with'. Kemp was a member of the Society of Friends' central committee, a committee member of the British and Foreign Bible Society and the Foreign Anti-Slavery Society and was associated with the Y.M.C.A. and the British Women's Temperance Association. He was also a Liberal and a member of the Reform Club.

Caleb Rickman Kemp was the stereotype Liberal Nonconformist who espoused what Malcolmson defined as the 'two dominant types of social outlook' held by the puritan mind; a religious austerity which promoted an 'aggressive moral earnestness' and a belief in 'rigorous labour discipline' such that was opposed to the 'habits of popular leisure'. While the fear of fire stimulated considerable concern it is clear that many of the opponents were not motivated only by this fear. For men like Kemp, Belcher, and Morris the immorality and irreligiosity that they associated with the celebrations became the focal point for their opposition.
Defending the bonfire boys were men who 'with their respect for antiquity... were little inclined to meddle with the people's affairs on the grounds of religion and morality'(225). Such a man was George Holman, who while not representing the counter-petitioners at the subcommittee hearings spoke out in their support at the unlikely venue of the Annual Football Club Dinner. In his Presidential address he commented on the attempt to suppress the celebrations,

In these days of utilitarianism, and what I might call ultra-education, many of the old English sports have fallen into abeyance... which is owing principally I think to the platitudes and sophistry of goody-goody people. Now I understand an attempt is being made to alter the calendar, as it were, and omit the Fifth from it. In an old town like Lewes, which is saturated with old customs and old traditions that conduce to make it as a contrast to the prosaic manner in which some of the towns have gone I think they should retain all these customs that are harmless and amusing to the people.(226)

Like Kemp, George Holman was an eminent local figure. Born and educated in Lewes, he became a Town Councillor in 1890 and an alderman in 1902. He was Mayor for two terms from 1899 to 1901 and like Kemp, a County Councillor. He was similarly involved in business and his church, being a director of the local printing firm of Baxters and Rector's warden at St John-sub-Castro for 16 years. He was president of numerous local organisations, including many associated with sport, and held office in one of the two lodges of Freemasons to which he was a member. Politically he was a Conservative. Holman's support for the bonfire boys no doubt lead to the indignity of having his house searched by Home Office inspectors looking for explosives used in the manufacture of fireworks(227).
Holman was not alone in expressing the 'popular' view. The Reverend Armstrong's criticisms in 1884 were attributed by a 'Times' correspondent to the peculiarity of the sect to which he belonged which naturally led him 'to take a prejudice view of any "worldly pleasure"'(228). Support at this time also came from an unlikely quarter. The Unitarian minister, William Mason, as a result of his rejection of Armstrong's statement(229) was invited to speak at Commercial Square's dinner where he remarked that 'it seemed to him that there was a tendency amongst religious people to frown upon all sorts of amusements, and especially to take from the working classes those out-of-doors innocent amusements which they used to indulge in'. His sermon 'had been delivered as a protest against that sort of feeling'(230).

In 1906 the 'popular' view did not prevail. On the 17th April the Joint Standing Committee received the subcommittee report in which attention was drawn to the fact that many of the activities complained of, including the throwing of fireworks and the making or assisting in the making of fires in the street, were illegal. However, because of persistence of the practice the Chief Constable felt it reasonable to 'ask the Standing Joint Committee, as the County Police Authority, for support of their approval if he is now to take these steps'. The report continued,

Your Sub-committee do not feel themselves called upon to express any opinion as to the wisdom or propriety of continuing this annual celebration; or to recommend that, if it is limited to a harmless torchlight procession of persons who like to dress themselves in a peculiar manner, steps
should be taken with a view to its suppression, but they think that the police should certainly proceed before the magistrates for penalties against all person lighting bonfires in the streets, or throwing fireworks about... and that notices of the intention to do so should at the proper time be posted and given to the representatives of the "Bonfire Societies".'

The subcommittee, acknowledging the potential threat to disorder if these measures were carried out felt 'confident that the police action will be sufficient for its purpose' went on to draw attention 'to the powers given to justices by the Licensing Act 1872, Section 23 to make an order closing licensed houses which might be usefully exercised if any tumult is apprehended'(231).

The petitioners' success, it was claimed, marked the death of the celebrations. The Express lamented that 'the old-time and far famed celebrations of the Fifth of November, as Lewesians know them will be no more' and proceeded to report the uncertainties now surrounding the celebrations. The bonfire societies were not altogether certain whether to continue the celebrations, meetings being held to decide 'whether there shall be a celebration of "The Fifth" in accordance with the legal requirements, or whether the whole thing shall be allowed to drop'(232). According to the Express division existed among the bonfire boys, the enthusiastic bonfire boys regarding a mere torchlight procession without fires, tar barrels, and Lewes Rousers 'a very tame affair', while 'others who look upon it simply as a carnival are in favour of some effort being made to provide an evenings amusement at a dull time of the year'(233). It was finally agreed that each society should
hold its own processions in their area of the town before holding 'a combined procession to some place on the outskirts of the town, where a large bonfire will be lighted, effigies burnt, and tableaux displayed'(234).

The societies experienced some difficulties as a consequence of the Committee's decision. Southover, unable to find an alternative firesite, suspended operations, not to be reformed until 1924. Borough, in addition to losing considerable financial support resulting in the society running into debt(335), were also unable to find a firesite. Rather than disband they entered into a formal amalgamation with Commercial Square, to form the 'Commercial Square and Borough Bonfire Society'. The former society agreed 'not during a period of three years, to reorganize the Borough Bonfire Society as a separate society or to organize any other society in its place', while the latter agreed to 'become liable (to an amount not exceeding £5) the existing debts of the Borough Bonfire Society'(236). The Commercial Square had already been promised the use of a field along the Brighton Road by Richard Brown, a local farmer, and Francis Verral JP. The Cliffe Society was the least effected, moving their firesite onto Malling Fields, not far from Cliffe High Street.

As the 'Fifth' neared the police posted notices warning of the consequences of disobeying the enforcement of the regulations. Their determination to ensure that the Committee's instructions were upheld was signified by 130 men being on duty during the evening. The use of large
numbers of police from other towns, according to the
Express, contributed to the number of arrests(237), 14
being made during the evening of the 'Fifth'. But the number
was clearly greater. Twelve appeared before the magistrates
on the 13th November charged with setting off fireworks.
Elias Harris appeared separately charged with making a
fire(238). A further four, William Thomas Gearing, his son,
Thomas Ernest Gearing, Eli Dawe and Harold Weston, all
leading bonfire boys, were similarly charged with taking
part in an unlawful assembly during which attempts were made
to build a fire, as usual, in Commercial Square. The court
hearings were reported in detail, including the divergent
evidence of the police and numerous defence witnesses(239),
the inconclusive nature of which resulted in the discharging
of the accused who, on leaving the court, were shouldered
down the street amidst a cheering crowd. The Express
concluded that the police had been over zealous, mistaking
the 'customary midnight hilarity in Commercial Square as the
beginning of a row'(240). However their action against the
bonfire boys emphasised a determination to suppress
the more dangerous elements of the celebrations.

In the following years the police maintained their
numbers and vigilance. Notices continued to be posted by the
police and it became their practice to escort all the
processions'(241). The bonfire boys continued to complain
about the police presence and by 1910 it appears to have
diminished, a speaker at the Commercial Square dinner noting
that the Brighton police were no longer required(242). But
this did not imply the police were less active. In 1911 they
again responded firmly to an attempt by the bonfire boys to 'test' their resolve by dragging blazing tar barrels through the streets. The police arrested six Commercial Square members for obstructing the highway with barrels carried on a trolley cart. The bonfire societies and their supporters reacted quickly, representatives of the three societies meeting to arrange legal assistance. The suggestion of a public protest meeting was also aired by a supporter, H.B. Matthews, the manager of a local Bank, who reported he had booked the Corn Exchange for just such a meeting(243). In the event the authorities acted leniently, the summonses against the six men being withdrawn on condition they acknowledged the illegality of their actions. On this being recorded and complied with the defendants were dismissed, having only to pay a nominal sum towards the costs of the case(244).

Apart from these brushes with the law the bonfire boys, from 1906 until the outbreak of the First World War, continued their activities within the parameters set by the Committee's decision. All the ritual elements of their celebrations were maintained, the only change being that the firesite activities previously held in the streets were now continued in the safety of open spaces on the outskirts of the town. But this change resulted in a breakdown of inter-society co-operation due to the dispersal of the firesites. Having previously been able to support each other's activities it was now found very difficult, particularly for the Cliffe Society, to join in any amalgamated procession. In 1911 Harry Pinyoun, for the Borough reported how his
society had been disappointed by both the Commercial Square and Cliffe for not joining the proposed combined procession (245). Again in 1913 a Commercial Square representative, S.J. Stevenson, commented on the failure of efforts to form a combined procession, noting that Cliffe declined because they already had enough ground to cover (246). With the reformation of the Borough Society at a well-attended meeting at the Brewers Arms in 1909 (247) the celebrations became three separate entities, each society carrying out the same rituals, but independent of each other. With the outbreak of war in 1914 the celebrations were suspended. At a meeting of the Borough and Commercial Square Societies it was decided to hold a street collection on the Saturday following the 'Fifth' in aid of the Belgium Relief Fund and Cliffe resolved to donate the balance of their funds to the local branch of the Soldiers and Sailors Family Association (248). There was not to be another commemoration of the 'Fifth' in Lewes until the cessation of hostilities.

Notes

1. In the Cliffe the 'Bishop' and his retinue addressed the crowd from the balcony of Mr Bosher's shop at Cliffe Corner. A rostrum in front of the White Hart was mounted by the Borough Society's bishop while the clergy of Southover delivered their oration from a temporary structure above the railings of Priory Crescent (S.A.E., 5.11.92.). At the St Anne's firesite the clergy were observed on the raised elevation of the reservoir (S.A.E., 7.11.93.).

2. In 1889 the press observed that 'his lordship's remarks were only audible a few yards off, and those who were
near him had a warm time of it, as he was continually being made a target of by many of those who were discharging squibs in that quarter'. (S.A.E., 9.11.89)
3. S.A.E., 8.11.87.
5. S.A.E., 5.11.95.
6. S.A.E., 8.11.64.
7. S.A.E., 8.11.59.
8. S.A.E., 6.11.83.
9. The anniversary of historical events were, like the Gunpowder Plot itself, seized upon by the bonfire boys to restate their warnings of Papal aggression. In 1888 reference was made to the 300th anniversary of the defeat of the Spanish Armada, the success of which would have resulted in the re-imposition through Spanish domination of Roman Catholicism. The 'Bishop of Cliffe' remarked how Spanish fortunes had declined since and claimed this was the direct result of Papal control of Spain's government. To mark the anniversary the Cliffe's tableau depicted a galleon and was entitled "Revenge", Admiral Drake's Armada Ship'. Earlier in the year a Protestant Conference, arranged by a committee of local Protestants, had discussed the defeat of the Armada and gone on to record the meeting's 'determination to defend, against all aggression, the constitutional liberties of the nation as secured by the Protestant succession to the throne' (S.A.E., 28.1.88.).
10. S.A.E., 2.1.75.
11. S.A.E., 7.11.91.
12. S.A.E., 11.11.65.
13. S.A.E., 7.11.93.
15. S.A.E., 8.11.62.
16. The press describe this tableau as 'consisting of a number of effigies and persons mounted on a four-wheeled vehicle... The individuals represented in effigy were "The destroyers of the liberty of Italy - Louis Napoleon and his tool - poor Victor Emmanuel". These, although bravely attired were the pictures of abject wretchedness; indeed so miserable did they appear that even the wounded hero, Garibaldi, who was impersonated by a living man, looked with pity upon them. A fourth individual occupied this elevated position; he was upon his knees, and as we thought kindly officiating as shoeback to Garibaldi; this, however, was not the case, he was supposed to be bandaging the wounded foot!' (S.A.E., 8.11.62.)
17. The Cliffe Society carried a banner inscribed 'Victories of the Italian Heroes' (S.A.E., 9.11.72.).
18. S.A.E., 6.11.83. Other speeches containing references to the Irish problem were reported in S.A.E., 8.11.79., 9.11.80., 8.11.81. and 8.11.87.
19. S.A.E., 7.11.96. It seems likely that the reference to the clergyman and Quaker was an attack on two local religious figures, the Reverend Belcher of St Michael's, a ritualist, and C. R. Kemp, a leading Quaker and constant opponent of the celebrations.
20. Successive Republican governments had attempted to restrict the influence of the Catholic Church and in July, 1901 Waldeck-Rousseau introduced a new law requiring congregations to apply for legal authorization or be dissolved. Following the 1902 election the vehement anti-cleric, Combes, took office and ruthlessly applied the new law. Eighty-one congregations for women and 54 for men were dissolved. See COBBAN, A. (1957), A History of Modern France Volume 3 1871-1962, Harmondsworth: Penguin, pp.24-26 and pp.47-62.

21. S.A.E., 7.11.1903.


23. S.A.E., 6.3.66.


25. S.A.E., 7.11.68. and 9.11.69.


27. The Cliffe's 'Bishop' commented, 'Last year when I addressed you I remarked on the progress of popery in this town, and I am sorry to say that it is still progressing, although slowly. A chapel is being constructed next door to the head quarters of our brethren, the Borough Bonfire Society. Now, my friends, in a town which has always been held up for its protestantism, this is really too bad.' (S.A.E., 6.11.69.)

28. E.S.N., 28.1.70.

29. S.A.E., 5.2.70.

30. S.A.E., 26.11.70.

31. The growth of Catholicism in West Sussex and Surrey was being attributed to its promotion by the Duke of Norfolk, a leading Catholic peer, whose residence was Arundel Castle. For references to this see speeches by the Borough 'Bishop' in 1876 (S.A.E., 7.11.76.) and the Cliffe and Borough 'Bishops' in 1877 (S.A.E., 6.11.77.).

32. S.A.E., 8.11.73.

33. S.A.E., 9.11.75.

34. S.A.E., 7.11.71.

35. S.A.E., 7.11.96.

36. S.A.E., 9.11.58. The Cliffe Society again destroyed an effigy of 'Old Neale' in 1859. The effigy was reported as being over six feet tall (S.A.E., 8.11.59.).

45. S.A.E., 10.11.1906. St Michael's Church continued as a centre for the High Church movement in Lewes and as a consequence remained the focus for the bonfire boys' suspicions. This continued after the First World War when, in 1925, the tableau of the Cliffe Society entitled 'The Way to Rome' consisted of a model representing St Michael's Church.

50. Full accounts of Richardson's addresses are contained in the press reports of the Thanksgiving Service. See for example S.A.E., 5.11.95., 'Civil and Religious Liberty and the so called Re-Union of Christendom'.


55. RUDE (1964), Chapter 9.
by horses from the Swan Inn, down Southover High Street, to the firesite, where they were unharnessed and led away before the tableau was ignited.

59. S.A.E., 10.11.60.
61. S.A.E., 10.11.60.
62. S.A.E., 9.11.69.
63. S.A.E., 8.11.73.
64. Only five Cliffe tableaux were recorded between 1873 and 1892, and all these had a nautical theme. They were 'A boat in honour to Mr Plimsoll' (S.A.E., 9.11.75.), 'A ship on fire' (S.A.E., 9.11.80. and 8.11.81.), "Revenge", Admiral Drake's Armada Ship' (S.A.E., 6.11.88.) and 'The Uganda' (S.A.E., 8.11.90.).
65. S.A.E., 8.11.64.
66. S.A.E., 5.11.95.
67. S.A.E., 9.11.69. and 8.11.70.
68. S.A.E., 6.11.83.
69. Frederick Beeching was licensed to supply and manufacture fireworks in 1872 (E.S.N., 11.10.72.). He was granted similar licenses during the 1860's (S.A.E., 26.10.61., 21.10.65., 26.10.67. and 9.10.69.).
70. S.A.E., 9.11.58.
71. S.A.E., 8.11.62.
72. S.A.E., 9.11.72.
73. S.A.E., 8.11.73.
74. S.A.E., 25.10.62.
75. Frederick Beeching's death was reported in S.A.E., 28.6.79.
76. James Beeching was reported as being responsible for the Commercial Square Society's display in 1879 and 1880 (S.A.E., 8.11.79. and 9.11.80.).
77. S.A.E., 9.11.89.
79. E.S.R.O., PAR 411/1/3/2.
80. During the 1860's and 1870's six people were granted firework licenses, Frederick and John Beeching, William and Richard Banks, James Lloyd and William Smith. All were local traders with their businesses either in the High Street or adjacent streets. Like Beeching, James Lloyd was licensed to manufacture. Later his son, Gerard, who went into his father's business, continued his father's seasonal work, being fined four shillings with ten shillings costs in 1893 for having 97lb of unlicensed gunpowder (S.A.E., 4.10.93.). William Banks was a subscriber of the Borough Society but there is no indication whether he became involved in the Society's activities. In 1899 an advertisement for Wells Fireworks in Cliffe's programme lists seven agents in the town. Four of them were shopkeepers including H.E. Philcox and J.W. Briggs who were both Cliffe society activists.
81. S.A.E., 10.11.55.
82. S.A.E., 10.11.55.
83. S.A.E., 7.11.57.
85. There are many other examples of Imperialist adventures being reflected in different forms through the celebrations. They include the 1879 Zulu War, 1893 Matabeleland, 1896 Ashanti War, 1898 Chinese port of Wei-hai-wei, 1898 Reconquest of the Sudan and 1900 Boxer Rebellion. The Eastern Question also provoked a hostile response from the bonfire boys, first towards the Turkish infidel's attempts to subjugate the Balkan Christians during the 1870's, and then towards Russian expansion into the area during the 1890's. Hostility to Russia was again manifest through their support for the Japanese in 1904.
86. S.A.E., 8.11.79.
87. S.A.E., 9.11.80.
88. Some Liberals continued to consider Arabi Pasha as a nationalist fighting a despotic ruler, Gladstone's action leading to the resignation from the cabinet of John Bright, the veteran anti-imperialist.
89. S.A.E., 7.11.82.
92. S.A.E., 6.11.1900.
93. S.A.E., 6.3.1900.
94. S.A.E., 8.11.99.
95. S.A.E., 6.11.1900.
96. S.A.E., 6.11.1900.
97. S.A.E., 18.11.99.
98. S.A.E., 22.11.99.
99. S.A.E., 8.11.99.
100. S.A.E., 8.11.99.
101. S.A.E., 8.11.84.
102. S.A.E., 7.11.93.
103. Gunner Wise proposed the toast to the 'Imperial Forces' at the Borough's dinner in 1902 (S.A.E., 2.12.1902) and Lance Corporal G. Parker of the lst CPRV proposed the same toast at Cliffe's dinner the following year (S.A.E., 28.11.1903).
105. S.A.E., 30.11.1901.
106. S.A.E., 6.11.1900. Only a Commercial Square member, Private John Floyd, has been identified. Floyd had been a member of the Cinque Port Rifle Volunteers. He was sent to South Africa in January, 1900 (S.A.E., 6.2.1900), but while serving with the Volunteer Company of the Royal Sussex Regiment died of enteric fever at Bloemfontein in 1901 (S.A.E., 23.2.1901).
107. In 1860 a Cliffe banner was inscribed 'God Speed the Volunteers'. At Southover's 1896 dinner reference was to the efficiency of the Volunteers (S.A.E., 24.11.96.) and Commercial Square's 'Bishop' remarked favourably on moves by the Mayor to put the Volunteers on a 'sound footing' (S.A.E. 6.11.1900).
108. The Artillery Militia were first mentioned in the press in 1858 (S.A.E., 30.10.58.) while the formation of the
Rifle Volunteers is reported in the following year (S.A.E., 4.6.59.). The development of the local Volunteers would constitute a separate study, but it may be noted here that the titles of these two companies changed on a number of occasions. The artillery Volunteers were known as the Sussex (1st) Artillery Volunteers (No 8 battery) (1882 Kelly's Directory), the 1st Sussex Volunteer Artillery Eastern Division Royal Artillery (No 7 Company) (1899 Kelly's Directory) and the 1st Sussex Royal Garrison Artillery (Volunteers) No 8 Company (1904 Pike's Directory). The Rifle Volunteers became known as the Cinque Ports (1st) Rifle Volunteers (D Company) by 1882 and then the 1st Cinque Ports Rifle Volunteers (Cinque Ports and Sussex) (D Company) by 1899. Just before the outbreak of war they became the 5th Battalion (Cinque Ports) Royal Sussex Regiment (D Company) (1913-14 Pike's Directory). Presumably these change were the result of army re-organisations. Around the turn of the century a third Volunteer company was formed, B Squadron Sussex Imperial Yeomanary, which was a cavalry unit (S.A.E., 30.11.1901).

109. In Gearing's obituary notice in 1913 it is recorded that he was presented with the Coronation Medal of George V, being one of three representatives of the National Reserve Forces in Sussex to attend the Coronation. The notice also noted he had been instrumental in getting over 100 ex-volunteers to join the National Reserve (S.A.E., 18.7.1913). Such was Gearing's prestige that he was laid to rest with full military honours, members of 'D' Company, 5th Royal Sussex Regiment heading the funeral cortege accompanied by the Lewes Town Band (S.A.E., 25.7.1913).

110. S.A.E., 2.12.71. and 30.11.72.
111. S.A.E., 8.11.73.
112. S.A.E., 26.11.87.
113. J. Pelling attended Southover dinners in 1893 and 1894 (S.A.E., 2.12.93. and 27.11.94.), Borough's dinner in 1896 (S.A.E., 28.11.96.), and dinners of Commercial Square in 1896 and 1897 (S.A.E., 28.11.96. and 20.11.97.).
114. S.A.E., 9.11.89.
115. S.A.E., 8.11.87.
116. S.A.E., 6.11.97.
117. S.A.E., 24.2.63., 7.3.63., 10.3.63., 21.3.63. and 4.4.63.
118. S.A.E., 17.6.93., 8.7.93. and 15.7.93.
119. References to the Silver Jubilee celebrations appeared in S.A.E., 8.1.87., 29.1.87., 8.2.87., 3.5.87., 10.5.87. and 7.6.87., and to the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in S.A.E., 27.3.97., 5.6.97., 26.6.97. and 9.7.97.
121. S.A.E., 7.6.1902 and 6.9.1902.
122. E.S.N., 30.6.1911.
123. S.A.E., 7.11.93.
Among the Conservative councillors who were either members or supporters of the societies were J. Miles, J.R. Hardwick, J.C. Lenny, E. Bedford, W.S. Hammond, J. Pelling, F. Pryor, W. Gates, G. Holman, W.T. Fowler, F.W. King and W. Carpenter.

King was a Conservative councillor for Castle Ward from 1906 to 1914. Taylor was elected to the Town Council as a Liberal for Bridge Ward in 1913.

William Gates was a councillor from 1889 until his death in September 1905 and was twice mayor, in 1897/8 and 1901/2. George Holman served as a councillor from 1890 to 1914 and was mayor from 1898 to 1902 and again from 1907 to 1911. G.J. Whiteman served for a similar period and likewise was mayor on two occasions, in 1894/6 and 1902/3. John Miles, who was a regular judge at the Commercial Square's fancy dress competitions, was a councillor from 1891 to 1914 and mayor from 1905 to 1907.

John Garrett was the landlord of the Brewers Arms, a headquarters of the Borough Society, to which he subscribed. In the 1859 election he voted Conservative, but in the following two General Elections of 1865 and 1869 he switched his allegiance and voted for the Liberal candidates.

In his obituary Baxter was described as a stalwart Conservative through the lean years of Liberal domination. (S.A.E., 14.1.73.)

A study of these political opinions as expressed at a local level has not been researched, but there is no reason to assume that they would be at variance with the national.

The Thanksgiving Service at Providence Chapel is reported on only two occasions (S.A.E., 10.11.94. and 5.11.95.) and unlike its Southover counterpart does not appear to have a bonfire society connection.

The plaque was placed in the outside wall of the church during the closing years of the 1890's.

The first reference to the existence of the 'Southdown Lodge of the Orange Institution' in Lewes appeared in S.A.E., 20.3.97.
In 1864 the subject of a Protestant lecture was "Popery and Tractarianism" (S.A.E., 19.7.64.). The same contention was being made in 1891, the topic of a Church Association meeting being "The Romanising conspiracy in the Church of England" (S.A.E., 11.4.91.). As in other places, Protestants in Lewes were sometimes invited to lectures given by people who had left the Catholic Church. In 1900 a Mr Rutherer, who described himself as an ex-Romanist priest, gave an anti-Catholic lecture (S.A.E., 4.8.1900) and six years later Miss Braye described her work among poor Catholics to a meeting of the Women's Protestant Union (S.A.E., 2.6.1906).


The unveiling ceremony was fully reported in S.A.E., 11.5.1901 and 21.5.1901.


An application to the Borough Council for permission to place a tablet in the Town Hall wall to mark the spot where the Martyrs had perished was made in January, 1896. A meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee 'Resolved - that the Committee regret they do not see their way to recommend the Council to accede to the application' (E.S.R.O., BLE/A3/4, Lewes Borough Council, Finance and General Finance Committee Minute Book, 1895-1903). This decision provoked a series of correspondence in the press supporting and criticising the Committee's decision (S.A.E., 21.3.96. and 14.11.96). The 'Lord Chancellor of Southover', during his firesite speech, complained that only two members of the Council had supported the application (S.A.E., 7.11.96). One commentator blamed the 'feeble action of the Town Council' for memory of the martyrs to be perpetuated 'by causing that much more conspicuous memorial obelisk to be erected' (LEGGE, A. (1905), A Guide to Lewes, Its Castle, Priory, Churches and Neighbourhood, Lewes: Farncombe p.27).

The Lewes Monday Evening Club met weekly between September and March at the Barbican, adjacent to the castle. According to the club's 'Report for 10th Year, 1871', held at Lewes Area Library, A.H. Browning, on the 24th October, proposed the following question:- 'Is it desirable to continue the Fifth of November Celebration held in Lewes?' The object of the Society, according to the rules, was 'the discussion of topics,
of Literary, Philosophical, Social and Scientific Character'. Membership was exclusive, new members having to be proposed and seconded, with the possibility of being blackballed if not acceptable. What is interesting is that the members were drawn from across the religious and political spectrum of the town and included Conservative supporters of the celebrations, like W.E. Baxter and J.C. Lucas, and consistent opponents including C.R. Kemp.

163. S.A.E., 8.11.70.
164. S.A.E., 25.8.91.
165. S.A.E., 9.11.95.
166. S.A.E., 21.11.96.
167. S.A.E., 15.11.1902.
168. S.A.E., 7.11.1903.
169. S.A.E., 7.11.1903.
170. S.A.E., 14.11.1903.
171. S.A.E., 8.11.84.
172. S.A.E., 7.11.91.
173. S.A.E., 22.11.1902.
174. S.A.E., 15.11.1912.
175. Following World War One this trend away from anti-Catholicism accelerated with all the societies, except for the Cliffe, discontinuing carrying 'No Popery' banners and burning the Pope's effigy during the 1920's and 1930's. However even the Cliffe moved to a position where the society defended the retention of these traditional elements of the celebrations within the context of the Gunpowder Plot, the effigy of Pope Paul V having no contemporary significance.

176. For detailed reports of this fire see S.D.N., 4.10.1904 and S.A.E., 8.10.1904.
177. S.A.E., 15.10.1904.
178. A copy of the original notice is contained in the 'Munt Scrapbook' (S.A.S.).
179. S.A.E., 15.10.1904.
180. S.A.E., 2.11.1904.
181. S.A.E., 14.11.1904.
182. S.A.E., 12.11.1904.
185. S.A.E., 11.11.1905.
186. S.A.E., 14.10.1905.
187. S.A.E., 11.11.1905.
188. S.A.E., 2.12.1905.
189. Richard Weston was a freemason and past Overseer of the Poor for the parish of St John-Sub-Castro who, with Roberts, lived in the select residential area of Wallands Park. J.R. Fothergill Esq, lived in a spacious High Street residence, Lewes House.
190. S.A.E., 15.10.1904.
191. In 1891 the Commercial Square's first meeting, at which 50 were present, was held at the Elephant and Castle. The following Monday Borough held their first meeting at the Brewers Arms, and then every Monday throughout October (S.A.E. 26.9.91).
192. From as early as 1875 (S.A.E., 27.11.75.) societies
were announcing their financial position at their dinners. In 1893 Commercial Square had an income of £38.16.7., spent £36.19.10., and carried forward a balance of £1.16.3. (S.A.E., 25.11.93.). Cliffe had an income of £27.18.11., spent £27.18.11., and carried forward £3.1.6. Southover had an income of £26.10.8., spent £21.9.7. and carried forward £1.1.0. (S.A.E., 2.12.93.). Borough's financial position was not reported. The financial strength of some of the societies increased after the turn of the century. In 1904 Cliffe recorded a record balance of £10 (S.A.E., 26.11.1904) while in 1908 the amalgamated Commercial Square and Borough Society had £15.13.11. (S.A.E., 28.11.1908). The original balance sheet for the Commercial Square and Borough Bonfire Society for 1906 survives in the 'Munt Scrapbook'. From this we learn that there were expenses of 5s.1d. for the petition to the County Council.

193. Commenting on combined general meeting the Express noted that 'the members appear to derive a good deal of enjoyment from these social gatherings, especially when what are known as "mass meetings" are held, when opportunities are afforded for an exchange of complementary visits from one institution to another' (S.A.E., 8.11.90). In 1902 Harry Hylands of the Cliffe Society, responding to the toast to the 'Kindred Societies' at Southover's annual dinner, 'alluded to the unity existing amongst the bonfire societies of the town' (S.A.E., 22.11.1902).

194. See Borough Society (S.D.N., 10.10.1905) and Commercial Square Society (S.D.N., 11.10.1905).


197. S.A.E., 25.11.1905.


199. Ibid.


201. Frequent reference to minor damage to property is made in the press, but serious damage to property was rare and injuries were generally sustained by participants rather than observers. For example, in 1903, Mr Wilson of Commercial Square was badly burned on the leg and was unable to follow his employment (S.A.E., 5.11.1903).


203. J.W. Briggs, of Paddock Road, was agent for Wells Fireworks and treasurer of Cliffe, W.T. Gearing of Lansdown Place was 'Bishop' of Borough, P.W. King was a general merchant of North Street and chairman of Commercial Square, and S.J. Stevenson, a corn merchant also trading in North Street was secretary of the same society. A.W. Hillman, was a grocer from Southover. There were a number of Hillmans who were members of the Southover Society, but not A.W. Hillman. However the fact that he was a Southover resident and none of the other bonfire boys mentioned were it seems likely that
he was representing the Southover Society's interests at the subcommittee hearings.

204. W.K. Armstrong was a native of Glasgow, arriving in Lewes in the Spring of 1879, taking up residence at 186 High Street. From then until his death in September, 1896, at the age of 74, he was pastor at the Eastgate Baptist Church.

205. S.A.E., 29.11.79.

206. The letters appearing in 'The Times' were reproduced in the 'Express'.

207. S.A.E., 18.10.84.

208. S.A.E., 11.11.99.

209. S.A.E., 5.11.1901.

210. Meetings were held regularly in Lewes from the 1870's onwards under the auspices of various temperance organisations including the British Women's Temperance Association, Church of England Temperance Society and the Lewes Temperance Association. A number of churches also attempted to attract the youth of the town to the cause with Bands of Hope. These included All Saints, Southover, St Annes and St Micheals, and among the nonconformists the Congregational and Wesleyan chapels. In March 1882 a coffee tavern was opened by the Lewes Coffee Tavern Company. Called the 'George and Dragon' its purpose was intended to be a temperance alternative to the public house (S.A.E., 18.3.82.). It does not appear to have met with much success, closing two years later (S.A.E., 26.1.84.).

211. In 1903 Morris chaired a meeting of the Protestant Alliance, at which the speaker delivered an address asking 'Shall we surrender England to the priests' (S.A.E. 9.5.1903). In the following years he chaired a number of similar meetings.

212. Morris was closely associated with the British Women's Temperance Association (S.A.E., 6.5.1905) and his church had its own Band of Hope (S.A.E., 29.8.1908).

213. S.D.N., 6.11.1905.

214. S.A.E., 4.11.1905.


217. For example, the leading figure in the 1853 procession was Thomas Monk, a local brewer.

218. S.A.E., 9.11.72.

219. S.A.E., 6.11.94.

220. S.A.E., 15.11.1912.

221. S.A.E., 26.11.92.

222. George Davis, a stableman of Western Road was fined 5/- with 10/- costs for being drunk in 1892 (S.A.E., 22.11.92.). George Watson was fined 10/- for the same offence in 1899 (S.A.E., 15.11.99.). There were a further three, C. Shoesmith, Timothy Pickett and Harry Comber in 1904 (S.D.N., 9.11.04.), 1906 (S.A.E., 10.11.06.) and 1907 (S.A.E., 16.11.07.) respectively, and two in 1908, Henry Bassett and C. Breeds (S.A.E., 14.11.08.).
223. The main sources for Kemp's biography were gleaned from Baxter's Mayoral speech (S.A.E., 10.11.83.) and Kemp's obituary notice (S.A.E., 3.10.1908).


226. S.A.E., 12.5.1906.

227. S.A.E., 3.11.1906. There were interesting repercussions arising from this search. Holman took the matter up with H.A. Fletcher MP, and it would appear that the only reason why a question was not raised in the House was due to Fletcher's non-attendance (S.A.E., 3.11.1906 and 10.11.1906). Holman did however receive a letter of explanation from the Secretary of State who stated that the H.M.I. of Explosives was acting on the instructions of the Chief Constable, who had received information which appeared to him to be reliable (S.A.E., 17.11.1906). A letter from 'An Outsider' referred to the search as 'a cheap insult' to the town (S.A.E., 10.11.1906) while the Express took the Chief Constable to task, remarking that 'as it is, the proceeding is only ridiculed as a farce and a fiasco and the gallant Major becomes rather a military bogey than a dignified protector of the civil rights of the inhabitants.' (S.A.E., 24.11.1906)

228. S.A.E., 18.10.84.

229. S.A.E., 4.11.84.

230. S.A.E., 6.12.84.


232. S.A.E., 12.5.1906.


234. S.A.E., 29.9.1906.

235. The 1906 Commercial Square and Borough Society balance sheet shows the Borough as having a debt of £4.13.7.

236. The document setting out the terms for the amalgamation of the two societies in contained in the 'Munt Scrapbook'. The agreement was signed by the chairman and secretary of each society, Harry Pinyoun and Frank H. Gearing for Borough and William Ed. Richardson and Percy T. Weston for Commercial Square.

237. S.A.E., 10.11.1906.

238. S.A.E., 17.11.1906.

239. S.A.E., 17.11.1906 and 24.11.1906.

240. S.A.E., 24.11.1906.

241. S.A.E., 9.11.1907.


243. S.A.E., 24.11.1911.

244. S.A.E., 1.12.1911.

245. S.A.E., 24.11.1911.

246. S.A.E., 14.11.1913.


248. S.A.E., 23.10.1914.
CHAPTER 8

REACTIONARY 'BOOZERS' OR RESPECTABLE LEWESIANS?

The Post 1853 Known Bonfire Population 'Sample'

Having traced the development of the Lewes Bonfire Night celebrations consideration can now be given to the bonfire boys responsible for them. Those active prior to the formation of the bonfire societies have already been considered(1), but before analysing society members the KBP had to be grouped according to members and non-members. Of the 682 positively identified post-1853 KBP individuals 88.8 per cent (N=606) were 'bonfire boys', 5.6 per cent (N=38) were 'upsetters', 2.2 per cent (N=15) were 'opponents' and 0.4 per cent (N=23) were court or local government 'officials'. The 'bonfire boys' divided into three categories, 'society members', 'dual members' and 'others'(2). It was only individuals included in the former two groups who were identifiable as society members.

Before proceeding with the analysis of society members one influencing factor requires elaboration. Figure 8.1 shows that 82 per cent (N=432) of society members were active during the 1890's and 1900's. This does not however represent an increase in membership during this period, but rather a change in reporting, more detailed accounts including increasing numbers of names of those involved. But Figure 8.1 does not include all society members.
### Figure 8.1: Years of recorded activity of society members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Period of Activity(a)</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50/60  60/70  70/80  80/90  90/1900  1900  Long</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBS</td>
<td>1  5  14  10  21  44  3  98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>-  -  -  3  10  30  49  2  94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSBS</td>
<td>-  2  5  20  85  86  10  208</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StABS</td>
<td>-  -  -  2  11  -  -  13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>-  -  -  1  45  28  -  74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSJBS</td>
<td>-  -  -  -  9  -  -  9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBS</td>
<td>-  -  -  1  -  -  -  1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duals</td>
<td>-  -  -  5  16  8  1  30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>N  1  7  22  49  208  224  16  527</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| %        | 0.2  1.3  4.2  9.3  39.5  42.5  3.0  100.0 |

**Notes:**

a. Membership did not fit neatly into decades, thus a member active for the period 1872 to 1881 is placed in 70/80. If he appears to have been active only in 1875 he is also placed in 70/80. The heading 'Long' includes all those active over a period spanning more than two decades.

It is difficult, from the available evidence, to obtain an accurate figure of society membership. The press contextually mentioned numbers taking part in the procession and the ranges from '70 marching four deep'(3) in the Cliffe in 1862 to 160 in the Commercial Square's 1893 Grand Procession(4). Numbers attending dinners were smaller, from as few as 30 to as many as 90, but more often between 30 and 40(5). How many of these were members rather than guests is impossible to determine. The only accurate record of society numbers are those announced at the annual dinners, but only Commercial Square did this regularly. In 1896 the Society had 140 members, 59 committee and 81 general(6). This number remained fairly constant and in 1906 the Society's strength stood at 45 committee and 93 general, a total of 138.
members(7).

These more reliable figures allow the representativeness of the sample to be assessed, at least for one society. During the 1890's and 1900's 171 Commercial Square members were identified as 'Positive' category KFP individuals. Additionally, a further 39 'Possible' and 73 'No Link' members were identified, 283 members altogether. Assuming that Commercial Square's membership figures are accurate, it seems probable that the 283 members active during this period represent a large proportion of the actual membership. But unfortunately only those in the 'Positive' category can be used authoritatively.

A Changing Age and Sex Structure

A comparison between society membership and their pre-1853 contacts indicates a slight change in the demographic composition of the bonfire boys. It has been noted that the early bonfire boys came from among the town's young male inhabitants. This appears to have continued, the society members' youthfulness being referred to in the press. In 1865, following an accident involving a barrel, the Commercial Square's committee resigned, having decided not to hold future celebrations(8). However, the press, in 1866, reported that the Society had been replaced by the 'Rising Generation Society', which by 1871 was attempting to revive the former society(9). This youthful enthusiasm was also sustaining the Borough, the press reporting in 1870 that 'the greater portion of the old
committees had intimated their intention of resigning',
leaving the celebrations to be 'conducted by younger hands'.
They did however reconsider and 'resolved almost unanimously
to "go in" for another year'(10), but the impetus of the
youthful element manifest itself the following year when the
'Rising Generation of the Borough Bonfire Boys' produced
their own programme of events(11). Other 'Rising Generation'
societies existed briefly during this period, some not
associated with the 'adult' societies. The members of these
juvenile societies were young children. In 1858 the Cliffe's
'Rising Generation', numbering about 50, were reported as
being between the age of five and ten(12). Towards the end
of the century the e societies cease to be mentioned and it
likely that they merged with the 'adult' societies. In
1912 children dressed as Indians were conspicuous in the
front of the Borough's procession.(13).

Figure 8.2: Age at tide of first reported activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>19</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>29</th>
<th>30-39</th>
<th>40-49</th>
<th>50-59</th>
<th>60+</th>
<th>N/K</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BBS</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSBS</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StABS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSJBS</td>
<td>9(a)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBS</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
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<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals N</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>151</td>
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<td>527</td>
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<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
a. All the South Street members were referred to as 'child'.

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The members of the adult societies were also fairly youthful. The Commercial Square drew the bulk of its members from the young men of the area(14). This is confirmed in Figure 8.2, where 54 per cent (N=203) 'Society members' were under 30. However there is a marked difference between this and the proportion of pre-1853 activists in the same age group, when 82.6 per cent of those involved were below the age of 31.

One probable explanation for this larger proportion of members being over 30 is the formation of the bonfire societies. The majority of the pre 1853 sample were arrested during the celebrations and were undoubtedly the 'young bucks' of the town. The post-1853 society members were identified largely from reports of annual dinners. Consequently it seems likely that these individuals represent the 'respectable' element among the membership, the existence of the societies allowing for a longer period of activity, particularly in the case of officers who retained their position over a number of years(15). It is probable the younger activists remained unrecorded, not becoming involved in the more formal activities of the bonfire societies. Thus, it may be concluded that the celebrations continued to be predominantly the preserve of the younger element of the Lewes population.

This slight trend towards an older membership is reflected in a similar increase in the number of married activists(16). In the pre-1853 sample 39.6 per cent were married. Following 1853, as Figure 8.3 shows, there was an
In the proportion of married men. When the 'Not Known' are removed, 69 per cent of society members were married. Again the changing character of the celebrations may account for this increase in the participation of married men. The opportunity to maintain activity over a number of years was provided by society membership. Thus men who joined a society in their youth could remain members through into married life. Data from the 1974 Survey indicates this trend has continued into the contemporary situation, 70.3 per cent (N=78) of male members being married, the significant difference between the post-1853 and contemporary data being the addition of 23.5 per cent (N=20) single and 76.5 per cent (N=85) married women.

The pre-1853 sample consisted entirely of men, and there was no evidence to suggest that women took part in the celebrations. In complete contrast 44 per cent (N=88) of the 1974 membership was female. Again, the formation of the
societies, along with changing attitudes towards women, may have influenced the gradual change from a time when the celebrations were a male preserve to one where women began to play a relatively equal role. This gradual transformation commenced during the post-1853 period.

From press reports it is clear that women were involved from the 1860's. On the occasion of the 1867 celebration the Express comments how 'some young women, not to be outdone by their sweethearts, also donned fanciful attire' (17). The involvement of women in the processions is mentioned on a number of subsequent occasions (18) and by 1899 'there were several young ladies among the lancers' of the Borough's pioneers and the Cliffe's pioneers consisted of a squad of lady lancers (19). Female involvement is graphically recorded in a number of paintings of the celebrations between 1899 and 1905 in which women in fancy dress are depicted (20).

Realling his parents' involvement in the celebrations with Commercial Square in the years immediately before the First World War, Bob Allen (21) related how his mother and grandmother dressed up and took him into the processions. He went on to comment how his father took a collecting box and was not seen for the remainder of the evening.

Women were becoming involved in other ways besides participating in the processions. For a number of years they had met the cost of new banners (22) and as they became more active within the societies they began to take on roles previously held by men. In 1905 'a noticeable characteristic was a number of female clerics attending the "Lord Bishop of
the Cliffe'(23), by 1911 Miss Killner was representing the Cliffe on the town's Coronation committee(24) and in the following year Commercial Square included a ladies' class in their fancy dress competition for the first time(25). Press reports however suggest that prior to 1913 women took no part in the societies' social activities. From 1853 to 1913 1,069 individuals were reported for their involvement with the societies, but only 29 were women. Either the press failed to record their attendance or, as seems more likely, women were not attending bonfire society functions.

Of these 29 women the largest group, numbering 14, were fancy dress competition entrants between 1902 and 1913, seven were involved in the processions, while of the remainder, four were defence witnesses at trials of male relatives, two were subscribers, one was referred to as the 'Bonfire Boys' costume' and one was charged with selling fireworks to children under age. It is likely that all, except the shopkeeper, were society members taking part in the celebrations. However it would seem that it was not until after the First World War that women became completely accepted into the societies. In a letter to the secretary of the Cliffe Bonfire Society in 1935, A.E. Faithful, an 'old Bonfire Boy and one time Chairman' of the Society writing from New Zealand commented that he thought 'the introduction of the ladies of the Society into the General Meetings and on the Committee is a step in the right direction and should enhance the social side of the meetings'(26). However a 1974 interviewee suggests that the prevailing attitude towards women before World War Two was one of disinterest.
Commenting of his own father, he remarked, 'before the war when he went out he didn't want his wife with him. He was going out to have a good time, to have a drink with his pals. It was a man's night out'. Women were tolerated rather than accepted on equal terms.

It is not possible to develop an analysis of this group of women, due to the smallness of the sample and the lack of biographical data. However some were related to male members. The son of Mrs Lucy Arter, was a Commercial Square member and the husbands of Mrs Gearing, Mrs King and Mrs Miles were all leading Commercial Square members. Although no positive link exists, a relationship based on surname and society may be assumed for Misses E. and S. Baker, both of whom entered the Commercial Square fancy dress competition in 1912, and Mrs and Miss Reed, both entrants in the Borough fancy dress competition in 1913. Those appearing as 'Miss' may similarly be related to male activists, but only tentative family links may be made using surname, society and corresponding period of activity as linking items. Seven such links exist. In the Borough there are members with the surname Reed and Witcher, in Commercial Square, Card, Green, Turner and Wheeler, and in Southover, Urry. Thus it may be tentatively concluded that one explanation for female involvement was the influence of their husbands' membership.

**Social Class and the Bonfire Boys**

The pre-1853 bonfire boys were predominantly working class. One factor influencing this, as has been discussed,
was the probable partiality of those empowered to carry out arrests during the course of the celebrations. The post-1853 society members sample may be equally biased, but this time as a result of the source from which they were drawn. It is probable that those attending annual dinners and holding office in the societies are more likely to be from high status groups than those being arrested during the celebrations. However before this can be discussed further it is necessary to be clear about the terms being used.

Social stratification, how individuals are placed on a hierarchical scale according to various social criteria is a constant topic of sociological and historical debate in which a major division has been the distinctions between Marxists and Weberians(27). Discussion centres around two the retical constructs, social class and social status. While Marxists have developed the theory of class and class conflict in which class and status converge, Weber and his followers, while accepting the existence of social class and status, have seen them as competing systems of social organization presenting no such linear development(28). Both concepts may be determined partly by the use of objective criteria and this has frequently been done by both sociologists and historians, basing their formulations on established classificatory schemes including the Registrar General's five classes and the Hall-Jones refinement of it.

However others would argue that social class goes beyond the objective ordering of occupation groups by identifying conflict groups that arise out of the economic
or authority structure. While conflict groups so identified may not always constitute a social class they do, according to Dahrendorf, function as recruiting fields for classes. Commenting on Dahrendorf's model Neale notes that 'at best it will produce a sorting out of people with similar authority or subjection positions into what Ginsberg and Dahrendorf have called quasi-groups'. He continues,

Whether a quasi-group produces or becomes a social class will depend upon technical, political and social conditions. Nevertheless, the formation of a social class as a conflict group will always have much to do with the growth of sensations of collective identity of interest among individuals in a quasi-group vis-a-vis other groups or social classes, and much to do with relationships of authority and subjection as felt and experienced by quasi-groups.

The terms social status and social class, particularly when they are defined according to the single variable of occupation, are often used in a confused manner, lacking conceptual clarity. Themstrom introduces such a confusion when he notes that 'occupation may be only one variable in a comprehensive theory of class, but it is the variable which includes more, which sets more limits on the other variables than any other criterion of status'. While he is right to emphasise the importance of occupation in any classificatory scheme he proceeds to refer to class and status without making any distinction between them. This confusion, according to Morris, is frequently introduced into the historian's work, 'class' being treated as synonymous to 'status'. A similar example where lack of clarity results in data being wrongly interpreted is described by Neale in his criticism of Vincent's book,
'Poll Books, How Victorians Voted'. He argues that a lack of definitional conciseness regarding the use of the terms status and class led to erroneous conclusions. Noting how Vincent uses 'occupation' as listed in the poll books Neale concludes, 'these methods only result in an occupational analysis of voting behaviour, and unless one assumes that men listed under a particular occupation are members of an economically and socially homogeneous group they provide a very unreliable guide to class composition of voters in the early nineteenth century'(33). Rather than analysing class voting behaviour Vincent is, more accurately, describing voting behaviour according to occupational status.

The distinction between social status and social class is important in the context of the analysis of the KBP. At one level 'occupation' is used to classify the bonfire society members into a hierarchy which may strictly be referred to as one of social status. At a second level the analysis of social conflict is also considered, but to see class in Marxist terms as conflict between quasi-groups within the town is to presuppose conclusions. So the initial analysis is based on 'occupation' as an objective criterion to determine a status hierarchy. Only then can a class struggle dynamic be introduced and considered alongside any status hierarchy found within the bonfire society membership. This can not be done in isolation. It is necessary also to consider the specific historical conditions in Lewes over the period being studied so that the bonfire societies can be placed in a wider social context, particularly relating to the social, political and
economic structure of the town.

We will commence with an analysis which may more accurately be described as one based on social status derived from occupation rather than a search for evidence of social class and class consciousness among the bonfire boys. The use of the single criterion, 'occupation', to ascribe social status does present certain difficulties in that it does not take into account other factors that may influence status. For example individual idiosyncrasies could alter an individual's social status among his contemporaries. This may be particularly relevant during the latter half of the nineteenth century when considerable emphasis was being placed on respectability and sobriety. An intemperate spe dtl 1ft, regardless of his occupational status, would be held in less esteem than a hard-working sober colleague. Armstrong(34) refers to this problem, noting that 'personal circumstances might equally affect the esteem in which individual members of other classes were held too', but he rightly concludes that 'clearly there is no basis for weighing such things when handling historical evidence'. In the absence of sources which would yield further evidence and where historical study requires the use of objective criteria to ascribe social status, then the most convenient means of classification is occupation(35). The principal source for occupation data, as Armstrong(36) argues, is the decennial census which provides the historian with the principal variable for ranking individuals in a hierarchy of social status.
Certain difficulties present themselves in the ascription of social status. Firstly, the occupation of all the bonfire boys in the 'Positive' category could not be determined. The majority of the post-1853 sample were identified as active during the 1890's and 1900's, beyond the scope of the principle source of 'occupation' data, the CEBs. Following 1881 trade directories, parish and non-parochial registers, and cemetery records have to be used, but due to the nature of this source, occupation is not always recorded(37). Figure 8.4 shows that this gives rise to the creation of three groups, those for whom an occupation is known, those for whom no data is available but the occupation of their father is known, and those for whom no occupational data, either for themselves or their father has been found.

Figure 8.4: Sorting categories of bonfire boys arising from analysis of occupational data(a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bonfire boys' Group</th>
<th>Own occ</th>
<th>Father's occ</th>
<th>Occ N/K(b)</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society Members</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>56.2</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporters</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>89.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes
a. The date(s) of nominal records from which occupation was ascribed do not always coincide with period of reported activity, but unless there was a gap of more than ten years the available data was used.
b. Without the N/K category the occupation of 67.7% of society members is known and 78.3% of their father's. The corresponding figures for 'Others' are 78.3% and 21.7%.
The use of father's occupation where the individual's own occupation is not known gives an indication of the social status of that person, but the use of this data rests on the assumption that the son remained in his father's occupational group. Without more reliable data the historian has either to ignore this group or make the best use of the data that is available. The latter course is adopted here, the two groups being kept separate to enable the reader to clearly differentiate between them.

A second difficulty centres around problems intrinsic to the sources. Firstly the accuracy of the sources has to be considered. Were people engaged in the occupations they claimed to be involved in? More recent sociological findings indicate that people tend to inflate their occupational status (38) and there is no reason to suppose that this was not also done in the past. Tillott (39) however argues that this is not a serious problem as there is evidence suggesting that the enumerator amended 'occupations' where false entries were made. But it cannot be assumed that the enumerator had either the inclination or the personal knowledge to make such alterations. Cross linking with other sources assists in removing this problem, but in the absence of no other check it has been assumed that the information contained in the individual sources is correct.

Secondly, the absence in the CEBs of data referring to whether individuals were employers or employees, also presents difficulties. Although instructed to do so, enumerators for Lewes inconsistently recorded 'master' and
'journeyman' status(40). Similarly the number of employees was not recorded except in cases where significant numbers were involved. It is possible to some extent, through the use of directories, to resolve this particular problem. Due to the nature of their compilation and economic considerations attached to their production it is probable, as Mills(41) argues, that only employers and those working on their own behalf would be included. In the case of the latter self-employed group, while it is impossible to determine whether they were employers, it does allow for a distinction to be made between them and others in Class III who appear only in the census and may therefore be considered employees.

The third difficulty is to decide on a suitable classificatory scheme to rank occupation according to a social status hierarchy. In a series of papers Armstrong(42) sets out and defends his use of the Registrar-General's scheme. In the absence of additional historical data that enables the construction of a more refined classificatory scheme, Armstrong argues that the best workable alternative is, with 'slight modifications', the Registrar-General's 1950 volume, 'The Social Classification of Occupations'(43). The Registrar-General's Social Classes consist of the following five classes; I, Capitalists, manufacturers, professionals, etc.; II, Small shopkeepers, lower professionals, farmers, etc.; III, Skilled labour; IV, Semi-skilled labour; V, Unskilled labour. These are defined in terms of social status, the classes being based on the 'general standing within the community' of each occupation.
Armstrong(44) proposes a number of modifications to the 1950 Classification which he argues makes it more relevant to the nineteenth century situation and, although subsequently criticised(45), Armstrong has consistently defended his use of this scheme both for its validity(46) and in the cause of introducing comparability of findings in historical research(47).

Adopting Armstrong's classificatory scheme and employing the frequently used crude division of classes I and II as being middle class and classes III to V as working class, it has been found that a significant proportion of bonfire boys belonged to the occupational status groups designated working class. As Figures 8.5 and 8.6 indicate, where occupation is known 72.7 per cent (N=274) belonged to the working class and where the father's occupation is used, 72.2 per cent (N=112) were working class. However, the largest group is Class III which includes both manual and non manual occupations, while a significant minority are in Class II. Class III represents over half of the bonfire

Figure 8.5: Own occupation of all bonfire boys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Classes</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>N/L(a)</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Society members</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporters</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| %            | 6.4| 20.2| 58.1| 5.6| 9.0| 0.8   | 100.1  |

Notes
a. N/L = soldiers
Figure 8.6: Occupations of bonfire boy's fathers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bonfire boys group</th>
<th>Social Classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society Members</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

boys, but the next largest group is Class II with 20.2 per cent and 24.7 per cent in Figures 8.5 and 8.6 respectively. Figure 8.5 indicates that bonfire society supporters came from higher status groups than 'members' and 'Others', but even when these are removed both Classes II and III remain proportionately high, Class II being reduced to 17.8 per cent (N=61) and Class III increasing to 63.3 per cent (N=217). If, as was done initially, Classes III, IV and V are grouped together then it may be argued that the bonfire society activists were predominantly working class. However, taking Classes II and III as comprising the bulk of society membership then it can be argued that society members were drawn from the more affluent section of the working class and aspiring middle class. Such a contention can be supported with reference to the apparent lack of support from Classes IV and V.

One explanation for the large Class III may be the criteria adopted for classifying occupations from census material. Critics of Armstrong(48) argue that his scheme creates an over-large Class III due to the inclusion of both
skilled labour and petty entrepreneurs. While he acknowledges this problem, Armstrong (49) contends it is 'rather difficult in respect of status to say what distinctions you would draw between skilled workmen, shopkeepers and (other) petty entrepreneurs not employing anyone'.

An alternative explanation for the large number of society members from Classes II and III is that the membership was drawn from these classes. This may be substantiated if the strategy suggested by Mills (50) is adopted. Mills argues that inclusion in a trade directory indicates an individual is self-employed and thus should be included in Class II, being seen as a member of a sub group of employers. In the case of the bonfire boys this modification to Armstrong's classificatory scheme enlarges Class II significantly as indicated in Figures 8.7 and 8.8. Again applying the crude middle/working class divide, instead of being a predominantly working class activity, Bonfire Night becomes a middle class preserve. Where the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 8.7: Own Occupation (Self employed Class III included in Class II)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bonfire boys group</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Page 371
individual's occupation is known 63.8 per cent (N=238) come from the middle class while only 36.1 per cent (N=136) are working class. However, when the supporters are removed the working class group increases to 40.5 per cent (N=135), but middle class members remain the larger group. The middle class is less represented among those where the father's occupation is used to ascribe status, the working class bonfire boys representing 53.9 per cent (N=83) of the total.

How people are classified, particularly in Class III, can therefore affect research findings and, as in the present case, influence conclusions. If Armstrong's classificatory scheme is adopted then the bonfire membership is predominantly working class, albeit from the more affluent section in Class III, but when Mills' modification is introduced the middle class becomes the larger group. The effect the use of directories on Class III is shown in Figure 8.9. No less than 63.9 per cent (N=129) of society members who would, according to Armstrong, be classified as Class III, are, because of the fact of being self-employed
or employers, are promoted to Class II. At this stage it would be easy to enter into a circuitous argument that resolves little. What must be grasped, in the present context, is that a significant proportion of bonfire boys came from the affluent working class and the lower, probably aspiring, middle class who, while having much in common with their working class counterparts are of a higher social status. But, while according to objective criteria, a division exists between them it seems likely, particularly as many belonged to various other voluntary associations in the town (51), the bonfire boys formed a fairly homogenous group.

Before proceeding with a more detailed discussion of the differences between the status groups that make up the bonfire boys a cautionary reference must be made to a factor that may be influencing the findings. The post-1853 bonfire boys came almost exclusively from press reports of annual dinners or officers on the 'Fifth' (52) which produces what can be considered a biased sample. It may be assumed that

---

**Figure 8.9: Class III according to entry in directory(a)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bonfire boys' group</th>
<th>III(Dir) N</th>
<th>III(Dir) %</th>
<th>III(Non Dir) N</th>
<th>III(Non Dir) %</th>
<th>Totals N</th>
<th>Totals %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Society members</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporters</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes
a. Individuals whose status can be determined from data in the CEBs are not included in this table.
members from lower occupational classes would be less likely to attend annual dinners, or to become society officers. There is some evidence to support this contention. Although numerically a small group, those arrested in the post-1853 period came mainly from Classes IV and V, as Figure 8.10 shows. A total of 47 were arrested between 1853 and 1913 for various offences relating to fireworks, tar barrels, drunkenness and disturbing the peace. Of these 72.7 per cent (N=24) are from Classes III-V. The question arising from this is whether these represent the less respectable bonfire activist who remained unreported by the press. The lively character of the celebrations and the influence of drink suggests such an element existed, but there is no way in which this subterranean group can be introduced into the present discussion.

Studies of contemporary voluntary associations have often shown a disproportionate number of high status persons being represented among the leadership(53), but data collected during the 1974 Survey suggests that contemporary

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**Figure 8.10: Occupational status of those arrested**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>social class</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>II/III</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>N/L</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Own occ.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father's occ.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33(a)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes

a. Occupation of 14 persons not known.
bonfire societies are untypical in this respect. Using a six
category classification of occupation(54) it was found, as
Figure 8.11 shows, that a significant correspondence existed
within each occupational category. Figure 8.12 indicates a
similiar correspondence between the leadership and members
existing among their nineteenth century counterparts
which ever classification, Armstrong's or Mill's, is used. A
shift in membership towards the middle class can be detected
when the two tables are compared and, bearing in mind the
'sample' bias(55) already referred to, it appears that

Figure 8.12: Social Class and Society Leadership, 1853-1913

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Category(a)</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I II III (dir) III IV V N/K (non-d)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society members</td>
<td>N 10 85 155 111 28 43 95 527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 1.9 16.1 29.4 21.1 5.3 8.2 18.0 100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society leaders</td>
<td>N 2 26 57 33 9 11 20 158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 1.3 16.4 36.1 20.9 5.7 7.0 12.6 100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
a. Class III is divided into two groups, directory (dir) and
   non-directory (non-d) entries.
b. Totals include both own and father's occupation.
nineteenth century bonfire societies were being led by a disproportionate number of middle class members.

For the purpose of this analysis 'leaders' are defined as officers, committee members and individuals holding positions directly arising from the organisation of the processions on the 'Fifth'. These include Chairmen, Secretaries, Treasurers, Commander-in-Chiefs and 'Bishops'(56) and are set out in Figure 8.13. Secretaries and Commander-in-Chiefs are well represented, the identity of 32 of the former and 43 of the latter being known. In both cases a little over one third came from the higher status directory category of Class III, 37.5 per cent of secretaries and 37.2 per cent of commander-in-chiefs. The high occupational status of the commander-in-chiefs is enhanced by a further 27.9 per cent in Class II. Similar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III (dir)</th>
<th>III (non-d)</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>N/K</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairman</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3(1)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6(1)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2(1)</td>
<td>12(6)</td>
<td>9(2)</td>
<td>2(1)</td>
<td>4(2)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3(2)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal(c)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3(1)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1(1)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-in-Chief</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12(8)</td>
<td>16(6)</td>
<td>7(1)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10(1)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others(d)</td>
<td>2(1)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10(8)</td>
<td>5(5)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong> N</td>
<td>2(1)</td>
<td>26(13)</td>
<td>57(21)</td>
<td>33(9)</td>
<td>9(1)</td>
<td>11(3)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

a. Figures in brackets denote totals where father's occupation has been used. These are included in the overall totals.
b. Class III is divided into two groups, directory (dir) and non-directory (non-d) entries.
c. Press reports refer to 'Principal' and 'Leading' officers. These are included in this figure.
d. These are officers peculiar to the bonfire societies, including captains of bands, torches, tableau and effigies.
high status personnel filled the role of 'Bishop', 52.6 per cent (N=10) being directory listed Class III. Significantly, only 11.9 per cent (N=15) of the leaders came from Classes IV and V.

Taking the nineteenth century leadership as a whole, if Armstrong's classification is applied, 69.7 per cent (N=110) are working class, but when Mills' refinement is introduced a significant proportion of this group, 57 individuals, is promoted to Class II, thus reducing the proportion of working class leaders to only 33.6 per cent (N=53). This preponderance of middle class members among the leadership is further emphasised when those performing the role of President, Chairman, Vice chairman or speech maker(57) at the societies' annual dinners, as shown in Figure 8.14, are

**Figure 8.14: Social Class of dinner dignitaries(a)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Class(b)</th>
<th>I (dir)</th>
<th>II (dir)</th>
<th>III (dir)</th>
<th>III (non-d)</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>N/K</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td>4(1)</td>
<td>21(7)</td>
<td>40(5)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4(2)</td>
<td>7(1)</td>
<td>14(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dignitaries %</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
- Figures in brackets denote totals where father's occupation has been used. These are included in the overall totals.
- Class III is divided into two groups, directory (dir) and non-directory (non-d) entries.

also taken into account. Again Mill's classification considerably influences the results, the division of Class III producing a larger middle class than would otherwise have existed.

However Mill's classificatory scheme introduces another
dimension to the discussion. While 57 per cent (N=90) of leaders and 48.4 per cent (N=47) of dinner dignitaries came from Class III, a large proportion of these, 63.3 and 85.1 per cent respectively can be promoted to Class II and thus into the middle class. However, rather than playing a numbers game between two classes, it is more important to recognise that as a consequence of shifting the use of the term class from one referring to status group to one describing social class, the presence of both Class III status groups indicates that the leadership of the bonfire societies came from both the working and middle class. Members of the labour aristocracy were rubbing shoulders with 'a relatively uniform, fluid, and transitional petty bourgeoisie of small businessmen, managerial and supervisory grades' (58). Rather than being antagonistic towards each other their common membership of the bonfire societies suggests a homogeneous group sharing a similar ideology.

**Industrial Groups and the Bonfire Boys**

The bonfire societies received considerable support from petty entrepreneurs, producer/retailers and skilled labour. Using a classification based on industrial groupings (59) the source of society support can be further refined. Taking only those for whom occupations are known (60) Figure 8.15 indicates that the bonfire boys came mainly from two industrial groupings, 'manufacture' and 'dealing'. Except for 50 per cent (N=17) of 'Supporters' drawn from the higher status occupations (61) in the 'Public Service and Professional' group the numbers in this category
and 'Others' and are too small for any conclusions to be drawn. For this reason the remainder of the discussion deals exclusively with bonfire society members.

Figure 8.15: Industrial groups and the bonfire boys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industrial Group</th>
<th>Society members</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Supporters</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacture</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Services</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Service &amp; Prof.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Service</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property owning etc.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The largest group, 'Dealing', comprises two dealing in coals, six in dress, 38 in food, two in tobacco, 32 in wine, spirit and hotels, five in stationery and publishing, seven in household utensils, two general dealers and three unspecified. Two significantly large groups exist among these, 'food' and 'wine, spirit and hotels'. Among the former group grocers, fishmongers, fruiterers and dairymen are all represented, but 20 are butchers. The latter group includes 31 publicans and one wine and spirit merchant.

The second largest group, 'manufacture', includes one involved in the manufacture of machinery, three of tools, nine worked in iron and steel (including five blacksmiths), three in copper, tin and lead, two in coal and gas, one in furs and leather, seven in wood, seven in furniture, two in
carriage and harness, one in paper, 11 in dress, two in food preparation, ten in baking, five in drink preparation, one with watches and 14 in print. 'Dress,' 'baking' and 'printing' are large groups and include nine boot and/or shoemakers, six tailors, eight bakers, eight printers and seven compositors.

The two smaller groups, 'Public Service and professional' and 'Building', also include large occupational groups. Eleven in the former group were involved in the law, including two solicitors, eight solicitors' clerks and a probate clerk. Among those involved in the building trade, six were builders in management and 26 were proprietors, 14 of them being carpenters.

Reference has been made to the importance of pubs to the societies and their members and this is reflected by the largest single group being those dealing in drink. Included amongst these are most of the landlords of the public houses used as society headquarters. Charles Ellis and Herbert Gower from the Royal Oak, and Horace Graham from the Brewer's Arms belonged to Borough; Luke Diplock and Edward Clare from the Elephant and Castle were members of Commercial Square; Frank Ackroyd of the Black Horse belonged to St Anne's; and John Mellor from the Swan Inn was a member of Southover (62). But many more not directly connected through their business were also involved in the various societies (63), generally attending the annual dinners of the society in whose territory their establishment was situated (64). Only three, H. Graham, H. Gower and E.A. Dawe,
all Borough members, appear to have become more actively involved, Graham as Treasurer from 1898 until 1902, Gower as Commander in-Chief and Dawe as Chief of Staff and Bishop in 1909.

In addition to these landlords the drinks trade is represented by a further seven individuals involved in the manufacture and transportation of drink. Two were brewers, Thomas Monk (65) who was Commander-in-Chief of the Borough in 1853 and John Fligg who held the same office in 1881. Charles Deverall, the brewery manager at Overton and Page, in Southover was a member of Southover along with John Muzzell, a drayman and Southover's secretary between 1892-9, and George Holmwood, a malster, both of whom probably being employed at the same brewery. The remainder include a brewer's labourer, a drayman, a wine merchant and a wine merchant's clerk. The fathers of a number of other members for whom no occupation is known were also connected with the drinks trade, ten of them being publicans (66).

The large number of butchers among the societies (67) can be accounted for to some extent by the number of members from family businesses. The brothers John and George Lipscombe were, in 1861, in the family business established by their father, Joseph. In 1881 the business employed one man and two boys, one of whom, Edwin Dowlen, is likely to also have been a Borough member (68). Another family of butchers was also among the Borough membership. Active during the 1880's and 1890's, Charles Watford worked in his father's business while his elder brother, Samuel, traded
independently. Two other brothers, Fred and Gilbert, members of Commercial Square and Cliffe respectively also both traded as butchers. Owen Harvey and his son, Frank, were active in St Annes while three generations of the Lusted family, John, John Richard and George, were all active in Southover where their long established business was situated. Finally the pork butchers, Fred Pryor and his son, Arthur Thomas, were active during the 1890's and 1900's in Commercial Square.

Many of these butchers took a leading role in the societies. John Lipscombe was Commander-in-Chief of Borough in 1866 and his younger brother George filled the same office in 1872 while Charles Watford was Borough's secretary in 1892. Richard Godden was active in Cliffe between 1891 and 1908, serving as a committeeman and assistant secretary. Alfred Harvey was President at Cliffe's 1895 dinner and the son of Owen Harvey, Frank, was Commander-in-Chief of St Anne's in the same year. In Southover John R. Lusted was an active society member for over fifteen years at the turn of the century, regularly acting as vice chairman at his Society's dinners.

A third well-represented industrial group is the building trade. In the case of this group there is a suggestion that the influence of workplace was operative, each society having both managers and operatives as members, suggesting the possibility of employer and employees both belonging to the same society. Three of the societies include members who either owned, or whose father owned a
building firm. Benjamin Thorpe was a son in an established Cliffe building firm which in 1871 employed 10 men and one boy. Two members of building firms, John Floyd and Charles Lower, belonged to Commercial Square, Lower employing eight men and two boys in 1881. In Southover Charles Errey, in partnership with Bishop, was the main builder. Evidence however is limited, only two of the 26 operatives definitely being employed by these builders. Charles Errey's son, Ernest, was a carpenter in his father's firm and John Herbert Carter was employed by Lower (69).

The influence of workplace can also be detected to a lesser extent among other occupational groups. It seems likely that the eight printers, seven compositors and two reporters who were all members of Commercial Square were employed by one of the two principal Lewes printing firms, Baxter's, the publishers of the Express, or Farncombes. Among the mourners at the funeral of H. Baker (70), the 'oldest Lewes compositor', were two fellow bonfire boys, W.N. Barnard and H. Pinyoun. Three members of Commercial Square were employed at the Phoenix Ironworks, Alfred Freeland, a pattern maker, James T. Gearing, a labourer, and Henry Taylor, a painter who according to his obituary (71) had been employed at the ironworks for 24 years. Also among Commercial Square members were three stone masons including J.T. Strong, a master mason, and among Cliffe members were three basketmakers. In both instances no others from the same trades are found among the other societies suggesting they may have been workmates.
This brief discussion of industrial groups present among the bonfire societies gives an indication of possible factors influencing membership. The only significantly large group, those involved in the drinks trade, were probably members as a result of vested interest, the publicans giving support to those who were making full use of their services. However the same cannot be said of the other large occupational groups, like the butchers and printers. Indeed the diversity of industrial groups from which the members were drawn suggest no other groups aligned themselves with the celebrations in the same way as the publicans. Where group membership exists it seems likely that this was the result of employer-employee influence, family connections as can be shown among butchers, or the influence of workplace as in the case of the printers, masons and basketmakers. Unfortunately insufficient data prevents further development of this line of argument.

**The Bonfire Society Leadership**

During the turbulent years before 1848 opponents attributed the celebration's survival to the support they received from leading tradesmen and their sons. Lack of evidence prevents the testing of their claims, but the use of occupational status and industrial groups indicate that for the three decades leading up to 1913 the leadership of the societies was drawn from a group of producer/retailers and non manual workers constituting a transitional group bridging the skilled working class and lower middle class.
The occupation of 67 leaders is known and when these are grouped according to industrial groupings three were employed in agriculture, 22 in dealing, 20 in manufacture, 12 in public service and professional, three in building, three in transport, three in industrial services and one in domestic service. This indicates that the leaders, like the membership, were being drawn from a cross-section of non-manual occupations, retailer/producers and skilled artisans. Of the 22 who were dealers, eight were dealing in food, including four bakers and two butchers. Within the two other large industrial groupings, manufacture and public service and professional, two groups were particularly numerous, five being compositors and six solicitor's clerks, three further clerks, two railway clerks and a wine merchant's clerk, bringing the number of clerks to nine. These two groups composed 20.9 per cent of the leadership group, the reputed literacy of both probably accounting for their numerical presence.

The biographies of some of these leading bonfire boys well illustrate the type of men running and organising the societies and their celebrations. Tom Jenner may be considered the senior member, being on a number of occasions referred to as the founding member of Commercial Square(72). A native of Brighton, Thomas James Jenner, was by 1851, at the age of 15, apprenticed to a Lewes butcher, his family at this time living in West Street, just off Commercial Square. By 1871 he had married, had two children and was sufficiently affluent as a cattle salesman to have moved into commodious accommodation in Abinger Place and to employ
a female servant. By 1881 he had moved to Mount Pleasant, opposite the Commercial Square's headquarters and was still residing there in 1901. Throughout this time he remained an active member of the Society, the press noting in 1887 that he had held the position of President at the Society's annual dinner for the past 30 years. His last reported involvement was in 1898 when, at the age of 62, he attended Commercial Square's annual dinner. By this time his son, Thomas Alfred, was a member, holding the office of Commander-in-Chief in 1893.

Other leading bonfire boys active during the societies' formative years are also known. Three were 'Bishops' of the Borough, John Newton, John Carey and William Thomas Gearing. Newton was born in Lewes in 1821 and was a successful High Street tobacconist during his early life, but later his fortunes obviously declined, his obituary noting that he had been in bad health, physically and mentally, and had died in the workhouse infirmary. His obituary also suggests an unsettled character.

John Newton, better known as "Phantas"... in his young days contrived to obtain a living in various ways arranging "dramatic"(!) entertainment, which used to take place in cellars of houses... He was to some extent a wit, but his sallies were generally of the low order, although at times he was very amusing. Occasionally he would appear attired in an extraordinary manner, and this attracted public notice, and he was also well known from the fact that he was in the habit of hawking oranges and nuts at the railway station and about the town, generally assuring his patrons that the oranges had not been "biled".

The obituary went on to note that 'some years ago he was connected with the Borough Bonfire Society, but got into bad
odour with the members, and was afterwards looked upon as a "traitor to the cause" by those concerned in the demonstrations'.

His successor, John Carey, first mentioned as 'Bishop' in 1867(79), appears an equally notable character. Born in 1825, the son of a Lewes tanner, his employment record suggests an unsettled nature. In 1841 he was, like his father, a tanner. At the time of his marriage, in 1848, he was a french polisher and three years later he had become a groom. In 1861 he was an ironmonger's porter, by 1871 an agricultural machinist and in 1881 a coal agent. His obituary(80) record a long association with the Borough. He resigned as official collector in 1874(81), but remained active during the early 1880's, being vice-chairman at the society's 1881 dinner(82). Three years later Carey was found hanging at his Keere Street home having committed suicide following 'bodily illness and depression'(83).

William Thomas Gearing, Borough's next 'Bishop' was a more substantial individual, holding office for over 40 years. He moved from London with his parents during the 1840s and spent his working life with the printing firm of Baxters, first as a compositor, then later as the firm's collector. Politically a Conservative and a member of the Loyal Orange Lodge, he was associated with a number of local voluntary associations including the Ancient Order of Buffalos, Foresters and Oddfellows, Lewes Football Club, Rowing Club and Operatic Society. He belonged to some for a considerable time, being a chorister at All Saints for 40
years and Colour Sargeant in the Rifle Volunteers, from which he retire in 1898 after 33 years service. His involvement with Borough was equally long, first being reported attending the Society's 1872 dinner(84) and in 1913, one year before his death, representing his society at the Commercial Square's dinner(85). During that time he took a leading role in the Society's affairs and in 1906 was a spokesman for the counter-petitioners at the County Council hearings. His obituary(86) and funeral arrangements(87) reflected the esteem in which he was held. Members of 'D' Company 5th Royal Sussex Regiment headed the funeral cortege and he was laid to rest with full military honours, including a graveside firing party.

George Trayton Baker was another long serving Borough member, being active during the 1890's and 1900's when he was secretary, treasurer and commander-in-chief. In 1910 he was referred to as 'one of the oldest bonfire boys'(88). Coming to Lewes from Brighton during the late 1860's he was, in 1871 at the age of 13, working as a baker's porter. He married in 1879, had seven children and by 1890 was a successful High Street baker and confectioner. Joseph William Briggs was a second bonfire boy who was also secretary and treasurer of his society, Cliffe, first as secretary during the 1880's and 90's and then as treasurer during the 1900's. Like Gearing he represented his society on commemoration subcommittees and at the 1906 hearings. Born in Lewes in 1860 Briggs, during his youth worked alongside his father in a local ironmongery, an employment he continued through into adult life(89).
During the 1890's the secretary of Commercial Square was Ernest Lewis Tappin, and the treasurer was Thomas Gearing. First reported as secretary in 1889(90), Tappin held this post until 1896. He then became a financial supporter, for a number of years sponsoring the Society's fancy dress competitions. The son of the local paper mill manager, Tappin had commenced business as a stationer, but following the cycling boom became a bicycle agent and an active member of the Lewes Cycling Club throughout the 1890's and 1900's, becoming the Club's sub-captain in 1907. Thomas Gearing, no relation of W.T. Gearing, by 1887 had been treasurer for 20 years(91), his services being recognised by a presentation teapot. Its non-alcoholic nature may be attributed to his background, his father was the minister at Bethesda Chapel, a small Independent Calvinist chapel situated in St John Street. Gearing retired as treasurer in 1909(92) after 40 years service, but was still an active member at the age of 60 in 1913(93).

Few society chairmen are referred to in the press, but one, Henry Alfred Hylands, was active in Cliffe in the late 1880's. He was a committee member by 1891(94) and chairman in 1899(95), an office he held until at least 1910 when he was again reported as chairman of the committee(96). Born in Lewes in 1865, the son of a fishmonger, Hylands married 25 years later in Cliffe parish church. He subsequently moved from his society's area to Market Lane and then to St John's Street by 1911. He was a compositor by the age of 17 and remained in this occupation into the 1900's(97). His younger brother, William, was also a Cliffe member during the
1890's, being a committeeman in 1891(98).

To summarize, according to age, sex and marital status the bonfire societies' members differed from the pre-1853 bonfire boys in that they tended to be older, to be married and to include women. Using occupational status to ascribe social class it was also found that the social composition of the known bonfire boys appears to have changed, those prior to 1853 being predominantly working class while society members were drawn largely from the middle class. However rather than indicating a change in the type of activists being attracted to the celebrations following the formation of the societies it can be contended that the use of different sources and changes in reporting style uncovered two elements among the bonfire boys. Court documents record the more lively working class participants while press reports of the societies' annual dinners named the 'respectable' middle class leadership. While society formation influenced the demographic characteristics of the participants, the social class composition remained the same, the bonfire boys being drawn from a cross-section of inhabitants.

Notes
1. See Chapter 5.
2. See Appendix 2 for an account of the criteria used to determine these groupings, and further statistical data relating to the groups.
3. S.A.E., 8.11.62.
4. S.A.E., 7.11.93.
5. It was reported that 100 members attend the Borough's 1877 annual dinner at the Brewers Arms, an unusually high number. Eighty attended the 1893 Commercial Square's dinner at the Elephant and Castle, but from that year until 1913 only 40 to 50 are reported as regularly attending. This figure also appears to have been fairly representative of the other societies.

6. S.A.E., 28.11.96.
7. S.A.E., 24.11.1906. The following membership numbers were reported at other Commercial Square dinners at this time:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>42 committee and 64 general members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>43 &quot; 70 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>42 &quot; 81 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>150 members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. This incident was not reported at the time, being mentioned for the first time in 1876 (S.A.E., 7.11.76.).
9. S.A.E., 7.11.71.
10. S.A.E., 8.11.70.
11. Held at Lewes Area Library.
12. S.A.E., 9.11.58.
13. S.A.E., 8.11.1912.
15. Included among the large number who had been members for over ten years (see Figure 9.5) were Borough's 'Bishop', W.T. Gearing, who was a member for at least 41 years, Cliffe's secretary, J.W. Briggs, a member for over 24 years and Tom Jenner, a founding member of Commercial Square who was still active after 43 years.
16. The large number of 'Not Known', 53.0 per cent of bonfire society members, makes the interpreting of this data difficult. This is mainly due to links being established between KEP name and baptism or census records, but no subsequent data indicating marriage.
17. S.A.E., 9.11.67.
18. In 1872 the presence of 'fresh rosey girls, evidently determined to take part in the proceedings, to judge from their rough and ready get up' was noted (S.A.E., 9.11.72.). Women participating in the celebrations was also recorded in 1895 (S.A.E., 5.11.95.), 1900 (S.A.E., 6.11.1900) and 1903 (S.A.E., 7.11.1903).
20. The artist of these paintings was C.Roper and photographic copies, which were reproduced as postcards at the time, are contained in the Reeve's Collection, the property of the Sunday Times and Sussex Archaeological Society.
22. Banners presented by the 'Ladies' appeared in the Commercial Square Society in 1877 (S.A.E., 6.11.77.), Borough in 1893 (S.A.E., 7.11.93.) and Cliffe in 1903 (S.A.E., 7.11.1903).
23. S.A.E., 11.11.1905.
24. S.A.E., 30.6.1911.
25. S.A.E., 1.11.1912. In 1913 both Commercial Square and Borough had ladies' classes in their fancy dress

26. Letter held by Cliffe Bonfire Society Ltd.


28. Morris argues that Weber is often overlooked by historians and there is a need for making a distinction between class and status. See MORRIS (1979), pp.61-66.


35. Some writers suggest more precise alternative variables to determine social status than occupation. Foster puts forward incomes earning differentials (DYOS (1968), p.149) while Holmes suggests ratable value (HOLMES and ARMSTRONG (1978), p.127; HOLMES, R.S. (1977) 'Continuity and change in a mid-Victorian resort: Ramsgate 1851 1871', unpub. Ph.D. thesis, Univ. of Kent. Neither of these alternatives have been considered here.


37. Lewes directories prior to 1900 consist of two lists, 'Private Residence' and 'Trade'. Those listed in the former were, by their inclusion, considered to be of high social status, but their occupation is rarely recorded. Some appear a second time in the 'Trade' and therefore their occupation can be found. Following 1900 Pikes Directories listed all residents, but rarely is occupation recorded. A limited amount of occupation data is found in parish and non-parochial registers but these are a poor substitute for CEBs.


40. This distinction was well recorded in the 1851 CEBs, but rarely in subsequent census.


44. ARMSTRONG (1972), pp.210-211.


46. Responding to Royle's criticism Armstrong observes that 'obviously what one wants is a classification which corresponds to the social hierarchy known to contemporaries. Yet it is an unfortunate fact that we can never know how the Victorians... would have rated occupations in class terms'. The modified 1951 scheme has therefore tended to be adopted faute de mieux, partly because of its convenience and partly, as Royle points out, because it permits comparability between studies. HOLMES, R.S. and ARMSTRONG, W.A. (1978), 'Social stratification', Area, vol.10, no.2, pp.126-7.

47. ARMSTRONG (1972), p.179.

48. While retaining Armstrong's classificatory scheme based on occupation, Royle rejects certain features of the Registrar-General's classification. He removes Class IV, the manual semi-skilled, which have 'connotations of modern semi skilled assembly line workings (which) has no place in the nineteenth century context', by distinguishing between non-manual and skilled manual occupations contained within the Registrar-General's Class III. Armstrong (1978) concedes that this 'has a certain amount of historical justification' but continued to retain his original scheme. See ROYLE (1978); Also TILLOTT AND HENNOCK in DYOS (1968), p.147.


51. See Chapter 9 for a full discussion of the bonfire boys membership of other Lewes voluntary associations.

52. Among the 'Positive' category 313 bonfire boys were reported attending annual dinners, 35 as officers on the 'Fifth', 36 fancy dress entrants and a further 147 involved in a number of these activities.


54. A six category classification of occupation was used in the 1974 Survey.

   I  Professional, managerial and administrative
   II  Semi-professional and lower administrative
   III  Routine white collar
   IV  Skilled manual
V  Semi-skilled manual
VI  Unskilled manual

55. Society officers and dinner dignitaries account for 39.2 per cent (N=343) of the bonfire society membership. Even if a society had 20 officers and committeemen in any one year membership would have exceeded an additional 40 members, parades often consisting of over 100 processionists.

56. Although not strictly an officer, the 'Bishop' is included here because of his influential position as the Society's spokesman on the 'Fifth'.

57. Dinner dignitaries include dinner presidents, chairmen, vice chairmen and speechmakers. Some were society officers, but due to the difficulty of distinguishing these from supporters this group are treated separately.


59. Industrial groups used here are those set out by ARMSTRONG in WRIGLEY (1972), pp.284-310.

60. Those whose social status is ascribed according to father's occupation are not included in the analysis of occupational groupings. A son's occupation is not necessarily going to be the same as his father's and therefore it is misleading to use the latter to place the former in an industrial group.

61. Among this group were an Inspector of Weights and Measures, two County Council accountants, a Superintendent Registrar, two solicitors, a barrister, two doctors and a newspaper editor.

62. Charles Ellis was innkeeper of the Royal Oak from 1866 to 1874. Herbert Gower was a compositor employed by W.E. Baxter before becoming a landlord, first at Ye Unicorn Inn and then the Royal Oak. Horace William Graham was at the Brewers Arms between 1894 and 1905. During February of that year he appeared before Lewes Police Court accused of attempted suicide, by cutting his throat at the Brewers Arms (S.A.E., 25.2.1905). Luke Diplock, the proprietor of the Elephant and Castle until 1893 (S.A.E. 31.10.93) was active in both Borough and Commercial Square, but he was closely associated with the latter. Edward Thomas Clare succeeded Diplock at the Elephant and Castle and was still there in 1913. Frank Ackroyd was landlord of the Black Horse from 1896 to 1901 and John Mellor was at the Swan Inn, Southover from 1895 to 1898.

63. Seven publicans were associated with the Borough, six with Cliffe, eight with Commercial Square, four with Southover, one with St Anne's and three were dual members. A further four members had fathers who were licensed victuallers.

64. In addition to the publicans from the headquarters, the proprietors of the Crown Hotel (Henry Wingham), The Morning Star (E.A. Dawe) and Windmill (Edwin Dowlen) attended the Borough' dinner, those of the Royal Marine (Alfred Lawson), Swan, Malling Street, (W.D. Avis), Snowdrop (Charles Lewis), Fountain Inn (Fred Pinyoun), Thatched House (William Dawes) and The Jolly Anglers.
(Charles Cooper) all attended Cliffe's dinners, those of the Lamb (Edward Goodchild and G.E. Foster), Crown Hotel (John Bonner and George W. Staden), Star Commercial Hotel (James Griffin), Stag Inn (Fred Sutton) and the Lewes Arms (Dion Wingham) attended Commercial Square dinners, those of the Jolly Friars (Henry Earl), Grape Vine (William Grace) and the Swan, Southover (John Mellor) went to Southover dinners.

65. Thomas Monk was one of the principal brewers in the town. In 1871 he employed 20 men and one boy. At the time of his membership of Borough he was a leading Conservative, but he later changed his allegiance and by 1890 he was President of the Lewes Liberal and Radical Association.

66. George Stevens, at the time of being Borough secretary in 1868, was living in his father's house, the Rainbow Tavern. The father of Commercial Square members, Arthur and Ernest Foster, was at the Lamb. The father of Cliffe members, Arthur and Herbert Avis was the landlord of the Swan and Trayton Blaber's father was at the Anchor. Arthur L. Diplock's father was licensee of the Elephant & Castle and the father of another Commercial Square member, W.J. Beck, himself a coppersmith, was landlord of the Rifleman Inn. Two Southover members were similarly connected, Thomas Steadman's father was a beerhouse keeper and Fred Sadler's was landlord of the Volunteer. A Southover activist, Thomas Muzzell's father was a brewery manager and the fathers of three Cliffe members, H. Best, R. Haffenden and H. Sharpe, all worked in a brewery, the two former as labourers, the latter as foreman.

67. Five butchers were members of the Borough, four of Cliffe, five of Commercial Square, two of St Anne's, two of Southover and two had dual membership.

68. Edwin Dowlen appears in a photograph with George Lipscombe in 1872, the latter being Commander-in-Chief while the former was his 'valet', the master-servant relationship continuing into their bonfire society activities. See S.A.S., 'Munt Scrapbook'.

69. S.A.E., 11.11.87.
70. S.A.E., 13.5.1905.
71. S.A.E., 14.2.1913.
72. In 1889 (S.A.E., 23.11.89.) Tom Jenner is referred to as the 'founder and principal supporter' of the society. In a dinner speech, W.T. Gearing mentions him as a 'founding member' (S.A.E., 25.11.93.) and he is again attributed as such in 'A Bonfire Boy's Reminiscences' (S.A.E., 7.11.1908).

73. S.A.E., 26.11.87.
74. S.A.E., 26.11.98.
75. S.A.E., 25.11.93.
76. 1851 CEB and directory.
77. S.A.E., 9.6.83.
78. S.A.E., 9.6.83.
79. S.A.E., 9.11.67.
80. S.A.E., 14.10.84.
81. S.A.E., 21.11.74.
82. S.A.E., 3.12.81.
In 1900 Briggs was in the employ of Martin Langridge and in 1903 Lowdell and Cooper, both local firms of ironmongers.

Bob Allen stated that Hylands was 'working for the local press' and had a wooden leg. (Interview in conjunction with 1974 Survey)
Community: Objective or Subjective Reality

Having established the types of people participating in the Bonfire celebrations consideration may now be given to the bonfire boys as a social group. The repetitive and increasingly ritualised nature of the celebrations led to the formation of what Turner and Killian (1) term a 'conventionalized crowd'. While retaining some sense of concern for public reaction and providing a release for the individuals involved, such a crowd promotes the sustaining and strengthening of social solidarity. Historians have referred to this characteristic of recurrent events (2), Malcolmson (3) noting how annual events provide 'the principal occasion for individuals to come together in order to reaffirm social relationships' arising from ties of kinship, friendship, and neighbourliness. This conclusion, however, remains a gloss, the manner in which social solidarity is manifest through an event not being supported by empirical data. The purpose of this chapter therefore is to consider evidence that may substantiate such a claim in relation to the Lewes celebrations.

If the celebrations are to be considered a symbolic representation of community it is necessary first to be clear about what is meant by 'community'. This concept is the focus of considerable debate in sociology, proving
illusive and difficult to define(4), but although a lack of conceptual clarity exists certain elements are common to the various definitions of 'community'(5). These tend to rest on the traditional notion of gemeinschaft as defined by Tonnes(6) in which the sociological consequences of the three central aspects, blood, place and mind, are kinship, neighbourhood and friendship. These social relationships in turn support a cohesive, stable and traditional society with a strong homogeneous culture. This, or similar formulations, are frequently placed at one end of a continuum, at the opposite being a social construct exhibiting all the characteristics least likely to be found in community(7). The small, face to face, socially integrated, self-sufficient community is compared with large scale complex society typified by diversity, impersonal relationships and in the extreme, a state of anomie.

Such a continuum often rest on the assumption that community life is declining as a consequence of increasing urbanism. With reference to four variables, rural, urban, past and present, it is argued that community life is only able to exist in the rural past. Growing urbanism results in social disintegration(8) and the destruction of community life, the consequence of which is the invalidation of 'community' as a useful analytic concept(9). Nevertheless there is a reluctance among sociologists to discard the concept altogether, either as a method of analysis or as a social reality. Those supporting its retention argue that while the traditional, romantic notion of community has to be modified to take account of the influence of wider
This refusal to reject the concept of 'community' has given rise to a number of alternative perspectives. It is argued that the various continua that contrast community with some form of modern large scale social relationship create a false dichotomy(11). Redfield's(12) much criticised Tepoztlan study idealised a rural conflict-free community which, ten years later, was found by Lewis(13) to be divided by internal tensions and disputes. But rather than negating the existence of community, conflict represents the dynamic aspect of community life. König argues that 'the social reality of interaction between men linked by common bonds does not exclude the existence of powerful inner tensions, definite power groupings and even a lack of inner homogeneity which can under certain circumstances, break into open conflict'(14). Empirical research substantiates this claim, Turner(15), Frankenberg(16) and Williams(17) each showing how communities develop ways to manage potential disruptive conflict.

At the other end of the continuum researchers have found that contrary to the various theoretical formulations aspects of community life are maintained in urban areas(18). Some, emphasising the importance of propinquity, focus on identifiable 'neighbourhoods' noting how the close social ties found there give rise to a sense of community(19). While people's perspectives are widened by urbanism, its development does not preclude local, horizontal
orientations. As Bell and Newby note, 'there is no study which demonstrates that nobody has any local relationship: indeed, precisely the opposite is the case'(20). Others emphasise a second dimension of community, not dependent on propinquity, but rather on common interests(21). Minar and Greer note that bodies of specialised men developing 'within themselves the loyalties, sense of identification, values, and other marks of a cohesive subculture' constitute a 'community of function' as a consequence of 'shared function rather than shared space'(22). However, whether such groups constitute a community in the generally accepted sense is questionable.

A third approach developed in an attempt to understand the structure of social relationships in urban areas is social network analysis(23). Developed initially as an analytical tool by Barnes(24) and used extensively by anthropologists studying urban development in Africa(25), social network analysis has subsequently been applied to the study of British urban and rural areas(26). Groups are seen as collectivities held together by networks of social relationships based on a variety of ties including family, friendship, neighbouring and associational life(27). Network analysis directs attention away from a collectivity called community towards the structure of social relationships that are independent of propinquity. According to Bott 'the immediate social environment of urban families is best considered not as the local area in which they live but rather as the network of actual social relationships they maintain, regardless of whether these are confined to the
local area or run beyond its boundaries'(28). However while it may be more useful to consider social relationships rather than where neighbourhoods begin and end, it is more likely that when social network and propinquity coincide a stronger sense of belonging to place will be felt.

One important aspect remains, community as perceived and constructed by the actors themselves. Through them the concept of community survives as a social reality. As Minar and Greer comment, community embodies the idea, 'it recalls to us our power to make as well as to accept'(29). So far attempts to identify community with reference to various sets of elements have been discussed, but undoubtedly the concept's durability is a consequence of the desire of both researchers and observed to believe it exists. Community is a subjective assessment of the situation, a construct in people's minds. It may be something they desire or perceive as a reality and as such community becomes a social rather than a sociological construct. But if this conception of community is to be shown as a reality it is essential that it is grounded on empirical evidence.

Nineteenth century Lewes was too large to be considered a community, but as will be argued in this chapter, a sense of community and social solidarity did exist among the bonfire boys on two interrelated levels. At the level of individual bonfire societies, their formation and recruitment within identifiable localities of the town provides evidence of a neighbourhood orientation among the members arising from the propinquity, family relationships
and social networks. At a second level, members of the different societies became a total group, drawn together by shared interests. As such the popular notion of community based on 'place' can be extended to include the more 'sociological' conceptualisation of community of function. The cohesiveness of the bonfire boys as a total group was further strengthened by social networks arising from family, membership of other Lewes voluntary associations and long term residence in Lewes. Social network, rather than community, appears to be the more relevant conceptualisation at this level of analysis. However neither community nor social network is mutually exclusive and, through the activities of the bonfire boys, they will be shown to be closely interrelated.

Neighbourhoods and the Bonfire Societies

The neighbourho d orientation of the Lewes bonfire societies was manifest from the time of their formation. The celebrations were formalised in 1853(30) with the creation of two societies, the 'Lewes' and the 'Cliffe Bonfire Society'. Both took their names from areas of the town, the former from the town itself and the latter from the suburb of Cliffe. In 1856(31) Commercial Square Bonfire Society was formed and in the following year the Waterloo Bonfire Society commenced operations, both similarly taking their names from identifiable localities of Lewes. The 'Lewes' Society, as though in recognition that it was no longer the only Lewes society, changed its name, first to the Lewes Town in 1856, and then in 1859 to Lewes Borough. The naming
of societies after localities continued throughout the
nineteenth century and into the twentieth, the Southover
Bonfire Society being formed in 1886, the St Annes Bonfire
Society in 1887 and the South Street Juvenile Bonfire
Society in 1913(32).

A number of other minor short-lived associations of
bonfire boys originating from the activities of
juveniles(33) also manifest neighbourhood orientation. In
1859 reference was made to the 'Rising Generation' of
Chapel hill Bonfire Boys(34) and 1870 saw the formation of a
'new body of Cliffe patriots, the South-street Bonfire
Society(35). In 1872 the Express reported celebrations by
the St Michael's Society and similar juvenile activities in
All Saints and South ver(36). Six years later youngsters
formed an association in Albion Street(37) and in 1892 the
Sun Street Juvenile , Toronto Terrace Boys and the Waterloo
youngsters(38) were also active. Recounting the activities
of the 'St Johns Star Society' immediately prior to the
First World War, Mr Allen describes how the children of St
Johns Str et imitated their local society, the Commercial
Square.

It was all for kids. We used to, as we got
the money out of the jugs, ...and with that we
bought rope down the Corporation yard. We'd sit
donw picking it and somebody else would go and buy
the oil and the wire and us kids, they showed us
how to do it round the Elephant (where Commercial
Square made their torches)... the kids would be
sitting on the ground making their torches and
those we had for ourselves in the evening, about
four or five in the afternoon... We used to shout
and sing and things like that and march along the
street.(39)
The neighbourhood orientation of the bonfire societies was also expressed through the territorial adherence of their processional routes (40) as the series of maps in Appendix 3 illustrate. The significant feature to emerge from a comparison between these maps is that the processional routes of the various societies rarely encroached on another's territory. Where this does occur it can be attributed to the formation or disbandment of a society or sometimes to territorial expansion.

The Lewes (Borough) Bonfire Society established its territory in its first year of operation, processing the full length of Lewes and Southover High Streets. In the following year the High Street route was extended to Cliffe Bridg, the boundary between the town and Cliffe. The Borough continued to process these routes until 1893 when they were extended to include Lansdowne Place and Friars Walk, and Western Road and St Anne's Crescent. Three years later the Society discontinued the 'Southover and All Saints Grand', not returning to this area until 1909 following the Society's reformation (41) and the disbandment of Southover. At this time Borough began to focus its activities towards the top of the town, where they were now compelled to have their firesite on land adjacent to the civil prison on the Brighton Road. Apart for small circuitous routes to east and west of the High Street, the Borough confined their processional routes almost exclusively to Lewes and Southover High Street, only relinquishing the latter during the existence of the Southover Society.
The Cliffe Bonfire Society had a clearly defined territory, being physically separated from the town by the River Ouse and being administratively independent of the Lewes authorities (42). Its processional routes reflected this separate geographical and administrative identity. Cliffe adhered to this territory throughout the period except for a brief excursion into Southover, processing to the Swan in 1908 and 1909 when neither the Southover nor Borough Societies were in existence. This route was however relinquished following Borough's reformation.

Initially the Commercial Square Bonfire Society confined its parades to a circular route in the vicinity of its headquarters and Commercial Square, but in 1870 a unsettled development of routes commenced. This may partly have been a consequence of their need to share streets previously the preserve of the Borough or a desire for territorial expansion. In that year Commercial Square orientated its routes away from the town centre to Wallands Commercial Square where the residences of a number of affluent townspeople, probably patrons of the Society, were situated. In 1877 the Society took on a new lease of life, increasing the number of processions and expanding the area processed through, but the streets now being covered were within what might be considered Commercial Square territory, being streets in the vicinity of the Square. Further expansion occurred in 1884, but again the new routes did not traverse those of the other two well-established societies, Borough and Cliffe.
Three years later the Society broke with custom by processing into the High Street and the territory of the Borough. This apparent audacious expansion may have been the result of the Society's growing strength or alternatively, a desire to be seen by the large High Street crowds and secure a lucrative source for their collecting boxes. The Society again broke new ground in 1887 when it processed through Wallands Park where the residents of a number of the society's wealthy subscribers were situated. Apart for the brief time the Society was amalgamated with the Borough, the processional routes remained the same until 1913, except for a short extension to Cliffe Bridge where the Society adopted the practice performed by Borough, the throwing of a blazing tar barrel into the river.

During the brief existence of the St Anne's Bonfire Society, probably little more than nine years, their activities remained a very local affair. The processional routes were confined initially to Western Road and St Anne's Crescent and only extended to include St Anne's Hill and De Monfort Road in the society's final two years.

Activities in Southover were first mentioned in 1879(43) when juveniles had a fire of their own and by 1884 it was reported that fires were being pitched outside the two principal pubs in the area, the Swan and the King's Head(44). The locality of Southover was very similar to that of Cliffe, being administratively separate from the town and physically bounded by a steep hill rising up from Southover to Lewes High Street. Like Cliffe, the Southover Society
confined its processional routes mainly within Southover, extending beyond the parish boundaries into Station Road, Lansdowne Place and Friars Walk in 1893. However, these streets were contained within the physical boundary of the steep hill leading up to the High Street. Southover continued to traverse these routes until they disbanded in 1905.

The Waterloo Bonfire Society appears to have been initially active between 1857 and 1858(45), when the Society processed through streets in the vicinity of Waterloo Place including the High Street in All Saints. The Society was subsequently active again in 1875, but only for a brief period of five years. Although probably not large, this did not prevent the Society having expansionist aspirations, its processions traversing the majority of streets in the parish of All Saints. In 1877 its routes were extended to include streets used by Commercial Square, an action that may have been interpreted as an invasion of Commercial Square's territory. In the following year the Waterloo encroached into Borough's territory by processing along part of the High Street. However, they had insufficient support to maintain their expansionist policy, ceasing operations by 1880.

The mapping of the societies' processional routes indicate a significant correlation between the streets they processed through and the locality from which they took their names. This raises the question of whether the societies were responding to already pre-existing defined
Evidence suggesting that society territory did coincide with parish boundaries exists. The Cliffe, Southover and St Anne's societies, all taking their names from the parishes in which they were based, processed almost exclusively within the parish boundaries. Parish appears to have been further acknowledged by the societies naming their leading mock clerics according to the parish in which they were situated, the 'Bishops' of 'Cliffe', 'Lewes', 'St John's', 'St Anne's' and 'All Saints' attending the firesites of the Cliffe, Borough, Commercial Square, St Anne's and Waterloo societies respectively. In 1871 the 'Lord Bishop of St Michael's' officiated at the firesite of the 'Rising Generation of Borough Bonfire Boys' (46), but the parent society never adopted this title, apparently preferring to emphasise the Society's wider claim to the whole town.

This recognition of a parochial basis for territory indicated by procession routes and clerical titles is however misleading. Although the processional routes of Cliffe, Southover, St Anne's and, to a lesser extent, Waterloo were contained within parish boundaries those of the remaining societies were not similarly restricted. The Borough marched through all the Lewes parishes except Cliffe. Similarly Commercial Square processed through the parishes of St John's and All Saints while Cliffe and
Southover entered All Saints by processing through Friars Walk and Lansdowne Place and Waterloo entered St Johns on their incursion into Commercial Square territory. The ignoring of parish boundaries on various occasions by the majority of societies indicates they were probably not identifying with parish as a geographic entity, that some procession routes were contained within parish boundaries being coincidental rather than intended.

**Neighbourhood Recruitment**

The residential distribution of society members provides further evidence to support the contention that the bonfire societies were the expression of neighbourhood. But before the members' residential distribution could be plotted on a map a number of difficulties had to be resolved. Firstly, if societies are to be considered manifestations of neighbourhood their acknowledgement of territorial divisions within the town has to be shown. Apart from Cliffe and Southover, the societies did not have clearly defined physical boundaries. As a consequence society territory is designated according to their processional routes, the streets through which they processed. Territory is further extended to include areas that were not traversed, but to which a society might lay claim, including streets immediately adjacent to processional routes. Thus the area to the north of the Commercial Square's processional routes is included in the Society's territory. Conversely, where a society traversed an area only briefly this is not included, for example
Cliffe's two year excursion into Southover. However, where societies traversed the same streets it is not possible to define precisely the territorial boundary between the societies. In these instances such streets are included within societies' territory. Parkin(47) has observed that in some situations neighbourhoods overlap and in the context of the celebrations these overlaps may be considered as contested areas.

Secondly, the society to which a bonfire boy belonged has to be determined. In most cases this is not difficult, it being assumed that people reported at a society's activities were members of that society unless contrary evidence existed(48). Of the 527 'Positive' category society members, 94.3 per cent (N=497) were members of one society. The remaining 5.7 per cent (N=3) appear to have belonged to two or more societies. Thirdly, an address that coincided with the member's period of reported activity had to be found. A detailed discussion of how this was done is set out

Figure 9.1: Member's society and place of residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Number of members</th>
<th>Addresses mapped</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borough</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cliffe</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Sq</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Anne's</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southover</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Street</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterloo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duals</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>461</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in Appendix 3 and Figure 9.1 shows that of the 527 members, 87.5 per cent (N=461) can be ascribed addresses and of those 89.9 per cent (N=474) belonged to the four established societies, Borough, Cliffe, Commercial Square and Southover.

Once these three variables were determined addresses were plotted and the membership distribution correlated with society territory. The series of maps (Maps 5.1-5.6) in Appendix 5 illustrate graphically the extent of the correlation while Figure 9.2 records this correlation numerically. As both show, a significant proportion of members' residences cluster within the territory circumscribed by the processional routes of their society. Among the four established societies, where numbers are large(53), only Commercial Square has a sizable minority not living in its territory. Territorial residence is particularly high in Southover where 85.9 per cent (N=55) of members resident. Even 'Duals' appear to conform, with over

Figure 9.2: Society territory and membership distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Total identified addresses N</th>
<th>Resident in territory N</th>
<th>Not resident in territory N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borough</td>
<td>91 100.0</td>
<td>66 72.5</td>
<td>25 27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cliffe</td>
<td>85 100.0</td>
<td>64 75.3</td>
<td>21 24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Sq</td>
<td>177 100.0</td>
<td>114 64.4</td>
<td>63 35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Anne's</td>
<td>13 100.0</td>
<td>11 84.6</td>
<td>2 15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southover</td>
<td>64 100.0</td>
<td>55 85.9</td>
<td>9 14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Street</td>
<td>4 100.0</td>
<td>3 75.0</td>
<td>1 25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterloo</td>
<td>1 100.0</td>
<td>1 100.0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duals</td>
<td>26 100.0</td>
<td>20 76.9</td>
<td>6 23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>461 100.0</td>
<td>334 72.5</td>
<td>127 27.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
three quarters of them living in the territory of one of the
societies to which they belonged.

The press often referred to the territorial character
of the bonfire societies. The Cliffe's separate identity was
acknowledged, being described as 'the community over the
water'(50) and their bonfire activists as 'the boys the
other side of the water'(51). Similarly the St Anne's
bonfire boys are referred to as 'the rising generation at
the top of the hill'(52). The press also indicated the
bonfire boys being aware of their territorial orientation,
the Express observing that the 'bonfire boys are quite as
jealous of their territory as masters of hounds, and the
Cliffe Society would no more think of marching in procession
on the West side of Lewes Bridge, than the worthy master of
the Southdown Hounds would contemplate drawing a cover
belonging to a neighbouring hunt; but although they do not
invade each others districts the two societies always
fraternize on the bridge'(53).

The exchanging of fraternal greetings between the two
societies on Cliffe Bridge, which occurred from 1857, shows
them acknowledging their territoriality. The Express
describes the ceremony thus:

On this and other occasions there was a good
deal of reciprocity between the boys of one side
of the water and those of the other. Gentlemen
from the classic district of Toby's Town and the
purlieus of St John's affectionately greeted and
warmly shook hands with gentlemen from the quiet
secluded retreat of Swing Pump, and many a foaming
cup was crushed in drinking the pledge that
"Britons never shall be slaves". There were, but
very rarely, some little differences of opinion
leading to a few rounds of fisticuffs, which
almost invariably terminated by the combatants finding themselves in an unpleasant position in the gutters, trampled over by the surging tide of humanity crowding the streets. (54)

The ceremony reflects co-operation between the societies, but the incidence of violence also emphasises the strength of feeling territoriality aroused among the bonfire boys. This was similarly acknowledged by the societies when they refrained from collecting money in their boxes (55) when processing through another society's territory.

Rivalry was also manifest through territorial competition surrounding changes in procession routes. These tended to occur at times when new societies were attempting to carve out their own territory from within those of the well established societies. During the 1850's Waterloo's territory was clearly separate from Commercial Square, but when it reformed in the 1870's Commercial Square had expanded and as a consequence gave Waterloo little scope for manoeuvre. In 1877 Waterloo extended its routes to include Lancaster Street and Abinger Place while at the same time encroaching on Commercial Square territory by processing through Mount Pleasant and West Street. In an apparent response Commercial Square, in the same year, likewise processed through Abinger Place and Lancaster Street and extended its routes into North Street, previously only traversed by Waterloo. Both societies appear to have been competing for new territory while responding to incursions by invading other's. During the 1880's, Commercial Square attempted to remove the threat of a possible re-formation of Waterloo by progressively annexing streets it previously
traversed (Appendix 3, maps 3.4 and 3.8).

The Borough responded in a similar way to the new societies of Southover and St Anne's. Traditionally it processed through Southover, a practice not discontinued until 1896, ten years after Southover Bonfire Society's formation. The two societies shared the same territory during those years, but in 1893 when Southover extended its routes to include Lansdowne Place and Friars Walk, an area beyond what might have been accepted as part of Southover, Borough responded by processing through the same streets (Appendix 3, maps 3.1 and 3.6). In the same year Borough expanded northwards into St Anne's, an area being claimed by the recently formed St Anne's Bonfire Society (Appendix 3, maps 3.1 and 3.5). This territorial expansion by Borough in 1893 can be interpreted as its response to the gradual loss of actual or potential territory.

The only time territorial competition occurred between the established societies followed the amalgamation of Borough with Commercial Square. With the suspension of Southover's activities after 1905 Cliffe processed the full extent of the now unoccupied territory. At Borough's re-formation meeting in 1909, the secretary, F.H. Gearing, reported having approached Cliffe requesting the restoration of Southover to Borough(56). The Cliffe did not respond immediately, but in 1910 the Society ceased to march through Southover, reverting to their traditional territory, leaving the Borough to 're-occupy' their former territory.

Having rejected 'parish' as the focus for the
societies' territoriality an alternative explanation has to be sought. Defining the concept 'defended neighbourhood', Suttles(57) refers to residential groups sealing themselves off, through the efforts of gangs, into localities which are both physical entities and result from cognitive maps used by residents. As a consequence groups within these localities 'tend to adopt a rhetoric of struggle which emphasises the mutual exclusiveness of their interests and the omnipresence of force'(58). While such antagonism may not have existed throughout the year, the strong identification with territory by the bonfire boys has much in common with Suttle's 'defended neighbourhood'. Certainly a cognitive map was imposed on the town during that evening and the neighbourhood that was circumscribed within this 'creative imposition' was guarded by the bonfire boys.

Affects of Neighbouring

However neighbourhood is more than a particular group's territory. Mann(59) refers to two definitions of neighbourhood as set out by Ruth Glass. Firstly it is 'a distinct territorial group, distinct by virtue of the specific physical characteristics of the area and the specific social characteristics of the inhabitants' and secondly it is 'a territorial group, the members of which meet on common ground within their own area of primary social activitie and for organized and spontaneous social contacts'. While defended neighbourhood emphasises geographic boundaries, the second definition emphasises the social characteristics of neighbourhood, the relationships
between the residents. Parkin(60) and Konig(61) similarly emphasise this, Parkin arguing that neighbourhoods 'revolve around a hard core of fairly frequently interacting tenants' while Konig notes that they are based primarily on informal, unorganized personal relationships. While the bonfire boys' activities expressed neighbourhood solidarity this did not occur in a vacuum on one night each year. If bonfire societies were symbolic representations of neighbourhood and expressions of community feeling then it is necessary to establish that social relationships within each neighbourhood existed throughout the year.

Stacey(62) outlines a number of factors influencing the amount and quality of neighbouring, including house type and layout, age, children, place of origin, length of residence, kin, social class and social status, friendship and associational life. But in the historical context, due to the limitations of documentary sources, the existence of some, particularly those relating to social relationships, cannot easily be shown empirically. However there is considerable evidence arising from the activities of the bonfire societies themselves, that suggests the existence of neighbourhood living in a number of localities in Lewes. The evidence arising from the bonfire societies' activities has been outlined. The factors isolated by Stacey may now be discussed, particularly social class and status, place of origin, length of residence, kin, and associational life.

In Lewes working class streets and neighbourhoods can be identified(63) and it is from these that some members
were drawn. The cohesiveness of traditional working class areas has been commented upon(64) and while such accounts have been criticised for their sentimental idealisation(65), empirical evidence tends, at least in part, to confirm their existence. But, as has already been shown, the bonfire societies drew their membership not only from the working class, but also sections of the lower middle class. However it is probable that as a consequence of regular unstructured social interaction resulting from propinquity(66), fairly cohesive neighbourhoods existed.

Two factors encouraging the formation of informal social relationships are the length of residence in the area and the length of membership to a society. Where long term residency existed, as a consequence of either being born locally or having moved into an area at an early age, it may be assumed that many neighbourhood residents would have been interacting for some time resulting in social networks being well established. Evidence indicates that many bonfire boys,

**Figure 9.3: Place of birth of the bonfire boys**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bonfire Boy Group</th>
<th>Lewes</th>
<th>Sussex</th>
<th>Elsewhere</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Society member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Terr Res)</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Non-Terr Res)</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Res N/K)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporters</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>325</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>644</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Abbreviations:** Terr Res (Territory resident), Non-Terr Res (Non-Territory resident) and Res N/K (Residence not known).
including 'Society Members', 'Others' and 'Supporters', were born in Lewes. Figure 9.3 shows 325 individuals representing 78.1 per cent of the 416 bonfire boys for whom a place of birth is known were born in Lewes. This predominance of Lewes-born bonfire boys is largely accounted for by society members. Of these, 52.0 per cent (N=274) were born in Lewes, 13.8 per cent (N=73) were not, and the place of birth of the remaining 34.2 per cent (N=180) is not known (67). Similar evidence was found among the 'Possible' category, 75.3 per cent (N=128) of those for whom a place of birth is known having been born in Lewes (68). The only group not to conform to this pattern are the 'Supporters', the proportion of those born in Lewes being much smaller. Supporters came from the town's business and professional strata and that many were not born in Lewes probably reflects the geographical mobility usually associated with the middle class.

The 'place of birth' recorded in CEBs rarely gave sufficient information to establish whether individuals were born in the neighbourhoods in which they lived at the time of their society membership, but according to addresses recorded in the baptismal registers 42.3 per cent (N=141) were born in their society's territory, as Figure 9.4 shows. It was found that a much smaller, but no less significant, group of members were resident in their society's territory since childhood. When these 18 individuals are combined with those born in Lewes this enlarged group constitutes nearly half of society members. Although a degree of variation between the main societies exists the extent of correlation between locally born and long term residents with society
neighbourhood substantiates the contention that bonfire societies were ritual manifestations of territoriality. Members identified with their neighbourhood and expressed this through membership of their local bonfire society.

Length of society membership was also likely to contribute to a sense of continuity and belonging. Figure 9.5 shows 68 members, representing 12.9 per cent of

Figure 9.5: Long-term society members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>10-14</th>
<th>15-19</th>
<th>20-24</th>
<th>25+</th>
<th>Totals</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BBS</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSBS</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
all society members, who were active for periods exceeding ten years(69). Included among them are a number of society officers who, as will be discussed later, were central figures in social networks arising from their membership of voluntary associations(70). Their presence among the long-term members indicates their importance as key members, both in the offices they held and as anchorage points(71) within their respective social networks.

It is not enough, however, to define neighbourhoods as geographical entities with residents sharing common social class, place of birth and length of residency. If people were exhibiting a community spirit through their membership of bonfire societies a second dimension that attributes neighbourhood with high density social networks arising from kin, friendship and neighbouring links(72) must be established. It is necessary to show that neighbourhood has a social as well as a geographic meaning. Social networks arising from these relationships, Barnes observes, occur when each person is in touch with a number of other people, some of them being in touch with each other while others are not. 'Similarly each person has a number of friends and these friends have their own friends; some of any one person's friends know each other, others do not'(73). Neighbourhoods thus arise from a web of relationships between the people who live there.

Establishing the existence of social relationships through social network analysis using historical data however presents a number of difficulties. Social networks
have two characteristics, the structural, which maps links between people, and the interactional, which takes account of the content of the relationships. Because the bonfire boys cannot communicate with whom they interacted the structural configurations of networks as set out by Barnes (74) cannot be established. However, as will be shown, family and friendship networks did exist among society members, but due to limited data the 'density' of these networks cannot be fully explored, either in relation to the degree of interconnectedness (75) or the flow of communication (76).

The interactional aspect of network analysis is similarly difficult to establish. While it is possible to show that fairly extensive networks existed among society members the content, directedness, durability, intensity, and frequency (77) of the links can only be deduced from the structural characteristics of these networks. It is not possible to be certain about the meaning or purpose brought to the relationships by those involved (78). Thus, while it is possible to establish structural links between groups of bonfire boys the qualitative character of these relationships remains elusive, if not impossible to determine.

In view of these limitations Mitchell's criticism of social network as defined by Barnes may likewise be directed towards the way in which it is used in the present research. According to Mitchell, Barnes's definition 'evokes an image of the interconnections of social relationships, but does
not specify the properties of these interconnections which could be used to interpret social actions except at the abstract level of "structure" (79). However, while these difficulties remain, network analysis does provide insights not only into the bonfire societies' neighbourhood orientation, but also the bonfire boys as a total group. Neighbourhood is here perceived as a loosely defined geographical entity involving clusters of social relationships, not a bounded system (80). It is acknowledged that while network clusters existed in the neighbourhoods, personal networks also extended outwards beyond neighbourhood to include fellow society members not resident in the society territory and also members of other bonfire societies.

**Family Networks among the Bonfire Boys**

Two sources establish the existence of networks that indicate society members interacted on a regular basis within their society neighbourhoods. Firstly, there is evidence of kin living in the territory of the society to which they belonged and secondly, data recording the bonfire boys' membership of other voluntary associations within the locality establishes the existence of neighbourhood social networks. Further evidence showing extensive membership of other voluntary associations by the bonfire boys indicates the existence of networks that extended beyond society and neighbourhood to embrace fellow bonfire boys in other societies and neighbourhoods. This evidence of extensive membership of other voluntary association suggests social
bonds existed not only within neighbourhoods and between members of the same society, but also among the bonfire boys as a total group.

The importance of family influencing bonfire society membership is clearly indicated in the 1974 Survey, extensive kinship networks existing within each of the societies(81). Press reports suggest that family was also an important factor during the nineteenth century, the celebrations promoting 'a happy reunion between scattered members of Lewes families'(82) when 'young men and women who rarely visit their native place come to their old homes'(83). Historical sources(84) do not provide the same comprehensive data found for the 1974 Survey, but the links that were established are tabulated in Figure 9.6. The 121

Figure 9.6: Family links within each society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Father/son</th>
<th>Brothers</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NI(a) NR(b)</td>
<td>NI NR</td>
<td>NI NR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borough</td>
<td>11 5</td>
<td>13 6</td>
<td>2 1</td>
<td>26 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cliffe</td>
<td>19(c) 7</td>
<td>8 4</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td>27 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Sq</td>
<td>24 10</td>
<td>19 8</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td>43 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Anne's</td>
<td>2 1</td>
<td>2 1</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td>4 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southover</td>
<td>13 6</td>
<td>8 3</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td>21 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>69 29</td>
<td>50 22</td>
<td>2 1</td>
<td>121 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>57.8 55.8</td>
<td>41.3 42.3</td>
<td>1.7 1.9</td>
<td>100.0 100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
(a) NI = Number of individuals
(b) NR = Number of relationships
c. This total includes a father/son/father's brother relationship (i.e. three individuals)
members recorded represent 24.3 per cent of all society members (86). Where family relationships are established nearly all exist within the parameters of close male kin, father, sons and brothers. The majority of these links however consist of only two or three individuals. Of the 52 family groups identified 73.1 per cent (N=38) include two members of the same family, 21.1 per cent (N=11) three, and only 5.8 per cent (N=3) four. The wider family connections found in the 1974 Survey (86) do not appear to have been present in the nineteenth century.

There are two possible contradictory explanations for this. Data in Figure 9.6 may reflect the situation as it actually existed. If so, it indicates a change of membership patterns, the family becoming more important during the contemporary period. Unlike their twentieth century counterparts there is little evidence (87) indicating involvement of the wives or children. Alternatively it can be argued that Figure 9.6 does not record the full extent of family membership due to the absence of women in the KBP and other limitations arising from the sources preventing extensive family reconstitution (88).

Evidence supporting the latter contention can be found among the 'Possible' and 'No Links' KBP categories. Many in these categories share the same surnames with 'Positive' category members and the possibility of more extensive family connections is suggested in Figure 9.7, the 224 named members representing 67.7 per cent of those in the two categories. The 'Number of Individuals' (NI) column includes
those for whom no link has been established between either
them and positively identified bonfire boys (89) or
individuals within the two categories (90), apart for their
surname. The figures in the 'Number of Relationships' (NR)

Figure 9.7: Possible family links among
'Possible' and 'No Links' categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Possible relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borough</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cliffe</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Anne's</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southover</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South St.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterloo</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>224</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

column represent the number of surnames around which
possible family connections cluster, but these do not
necessarily represent actual families (91). Nevertheless, the
fact that many less common surnames occur in single
societies suggests the probability of family relationships
in addition to those already found among the 'Positive'
category (92), but any conclusion from this data can only
remain tentative.

The importance of family influencing membership is
supported by the period of activity of related individuals
tending to coincide (93). The extent of this is indicated in
Figure 9.8. In these cases involvement of one family member
probably encouraged the participation of other close male relatives, but such a conclusion must remain tentative in view of the fact that among the 'Positive' category 75.7 per cent (N=376) had no identified relative involved.

**Figure 9.8: Family links within and between societies and period of activity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>fath/son</th>
<th>brother</th>
<th>other</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Period of activity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same period of activity</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>NI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different period of activity</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanning both periods(a)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

a. Included here are relationships that involve some members active during the same period, but others who were not; e.g. the brothers H.T., W.N. and A. Barnard were all active between 1889 and 1895, but a fourth brother, G.T., was not active until 1901.

b. These totals relate to 52 relationships (NI=121) within societies (see Figure 9.6) and eight new relationships (NI=28) identified as existing between societies (see Figure 9.9).

One further point emphasising the influence of family membership is the apparent loyalty of family members to one society(94). Figure 9.6 indicates that family relationships within societies existed among 24.3 per cent (N=121) of the 'Positive' category while in Figure 9.9 data shows that only in a few instances did these families divide their loyalties between more than one society. Forty-seven individuals were connected through 18 family relationships that divided across societies. Of these, 28 are recorded for the first time, the others already sharing relationships within single
Figure 9.9: Positive family links across societies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fath/son</td>
<td>brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>NR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSBS/BBS</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSBS/CBS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBB/SBS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBS/CBS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS/CBS</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSBS/SBS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4 Socs(a)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes

a. Including 'Duals'

Societies. The newly recorded individuals included in Figure 9.9. are either related to one of the families in Figure 9.6 or formed new family relationships not contained within a single society(95). Thus from a total of 149 positively identified society members(96) with relatives only 18.9 per cent (N=28) had relatives in another society.

Finally, having established family connections within societies family networks may now be related to society territory. Although families are found among only a quarter of the 'Positive' category the majority of these families lived in their society's territory, as Figure 9.10 shows. But while this data suggests that family networks, neighbourhood living and society membership do coincide, because the 90 individual family members represent only 18.1 per cent of the 497 society members no significant correlation can be established.
### Figure 9.10: Family links existing within territory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Family living in society</th>
<th>Family not living in society</th>
<th>Family divided between territory and non-territory</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>NR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borough</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cliffe</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Anne's</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southover</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>90</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:

Included among the family groups in this figure are two where another family member lives outside the society's territory and four where other family members belong to a different society.

---

**Social Networks, Voluntary Associations and Society Members**

Considerable more data contained in press reports indicates an extensive membership of other Lewes voluntary associations by the bonfire boys. Allowing for the difficulty of being able to link according to only surname and first name initial, it is found that 51.7 per cent (N=334) of all the bonfire boys were involved in 65 various voluntary associations (See Appendix 6) during the years 1890 to 1913.

The potential for the existence of extensive networks among the bonfire boys resulting from this is shown in Figure 9.11. Of these 66.8 per cent (N=223) belonged to two or more other associations, the remaining third being members of only one. However, many of these belonged in the
Figure 9.11: Bonfire Boys' membership of voluntary associations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BBS</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSBS</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StABS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supps</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

company of fellow society members. But while the majority of family networks exist within society territory the same is not true of the social networks found among voluntary associations. There were neighbourhood orientated associations, particularly those based on parish churches or local pubs, but many were not, attracting members as a result of the activities they provided. Consequently individual social networks were not confined to neighbourhood, but if the neighbourhood orientation already identified among the bonfire boys is to be related to an analysis of the networks arising from membership of voluntary associations the locally-based clubs and societies may be considered as a separate group.

Assuming that the local orientation manifest through bonfire society membership would similarly result in members frequenting their local parish church or pubs it might be
### Voluntary Association in Society Territory

#### BOROUGH TERRITORY
- Crown Shades S.C. - 1 - 1 - - 2
- Jolly Anglers S.C. - - 1 - 1 2
- Lansdown Arms S.C. - - 1 - - 1
- Rainbow S.C. 2 - 2 - - 4
- Royal Oak S.C. - - 2 - - 2
- St Michael's C.C. 4 2 11 1 1 19
- St Michael's Soc.C. 10 2 26 1 2 41
- Sussex Arms S.C. 1 - - - - 1
- Unicorn S.C. 1 - 1 - 2 4
- Volunteer S.C. 1 - 1 - 2 4

**Totals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>BBS</th>
<th>CBS</th>
<th>CSBS</th>
<th>ABS</th>
<th>SBS</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cliffe Soc.C.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thatched House Q.C.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Totals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>19</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>46</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### COMMERCIAL TERRITORY
- All Saints Mens' Guild 1 - 3 - - 4
- All Saints Soc.C. 2 1 5 - 2 10
- Elephant & Castle S.C. - 1 5 - - 6

**Totals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### ST ANNE'S TERRITORY
- St Anne's Soc.C. 1 3 3 1 3 11
- Windmill Q.C. 1 1 1 - - 3
- Windmill S.C. - 2 - - - 2

**Totals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### SOUTHOVER TERRITORY
- King's Head C.C. - - 1 - 5 6
- King's Head S.C. - 1 1 - 10 12
- King's Head T.C. 1 - - - 4 5
- Priory Arms Ton.C. - - - - - 4
- Priory C.C. - - - - - 1
- Southover Bellringers - - - - 2 2
- Southover Churchmen 1 - - - 8 9
- Southover Court Baron 1 1 4 - 2 8
- Southover C.C. 1 - 1 - 9 11
- Southover Friendly Soc. - 1 2 - - 3
- Southover Star F.C. - 1 1 - 1 3
- Southover Ton.C. - - - - 2 2

**Totals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>48</th>
<th>66</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Abbreviations:** C.C. (Cricket Club), F.C. (Football Club), Q.C. (Quoit Club), S.C. (Slate Club), Soc.C. (Social Club), Ton.C. (Tontine Club).
expected that they would belong to clubs associated with them. But, although the bonfire societies had their headquarters in their neighbourhood pubs (See Appendix 7) and held many of their social events in them(99), a significant number of members did not belong to other neighbourhood associations, as Figure 9.12 shows. Only among Southover members was there a tendency to belong to neighbourhood clubs associated with the church or pubs, the 48 belonging to local clubs representing 64.9 per cent of the total identified Southover membership. From among the total identified memberships of the other societies only 22.7 per cent, 6.4 per cent, 6.3 per cent and 7.7 per cent of Borough, Cliffe, Commercial Square and St Anne's respectively belonged to associations located in their societies' territories. The only association with a significant number of members, the St Michael's Social Club, attracted bonfire boys from all five societies although the majority of them came from Borough and Commercial Square, the town centre societies.

While there is thus little evidence to support the contention that bonfire society members belonged to other neighbourhood associations there is considerable data indicating a correlation between society membership and membership of 'interest' associations(100). As a result a significant number of bonfire boys belonged to extensive social networks involving fellow society members. The 264 members included in Figure 9.13 represent 55.7 per cent of all members from the four large societies. The extent of linkages between these members is indicated by the fact
that, apart for Southover, over 50 per cent of members from the other societies were linked more than ten times to other members within their society. In the case of the Commercial Square Society the network among the members belonging to other voluntary associations was extensive, with only 6.9 per cent (N=9) linked to other members less than ten times.

No statistical analysis of these linkages has been carried out\(^{(101)}\), but a number of society members may be taken to illustrate the extent of some individual personal networks resulting from voluntary associations membership. T.E. Gearing was linked to 93 fellow Commercial Square members through his membership of ten voluntary associations. He was linked to 49 fellow members once, 19 twice, 15 three times, 6 fours times, 3 five times and one seven times. Similarly C.W. Gardner belonged to eight voluntary associations and through these was linked to 90 Commercial Square members. He was linked to 39 once, 24 twice, 14 three times, 7 four times, 4 five times and 1 six times. Other Commercial Square members had similar extensive...
links including E.T. Clare, E.E. Foster, P.W. King, H. Mercer, S.L. Wright, W.J. Tapp and E.L. Tappin, all of whom were individually linked to over 70 other members. Similar multiple linkages were less common among the other societies, this is in some part attributable to the smaller numbers involved, but those who did included W.T. Gearing and T. Buckman of Borough, H. Holman, H.E. Philcox, G. Watford and C.S. Wood from Cliffe, and J.R. Lusted and G. Stroud, both Southover members.

Conversely membership of only one or two voluntary associations did not mean an individual came into contact with less society members. The Borough member, H. Pinyoun, belonged to only the Liberal Association, but through this he was linked to five fellow society members who were also Liberal Association members. Similarly Minshal Baxter belonged to the South Saxon Lodge of Freemasons, but shared this membership with three other society members.

Evidence suggests key groups within each society formed a nucleus of members sustaining fairly regular social interaction. Two examples may be used to illustrate this. Figure 9.14 shows the linkages between 14 Borough members, all of whom were linked to at least 20 fellow members. Besides establishing links between these members the figure also shows the degree of frequency contact was made. Buckman, W.T. Gearing, Lenny and Whiteman, are central figures of the network, being linked to all thirteen other members, in many instances at least three times. They were themselves linked to each other between four and six times,
only Lenny and Whiteman not coming into frequent contact.

Figure 9.14: Links between key Borough members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gearing W.T.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenny G.J.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckman T.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whiteman C.L.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banks W.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gearing F.H.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banks A.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baxter W.D.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad V.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philcox E.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arter H.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gower H.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James A.E.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card E.A.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name(a) G L B W B G B B P A G J C

Note: a. Initial letter of surname in same order as column.

A more extensive network existed among Commercial Square members. Of 130 members belonging to other voluntary associations only 5.4 per cent (N=7) were linked to less than ten fellow society members, and of these only two, L. Doig and S. Underhill, were not linked to anyone. Many were linked to large numbers of fellow members and in the case of those in Figure 9.15, to at least 70. The existence of such a group is itself significant, indicating the extent of linkages that existed within the Commercial Square Society, in some instances members being linked as many as six or seven times to fellow members. Only two pairs of possible links were not made, those between Tapp and Foster, and Taylor and King. Unlike among Borough members no cluster emerged to form a core group. Rather, as Figure 9.15 shows,
Figure 9.15: Links between 20 Commercial Square members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wright S.L.</td>
<td>X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardner C.W.</td>
<td>6 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gearing T.E.</td>
<td>7 4 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardwick J.R.</td>
<td>7 5 5 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wells H.H.</td>
<td>5 3 5 3 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercer H.</td>
<td>4 5 4 5 3 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King P.W.</td>
<td>4 5 3 3 2 5 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philcox S.J.</td>
<td>5 5 4 3 3 2 3 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor F.</td>
<td>5 4 5 3 3 2 5 X 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parker G.E.</td>
<td>3 4 3 2 4 1 3 4 4 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster E.E.</td>
<td>6 3 4 2 5 3 3 2 3 3 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uridge A.J.R.</td>
<td>3 3 4 2 4 2 3 2 2 4 3 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higham T.</td>
<td>5 3 4 3 2 2 3 2 3 2 3 1 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clare E.T.</td>
<td>3 4 3 4 3 4 2 3 1 1 2 2 2 2 1 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panton J.</td>
<td>3 3 2 2 2 2 2 3 3 4 2 2 2 2 1 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tapp W.J.</td>
<td>2 3 3 3 1 2 3 2 3 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 X 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stevenson S.J.</td>
<td>2 2 3 2 5 2 2 1 1 4 3 3 1 2 1 1 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diplock A.L.</td>
<td>2 2 3 3 3 3 1 2 2 2 2 1 1 3 2 2 2 1 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tappin E.L.</td>
<td>2 4 1 2 1 2 3 1 1 1 1 1 3 2 2 2 1 1 X 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnard A.</td>
<td>1 3 2 3 1 2 3 1 1 1 1 1 2 1 1 2 2 1 1 2 X 19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name(a) W G G H W M K P T P F U H C F T S D T B

Note: a. Initial letter of surname in same order as column.

Links are spread evenly among the group. Multiple links existed between some individuals, but while others were not involved in such close-knit networks, multiple links between them and other members exist. For example, Stevenson is linked five times to Wells and four times to Parker.

Many of these multiple linkages occur when groups of society members belonged to particular voluntary associations. Membership was spread over a large number of voluntary associations and as Figure 9.16 indicates, between one and five society members belonged to each. But significantly more belonged to some. 13 Borough members belonging to the Rifle Volunteers while the Lewes Cycle Club include 38 Commercial Square members.
Figure 9.16: Numbers of members belonging to each voluntary association

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Number of members</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-5  6-10 11-15 15+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBS</td>
<td>30   13  1   44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>35   2    37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSBS</td>
<td>30   4    11     7  52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StABS</td>
<td>11   11    11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>34   3    37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>140  22  12     7  181</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9.17: Borough members, Rifle Volunteers and other Voluntary Associations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voluntary Association(a)</th>
<th>A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I  J  K  L  M  N  O</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arter H.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barber R.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad V.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckman T.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cox J.G.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downey C.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downey G.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gearing F.H.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gearing W.T.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gower H.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenny G.J.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whiteman C.L.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witcher W.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13  5  4  4  4  3  3  3  3  3  3  2  2  2  2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:
Figure 9.18: The interconnectedness of
the Rifle Volunteer’s network

Name

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gearing W.T.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenny G.J.</td>
<td>6 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckman T.</td>
<td>5 5 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whiteman C.L.</td>
<td>4 4 4 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gearing F.H.</td>
<td>3 1 5 2 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad V.</td>
<td>2 3 2 1 1 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arter H.</td>
<td>2 2 1 1 1 1 2 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cox J.G.</td>
<td>2 1 2 1 1 1 2 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downey C.</td>
<td>3 2 1 2 1 1 1 1 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barber R.</td>
<td>2 2 2 2 1 1 1 1 1 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gower H.</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 2 1 2 2 1 1 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witcher W.</td>
<td>1 1 1 2 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downey G.</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name(a) G L B W G B A C D B G W D

Note:
a. Initial letter of surname in same order as column.

The extent of networks arising from voluntary associations membership can be illustrated with reference to these two associations. Figure 9.17 shows the 13 members of the Rifle Volunteers belonging to a further 14 voluntary associations where fellow volunteer were also members. This analysis is extended in Figure 9.18 by linking the individuals involved to show that Buckman, Whiteman, F.H. and W.T. Gearing formed a cluster within the network that embraced both the bonfire society and the Rifle Volunteers.

A similar cluster can be identified among the 38 Commercial Square members who belonged to Lewes Cycling Club. Figure 9.19 shows that the 38 members of the Cycle Club belonged to a further 23 voluntary associations to which fellow society members belonged. Only four were just cycle club members. Large numbers, 15 and 13 respectively,
### Figure 9.19: Commercial Square members, Lewes Cycling Club and other Voluntary Associations

| Voluntary Association | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | No |
| Hardwick J.R.         | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 9 |
| Battersby W.          | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 7 |
| Langridge H.          | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 7 |
| Gearing T.E.          | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 7 |
| Gardner C.W.          | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 7 |
| Wells H.H.            | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 7 |
| Tapp W.J.             | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 7 |
| Clare E.T.            | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 6 |
| Mercer H.             | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 6 |
| Diplock A.L.          | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 5 |
| King P.W.             | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 5 |
| Tappin A.K.           | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 5 |
| Stevenson S.J.        | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 5 |
| Uridge A.J.R.         | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 5 |
| Wingham D.            | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 4 |
| Staden G.W.           | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 4 |
| Flint E.              | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 4 |
| Bailey A.             | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 4 |
| Barnard A.            | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 4 |
| Beck W.J.             | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 4 |
| Hall E.T.             | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 4 |
| Tappin E.L.           | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 4 |
| Tunks J.J.            | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 4 |
| Adams E.G.            | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 3 |
| King B.               | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 3 |
| Stevenson H.R.        | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 3 |
| Suter A.J.            | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 3 |
| Bonner J.             | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 3 |
| Cole W.T.             | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 2 |
| Dunning J.M.          | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 2 |
| Foster G.F.           | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 2 |
| Likeman G.            | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 2 |
| Watford F.            | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 2 |
| Young W.J.            | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 2 |
| Stevenson E.J.        | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 |
| Jenner C.             | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 |
| Coppard T.            | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 |
| Wheeler G.            | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 |

Totals 38 13 8 7 7 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 4 4 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 15

Abbreviations:
also belonged to the Lewes Rowing Club and Ancient Order of Buffaloes. Among the membership of these four associations a close-knit network involving eight society members who belonged to them all existed, but as the figure illustrates, this network was not restricted to members of these associations or exclusively to the eight members. There is a significant overlap of membership between other associations including the Foresters, Druids and Rifle Volunteers.

Figure 9.20 focuses the analysis on the Cycle Club members independent of other voluntary associations and shows a close knit network embracing a fairly large group of

**Figure 9.20: The interconnectedness of the Cycle Club network**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Number of links between individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hardwick J.R.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardner C.W.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gearing T.E.</td>
<td>5 3 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercer W.H.</td>
<td>4 4 3 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wells H.H.</td>
<td>3 3 4 3 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clare E.T.</td>
<td>4 3 4 3 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langridge M.</td>
<td>3 3 4 3 3 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battersby B.</td>
<td>6 3 3 2 2 3 4 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uridge A.J.R.</td>
<td>2 3 3 3 4 2 2 2 2 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wingham D.</td>
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</table>


Note: Initial letter of surname is in same order as full name in column.

Page 439
members. Many of the first 15 members in the figure are linked to each other three or more times, in the case of Battersby and Hardwick as many as six links exist between them. The interconnectedness between them and the remainder of the group diminishes slowly down the figure, the majority being either linked through their membership of the Cycle Club and/or a second association.

These networks, and others that probably existed among the other societies, would have performed an integrative function in a similar way that neighbourhood relationships did. Members of family networks and those society members sharing common membership of other voluntary associations are likely to have come into frequent contact, thus sustaining relationships throughout the year and not just during the short period of bonfire activity around the 5th November.

So far voluntary association membership in relation to individual societies has been discussed. However many voluntary associations were not the exclusive domain of members of one bonfire society. Most of the 65 voluntary associations included among their membership bonfire boys from different societies including some, as Figure 9.21 records, with over 50, many coming from the three large societies, Borough, Cliffe and Commercial Square. The large numbers involved indicate that many members of the different bonfire societies were in contact with each other through their common membership of voluntary associations. Among those who were members of the five shown in
Figure 9.21: Five voluntary associations with over 50 bonfire boys among their membership

<table>
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<th>Association</th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Totals</th>
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<td>CBS</td>
<td>CSBS</td>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Dual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rifle Volunteers</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>St Michael's Social Club</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9.21: An extensive network involving members from all the societies existed, as Figure 9.22 indicates. The totals shown record the number of members belonging to each association, but many individuals were members of more than one association (103) thus coming into contact with more people and often on more occasions than if he belonged to only one. As a consequence, not only do the figures record the extent of linkages among the bonfire boys as a total group, but also the probable frequency of contact.

Figure 9.22: Network of bonfire boys belonging to five voluntary associations

Voluntary association

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bonfire boys</th>
<th>X</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>54 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewes Rowing Club</td>
<td>56 12 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative Association</td>
<td>59 11 18 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewes Cycling Club</td>
<td>85 13 31 21 X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rifle Volunteers</td>
<td>55 8 17 10 14 X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Voluntary association (a) B M R Co Cy V

Note:

a. Names of voluntary association in same order as in column.
This leads onto the qualitative dimension of social networks. If frequency of contact is high then the relationships between those involved are likely to be well-established and as a consequence they become a cohesive group identifying with each other through their common interest in the celebrations. Through networks that extend beyond the neighbourhood orientation of families and individual societies, members become involved in a wider fraternity of bonfire boys, identifying with each other as a total group. That the bonfire boys perceived themselves as a group that went beyond their individual societies was exhibited through a spirit of friendship and co-operation that was present between the societies on specific occasions, and the manifest solidarity at times when their celebrations were threatened by opposition. Both, it may be argued, were sustained and strengthened by the social networks present among the bonfire boys both within and between the societies.

This sense of common identity and mutual interdependence was manifest in a number of ways, some of which have already been referred to when discussing co-operation surrounding support for each others processions and annual dinners, and the organisation of the town's commemoration festivities. Two further aspects of co-operation may be considered here; first, mutual support for individual members and, second, the forming of coalitions between the societies to protect their common interests.

On various occasions financial aid was organised to
assist individual members. In 1906 and 1911 funds were set up to meet the expense of lawyers employed to defend bonfire boys arrested during the celebrations (104). During the 1909 celebrations Tom Gearing, a Commercial Square torchman, died as a result of being badly burnt while 'running' torches (105). A subscription list was set up to help his wife and children, and by March, 1910 £183.3s.10d. had been contributed including over £6 raised at a Cliffe Society concert the previous December (106). In 1913 the Cliffe held a 'smoker' to raise money for a member who had broken his leg (107).

But more importantly for the societies was their ability to mount joint action when opposition threatened their celebrations. This was particularly in evidence between 1904 and 1906 when they had to defend their celebrations following the Dusart's fire. The societies' speedy response and the co-operative spirit in which their concerted action was mounted may largely be attributable to the pre-existing web of social networks. While the bonfire societies are corporate bodies Boissevain's contention that network analysis is, as a consequence, inapplicable (108) ignores the important influence of members' ego-centred networks and influential 'cliques'. Boissevain defines a 'clique' as a 'coalition whose members associate regularly with each other on the basis of affection and common interest and possesses a marked sense of common identity' (109). These existed among the societies and included core groups of activists with individual networks that included members of other bonfire societies.
### Voluntary associations and leading members, 1904-1906

<table>
<thead>
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</thead>
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<td>Gearing W.T. (B)</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillman J. (S)</td>
<td>X X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tappin E.L. (CS)</td>
<td>X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King P.W. (CS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fenton J. (CS)</td>
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<td>Baker G.T. (B)</td>
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<td>Briggs J.W. (C)</td>
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<td>Peel G.W. (S)</td>
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<td>Kemp C.W. (C)</td>
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<td>Muzzell, T. (S)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glandfield J.T. (S)</td>
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**Abbreviations:**
- **Voluntary Associations:**
  - F. Foresters, V. Victoria Cycle Club,
  - L. Lewes Cycle Club, C. Conservative Association, R. Rowing Club,
  - D. Antedeluvian Order of Druids,
  - S. Ancient Order of Shepherds, I. Rifle Volunteers, A. Artillery Volunteers,
  - B. Ancient Order of Buffalo, O. Loyal Orange Lodge.
- **Bonfire Societies:**
  - B. Borough, C. Cliffe, CS. Commercial Square, Southover(S).

The precise manner in which this occurred and the individuals involved is difficult to ascertain, but as Figures 9.23 and 9.24 show, 18 leading members from the four societies were linked in a multiplex network resulting from their membership of eleven voluntary associations. It was an alliance between such networks that aided the formation of a coalition of bonfire societies in 1904, interaction between...
Figure 9.24: Connectivity among leading members, 1904-1906

Names

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<th>T</th>
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Abbreviations
Top row: Initial of surname appears in same order as left hand column.
No. column indicates the number of other members to whom the individual is linked.
Bonfire societies as in Figure 9.23.

their members bridging the separate identities of the societies. However, in the context of the present discussion it is necessary to note that during this period of mobilization the two levels of networks described, those within and those between the societies, came into play.

Craven and Wellman(110) comment on how neighbourhood networks may utilize their wider networks, calling on like-minded people in other neighbourhoods to enter into an alliance to achieve a common objective. In this way networks embracing both neighbourhood and voluntary association members were of considerable importance in providing the
solidarity among the bonfire boys necessary to counter opposition.

To summarize, through their formation, recruitment and celebrations the bonfire societies manifest a neighbourhood orientation which suggests a feeling of community identity among the membership. The existence of family networks within society neighbourhoods tends to substantiate this contention. However the presence of social networks that, while existing among members of the same society, also include many members from other societies helps to explain expressions of group solidarity among the bonfire boys as a total group. As a consequence two inter-related dimensions of social solidarity draw the members of the bonfire societies together, one based on propinquity, the other on shared interests.

Notes

1. TURNER and KILLIAN (1972), pp.142-147.
5. See HILLERY, G.A. (1955) 'Definitions of Community: Areas of Agreement', Rural Sociology, vol.20, (1955), cited by BELL and NEWBY (1971), pp.27-29. Hillery, in a survey of community studies, found no less than 94 different definitions and although Bell and Newby attempt to rationalize this situation by extracting 16 characteristics that many of these definitions have in common, a lack of preciseness remains.
8. See BERNARD (1973), pp.91-96;
10. Probably one of the best articulated defences of the continued usefulness of 'community' in the study of large scale, complex society is that put forward by Warren. He distinguishes between two dimensions of community at a local level, the influence of 'vertical' relationships between the community and wider society and the 'horizontal' orientations existing within the community. See WARREN, R.L. (1978), *The Community in America*, Chicago: Rand McNally, (Third edition).
11. BERNARD (1973), pp.93-96. Referring to the rural/urban continuum Bernard notes that rural villages do not necessarily exhibit gemeinschaft characteristics, nor are urban areas automatically typified by gesellschaft.
15. TURNER (1957).
23. For a detailed discussion of social network analysis see BOISSEVAIN, J. and MITCHELL, J.C. (eds.), (1973),


30. The precise year of the formation of the societies is a little unclear. Although today it is generally accepted by Cliffe and Borough that they were formed in 1853, contemporary press reports suggest they may have been in existence in either 1851 or 1852.

31. The exact year of the Society's formation is unclear. The first reference to celebrations being held in Commercial Square appeared in 1856 when the Express reported 'demonstrations' and a firework display mounted by Mr Beeching (S.A.E., 8.11.56). However, some years later, in an article 'A Bonfire Boy's Reminiscences' (S.A.E., 5.11.1908) Tom Jenner is attributed with conceiving 'the idea of enlivening another part of the town' by forming the Commercial Square Bonfire Society in 1855.

32. This identification of bonfire societies with localities has been retained into recent years. During the 1950's two societies based on council housing estates were formed, the Landport Bonfire Society and the Nevill Juvenile Bonfire Society.


34. S.A.E., 8.11.59.

35. S.A.E., 8.11.70.

36. S.A.E., 9.11.72.

37. S.A.E., 9.11.78.

38. E.S.N., 11.11.92.

39. Interview with W.R. Allen, 1976. Mr Allen was born in February 1900 and has lived in Lewes all his life.

40. Two sources provide details of processional routes, society programmes and the press. These sources enable routes, including significant extensions and alterations, of the six main societies existing between 1853 and 1913 to be mapped.

41. During the period of amalgamation with Commercial Square the two societies covered the processional routes previously marched through independently by the
separate societies.

42. Cliffe, along with a second suburb, Southover, did not come under the jurisdiction of the town authorities until the Incorporation of Lewes in 1881. Prior to this Cliffe and Southover had separate Court Leets and Improvement Commissioners.

43. S.A.E., 8.11.79.
44. S.A.E., 8.11.84.
45. S.A.E., 7.11.57 and 8.11.58.
46. The 1871 programme of the 'Rising Generation of Borough Bonfire Boys' is held at Lewes Area Library.
48. In the case of guest speakers at annual society dinners the press noted that they were speaking on behalf of another society.
49. Where larger numbers exist, as for the four established societies, the conclusions are better substantiated.

50. S.A.E., 7.11.71.
51. S.A.E., 6.11.97.
52. S.A.E., 5.11.95.
53. S.A.E., 8.11.84.
54. S.A.E., 8.11.70.
55. S.A.E., 9.11.86.
57. SUITLES (1972).
58. SUITLES (1972), p.171.
59. MANN (1965), pp.150-151.
60. PARKIN (1969), pp.61-68.
61. KONIG (1968), pp.54-55.
63. No rigorous analysis of working-class housing has been undertaken for this study. Statements that such streets and neighbourhoods existed are based on the occupations of those living there as recorded in the CEBs and a first hand knowledge of the type of housing, much of which survives today.

66. Stacey (1960, p.102.) emphasises the importance of propinquity for the establishment of social relationships when she states that 'close proximity may make coincidental contact hard to avoid and is likely to lead, what ever persons may wish, to levels of interaction which can more easily be avoided in less dense developments.

67. In view of the marked difference between those born and not born in Lewes it seems likely that included among the large group of 'not knowns' are many who were born in Lewes. As a consequence the proportion of bonfire boys born in Lewes is likely to be over 50 per cent.

68. There are 336 duplicates for the 130 individuals in the 'Possible' category. Of these 38.1 per cent (N=128) were born in Lewes, 9.5 per cent (N=32) were born in

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Sussex, 3.0 per cent were born elsewhere and the place of birth of the remaining 49.9 per cent (N=166) is not known.

69. Length of activity was determined by using the first and last recorded references to an individual's society activity. If referred to only once it may be assumed he was active for only a short period.

70. These included F.H. Gearing (active for 14 years between 1898-1912, Borough Commander-in-Chief), W.T. Gearing (active for 41 years between 1872-1912, Borough 'Bishop'), H.E. Philcox (active for 23 years between 1875-1898, Cliffe Commander-in-Chief), T.E. Gearing (active for 26 years between 1887-1913, Commercial Square Treasurer), E.L. Tappin (active for 20 years between 1889-1909, Commercial Square Secretary) and J.R. Lusted (active for 15 years between 1890-1905, Southover dinner vice-chairman). All were resident in their society's territory.

71. While agreement exists on 'ego' as the 'anchorage point' for a social network it is disputed whether a group can be used in the same way, Barnes (1954) and Bott (1957) contending that the group or marriage partners can be the anchorage point. Nobel (1973) and Kapferer (1973) are both critical of this position. In the present research both the individual member and the bonfire society have been used in the mapping of social networks. The societies, although constituting a corporate group, have members who through their wider networks become an informal group, their membership of the bonfire society forming a cluster of relationships within a wider personal network. See BARNES (1954); BOTT (1957); KAPFERER, B. (1973), 'Social networks and conjugal role in urban Zambia: Towards a reformulation of the Bott hypothesis' in BOISSEVAIN and MITCHELL (1973), pp.83-110; NOBLE, M. (1973), 'Social Network: Its Use as a Conceptual Framework in Family Analysis' in BOISSEVAIN and MITCHELL (1973), pp.3-14.

72. See BOTT (1957), Chapter 4; KLEIN (1965), pp.128-130; TROUWBORST, A. (1973), 'Two Types of Partial Networks in Burundi' in BOISSEVAIN and MITCHELL (1973), pp.111-123.

73. BARNES (1954), p.43.


76. The density of networks was refined by Boissevain (1974) to include the 'potential' and 'actual' flow of communication.

77. For discussion relating to the interactional aspects of networks see, KATZ, F.E. (1966), 'Social Participation and Social Structure', Social Forces, vol.VLX, 1966, pp.199-210; MITCHELL (1969) and (1973); BOISSEVAIN,
A number of network theorists have indicated the 'exchange' content of links between individuals within a network. Blau defines exchange as 'voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the return they are expected to bring and typically do in fact bring from others'. See BLAU, P. (1964), Exchange and Power in Social Life, New York: Wiley, p.9, cited by KAPFERER (1973).


See Chapter 1.

S.A.E., 8.11.90.

S.A.E., 5.11.95.

The main nominal record used to establish family connections between the positively identified bonfire society members for this period were CEBs, parish and non-parochial registers.

Family connections exist between 19 'Dual' and 'Other' individuals. Included among these are four family groups where no evidence exists linking them with a particular society. Two are father/son relationships, James and Gerard Lloyd, who supplied fireworks to the bonfire societies, and Richard and Charles Sales who were involved in the 1870 disturbances that accompanied the opening of the Roman Catholic Chapel in Lewes. The Thorpe family comprising of father, mother, son and daughter in law appeared as accused and defence witnesses in an assault case in 1859 and Bertie and William Roser were brothers involved in a firework charge in 1911.

In the 1974 Survey, in addition to the membership of the nuclear family, extended family connections within and between generations also existed. One hundred and twenty (62.5%) adult members recorded that other relatives who were society members included their parent(s), brother(s), and sister(s) and their children, and aunt(s) and uncle(s). One or both grandparents of a further 65 (36.1%) of those who responded had also been members, but 31 (48.0%) had belonged to a different society than the respondent.

Bob Allen, describing his family's involvement in about 1905 comments, 'My mum and dad were always in the bonfire in Commercial Square. My Uncle Dick was dishing out torches... my dad always took a box... My mother used to dress up. Her and her mother... and they used to dress me up as Little Boy Blue... The family used to get together.'

Following the 1881 census, directories and registers of electors are the only sources of lists of inhabitants, but neither record information relating to family relationships.
89. A.D. Cox and J.G. Cox were positively identified brothers and members of the Borough Society. A third Cox, James, was also a Borough member, but apart from the surname there is no other data linking him to the brothers.

90. For example two individuals in the 'Possible' category, F.W. and W. Appleby were Borough members, but no data exists linking them in a family relationship.

91. The uncertainties involved in the analysis of family relationships among the 'Possible' and 'No Links' categories may be illustrated by the surname Baker. Eleven individuals with the surname Baker are referred to in the initial source, including two women. These are as follows: A. (CSBS 1896, BBS 1909), E. (SBS) 1892-1901, Miss E. (CSBS 1912-13), E.C. (BBS 1896), E.T. (CSBS 1896), F. (CBS 1913), G.T. (BBS 1891-1913), H. (BBS 1898-99 and 1909), Jack (? 1909), Miss S. (CSBS 1912), and W. (CSBS 1897-98, SBS 1899, CBS 1900, CSBS 1902 and BBS 1902-9). From these references it would seem that there was a close connection between the Baker families and the Borough and Commercial Square. However due to the frequency of the surname it is not possible to determine how many were actually related, if at all. Only two, E.C. and G.T. have been positively identified. No links have been found for four, E.T., Jack and Misses E. and S. Numerous duplicates in the 'Possible' category exist for the remaining five, A., E., F., H., and W. In the case of W., a W. Baker was referred to as being active at various times in four different societies suggesting the existence of more than one W. Baker.

92. For example, J. and C. Griffie were both Borough Society members active at the same time, and although no positive link has been found to establish a family link, one does seem likely.

93. Although periods of activity have been defined it should be noted that the nature of the initial source may hide the fact that many of those apparently active at different times were in reality active together.

94. A similar trend was found in the 1974 Survey where 82.8 per cent (N=135) of the respondents had relatives who were members of the same society.

95. Eleven family relationships were extended beyond a single society: e.g. W.T. and F.H. Gearing were a father/son relationship belonging to the Borough Society. A third brother, T.E., belonged to Commercial Square. A further eight new relationships were established between relatives who were members of different societies: e.g. J.B. Thorpe belonged to Borough while his brother, B. Thorpe, was a Cliffe member.

96. 121 members had relatives within single societies and 28 had relatives in more than one society.

97. Like the reporting of bonfire society activities, the press during the 1890's and 1900's gave detailed accounts of the activities of a wide variety of voluntary associations in the town. Included within these reports are long lists of the names of those...
participating. This data was supplemented by names and addresses of officers of a small number of these voluntary associations which are recorded in local trade directories.

98. The percentage of members from each society who belonged to voluntary associations varied. Totals for each group are as follows: BBS 54.1% (N=53), CBS 42.6% (N=40), CSBS 62.0% (N=130), StABS 58.8% (N=7), SBS 55.4% (N=41), Duals 73.3% (N=22), Others 22.8% (N=18) and Supporters 55.3% (N=23).

99. On the 'Fifth' the society's headquarters was the focal point of activities, processions frequently commencing from outside the pub. Pubs also provided the venue for social occasions, annual dinners, committee meetings and other gatherings.

100. It must be noted that bias may exist arising from the source of data and the conflation of time span covered by the records. Due to difficulty of establishing the exact period of activity of each member and consequently that individuals did actually come into contact with other members, the time dimension has not been taken into account when identifying the existence of social networks among the bonfire boys.

101. The potential for social network analysis of this data is indicated in Appendix 8.


103. For example T.E. Gearing of Commercial Square belonged to the Rifle Volunteers, the Cycle Club and the Rowing Club.

104. S.A.E., 24.11.1906, 9.2.1907 and 24.11.1911.

105. A torch 'runner' is a society member whose task it is to supply the processionists with torches, often when the procession is on the move. This can be hazardous due to the torches being soaked in paraffin.


107. S.A.E., 14.11.1913.


CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION: CLASS OR COMMUNITY?

The Interdisciplinary Approach

At the commencement of this thesis the view was expressed that there were positive advantages to be gained from the adoption of an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the Lewes Guy Fawkes Night Celebrations, specifically the social analysis of historical data, both quantitative and qualitative, using the dramaturgical approach developed by the anthropologists Turner and Frankenberg. In this way, it has been argued, the artificial divide between structure and process can be bridged by taking into account, as far as possible using historical data, the active part played by individuals in the creation of their own social world. Such an approach provides different perspectives from which to view the subject being studied. Both historians and social scientists have studied various aspects of popular disturbances and customs(1) and as a consequence a body of knowledge, relevant theory and useful conceptualisations were also available to be utilised in the present research.

The adoption of this research strategy made the analysis of four interrelated topics possible. Firstly, taking the Lewes celebration as a recurrent ceremonial drama, and by tracing its development from a public
disturbance to a ritualised carnival it has been possible to analyse the process of gradual, almost imperceptible social change within a small market town over a period of more than a hundred years. Secondly, by focusing on particular incidents when the celebration was provoking considerable controversy, the use of social drama provides a framework not only to trace the processual form of the conflict, but also to expose the underlying tensions that stimulated that change, the motives and ideological perspectives of the various factions involved, and the dynamics of interaction between the competing factions within the town. Then, using the qualitative and quantitative data gathered from a luminous primary and printed sources available for the nineteenth century, it has been possible, thirdly to examine critically the notion of social class both as an analytical concept and as sociological reality; and finally, to consider the evidence of social solidarity at the level of community, neighbourhood and social network as manifest through the activities of the bonfire boys.

The Celebrations Reflecting Gradual Change

Change, as reflected in the celebrations, can be analysed on two levels. Firstly at the manifest level, where change can be observed through the outward activities of the bonfire boys and the form their celebrations were taking. How the celebrations reflected the wider social change occurring in society can also be considered at this level. Secondly at an underlying level, by focusing on times of open conflict through the social drama approach,
the sources of tension that stimulate change can be observed. These are not divorced levels, but are inextricably interwoven in the same continuous process. On the majority of occasions the celebrations passed off without incident, change only becoming detectable when events are compared over a long period of time. Significant changes, however, are observed at times of open conflict between the bonfire boys and their opponents. The origins of such incidents may be manifest through evidence of simmering hostility prior to the event, and its consequences may be detected for a number of years afterwards.

Taking the celebrations first, the immediate impact of its re-enactment each 5th November is its unchanging form. Apart for the major transformation resulting from concerted opposition during the middle of the century the celebrations remained largely the same from year to year. During the period of 'riots' prior to 1847 certain activities, including street fires, the dragging of tar barrels and the use of fireworks, had become integral ritual elements of the celebrations. But even though the bonfire boys were compelled to make major changes to their celebrations during the late 1840's and early 1850's, these elements were retained and developed following the formation of the bonfire societies. Once transformed the 'organised' celebrations took on an even more regular form, the only minor changes each year being the content of the 'Bishop's' speeches and the topics of the firework displays. Even following the prohibition of street fires in 1906 the bonfire boys attempted, within the changed circumstances, to
maintain the traditional form of their celebrations.

The very gradual change in the celebrations reflects the gradual economic and social changes occurring in the town, which in turn helps to account for the celebration's survival. The policy of non-intervention followed by the Lewes authorities during the 1840's can be interpreted as a sign of weakness or of tacit approval. The latter explanation rests on the assumption that paternalism, so often said to typify social relationships in eighteenth century society, lingered on into the next century in the slowly developing market town of Lewes. But relationships are not timeless. Changes in the mode of production and the increasing pace of urbanism were influencing the social relationships between rich and poor and, although Lewes was not experiencing major industrial or urban development, the change in attitudes and labour relationships associated with these trends were, to a greater or lesser extent, being expressed in the town. During the eighteenth century the advantage of a reciprocity of relations may have helped sustain the celebrations, but increasing opposition during the early part of the nineteenth century exhibited a less tolerant attitude towards the celebrations. Growing numbers among the middle class no longer saw the need to patronise the poor and having the means at their disposal to enforce their will, a growing police force, pursued the suppression of the celebrations. The assault on Blackman disturbed the previous balance and provided the critics with an opportunity to move against the celebrations.
The failure to suppress the celebrations at this time can be attributed to the lack of influence those espousing the 'puritan' ideology had in the town. While they were able to mount an effective opposition at a time when feelings were aroused, they were not able to sustain it. Their weakness, and the ultimate strength of their opponents can in turn be explained with reference to the slow pace of economic and urban development of the town. Lewes continued as a small market centre serving its rural hinterland throughout the remainder of the century, and it was not until the advent of the motor car and the resurfacing of the town's main streets, together with the disastrous fire, that opinion was such to enable a second concerted attempt to have the celebrations suppressed. But again this was prevented by the tenacity of the bonfire boys who, along with considerable support from leading inhabitants, were able to persuade the authorities that only the offending street fires required suppressing.

The bonfire boys' cause was no doubt strengthened by the 'respectable' image they had cultivated over the previous fifty years. From having been labelled the 'mob', the formation of the bonfire societies, the organisation of the celebrations into a more acceptable form, and the open recruitment of many leading men of the town enabled the bonfire boys to take on an air of respectability. Their annual dinners bear witness to this new found social image, with guest speakers, including the Mayor or town councillors, proposing a whole series of loyal and patriotic toasts. Similarly their involvement in the town's organising
committees for royal and civic occasions enhanced their acceptability and promoted good relations with potential supporters. While it can be argued that this was an image consciously developed as a defence against their opponents, it is nevertheless far removed from the public image they enjoyed during the early part of the century.

Their success can also be accounted for by the web of social networks that not only brought the bonfire boys from the different societies into contact with each other, but also into social contact with other inhabitants of the town who were non members. Through these extended networks, often including influential men in the town, the bonfire boys were fully integrated into the social fabric of Lewes. They were not 'strangers', but were men who were known to other residents, in many instances respected by their fellow inhabitants, and as a consequence their activities, rather than being considered alien to the town, were by many considered an integral part of the town's calendar.

Social Drama: Tension and Diversity

The bonfire boys' success in defending their celebrations leads on to the consideration of the second level of analysis made possible by the use of the dramaturgical approach. Social drama exposes the tensions present in a society which might otherwise go undetected, identifies the people involved, what motivates them to act the way they do, and enables the process to be traced through interaction between competing groups. As Tilly
similarly observes, periods of conflict are fruitful areas of study because they expose a 'continuous interplay among contenders and authorities (which) provides an exceptional opportunity to watch processes of repression, facilitation, coalition, co-option, and mediation at work(2). This process has been fully explored in the account of the social drama provoked by the Blackman assault, but certain issues may be elaborated a little more here.

Social drama exposes divisions that do not come to the surface during day to-day life. Through the celebrations religious, political and social divisions that were the sources of tension in the town become observable. The conflict between Catholics and Anglicans, and between Anglicans and Tractarians is given full expression through the anti Catholic pronouncements of the bonfire boys and their Pope-burning ritual. Less obvious is the antagonism existing between Anglicans and nonconformists, this surfacing only at the time of social drama. On both occasions described, leading opponents of the celebrations were nonconformists who expressed opinions on morality and temperance associated with their strict observance in religious matters. Those who resisted them, including leading supporters of the celebrations, were mostly Anglican. The absence of nonconformists among the membership of the bonfire societies confirms their rejection of many of the activities of the bonfire boys, the focus on pub life and drinking being a particular anathema to them.

Elections, political meetings and demonstrations are
the usual times when political divisions are manifest, but the bonfire boys' support for Conservative causes, particularly Imperialism, and their open hostility towards Socialism reflects political tension in the town. Again it is the social drama that brings the combativity of that tension into focus, but unlike religion, the division appears not to have been so intensely felt. The leading inhabitants openly supporting the celebrations were all Conservatives, but while opponents of the celebrations tended to be Liberals, not all of them were. Similarly, while the majority of bonfire boys for whom political allegiance is known, were Conservatives, some were Liberals. This tends to indicate that the celebrations, while remaining a religious demonstration, had, by the end of the century ceased to be identified as a political demonstration by some bonfire society members. While overt expressions of popular Conservatism continued to be expressed in the 'Bishops' speeches the presence of Liberals among the membership reflects a declining importance placed upon this aspect, the content of the speeches not necessarily reflecting the sentiments of all the members.

The diversity of membership, being drawn from all sections of the social classes in Lewes, indicates clearly that the celebrations were never a class-orientated activity. However, as a direct result of this diversity both social division and social cohesion within the town can be detected. During the pre-1847 'riots' the houses of the rich were attacked and inhabitants acting as special constables assaulted regardless of their political or religious
convictions. These actions, perpetrated by the poorer element among the bonfire boys and carried out in a spirit of defiance and anti-authoritarianism, reflect a 'them and us' attitude between rich and poor. This was not motivated by revolutionary convictions, but by what has been described as a 'rebellious' character(3), to defend things they already had rather than to attain things they had not got. The prevailing tone of working class culture, according to Stedman Jones(4) 'was not one of political combativity, but of an enclosed and defensive conservatism', this being borne out in the present research. Social cleavage did not only exist between rich and poor. Division within the middle class is also exposed by the absence of a cohesive opposition to the celebrations by the members of that class. Those giving support, or becoming members of the bonfire societies, as has been shown, held a very different 'world view' of society than their fellow middle class inhabitants who opposed the celebrations.

Conversely, the presence of both members of the working and middle class among the bonfire boys indicates a process of social cohesion within the town rather than a developing cleavage along class lines. But people were drawn to the celebrations for different reasons, as was discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, and the presence of a diverse social membership can be interpreted in class terms. It has been argued that during the pre-1847 period there are indications that the bonfire boys were being manipulated by a political group among the middle class. But it has also been contended that the working class activists were in turn manipulating
their middle class supporters with the object of maintaining their opportunity for a night of license and release. It may also be contended that a similar dynamic was still present later in the century when, although comparatively more restrained, the celebrations continued to provide the same opportunities for working class society members. The high status leadership, not perceiving the celebration in these terms, used them as a vehicle for expressing their political and religious beliefs. If this is accepted, then members from the different social classes can be said to have been united in a dynamic interaction based on reciprocity of interests, sharing in a common objective of promoting and maintaining the celebrations, albeit for different reasons.

Alternatively it can be argued, that while such a dynamic between the different groups of bonfire boys may have been present, such an explanation does not necessarily account fully for the diversity of class membership. Social diversity among the bonfire boys may equally have arisen in the absence of class combativity. Although coming from different social strata, the fact that they came from the same community is indicative of a social cohesion unaffected by possible class antagonism. Lewes, being a small town, meant that people were in constant face-to-face relationships, as neighbours, as employers and employees, as customers and shopkeepers, as artisans and people requiring their services. Although their individual economic, political and religious interests were different the personal contact that was experienced tended to negate class conflict and the development of class consciousness. The
sources of tension were there, as has been shown, but these focused on politics and religion, rather than on class.

The inadequacy of the class conflict model to explain social relationships as reflected through the celebrations may be explored through the activities of the bonfire boys. The celebrations evolved a traditional form, both as a consequence of immediate external pressure which was responded to in a dynamic way by radical alterations, and also as a result of gradual changes generated by the bonfire boy themselves on their own behalf, changes that can be shown to reflect events or changes in the wider society. But more frequently changes were intrinsic to the celebrations themselves. Such transformations of cultural forms have frequently been interpreted in class terms, and this form of analysis may be applied to the changes undergone by the Lew's celebrations, but as we shall see, this single approach limits consideration of other explanations.

The changes and adaptations that the celebrations underwent and the innovations introduced, described in Chapters 4 to 7, allow for a consideration of the reasons for such changes. The most significant change, from riot to organised display, was the direct result of the bonfire boys response to the threat of suppression following the actions of the authorities in 1847. But it was an innovative rather than negative response, evolved over a number of years, which had the object of ensuring the survival of the celebrations. It was achieved through a process of interaction involving negotiation, compromise and
opportunism between the various interested parties in the town. While acknowledging 'the sheer inequalities of power in the nineteenth century' Storch(5) correctly argues that the working class were not 'perpetually on the receiving end of outside forces and influences', nor were they 'putty in the hands of a masterful and scheming bourgeoisie'. Although they may have felt the need to moderate their activities 'the lower classes certainly did make their own history and exercised initiative, choice and creativity in doing so'. It is in this spirit that the transformation from riot to organised display can be perceived.

One of the reasons for the bonfire boys' desire to maintain the celebrations was that it provided an opportunity for a night of release and license. This aspect was criticised by opponents, Bacon constantly accusing the bonfire boys of being a drunken mob. But as Yeo(6) argues, there are simpler ways of having a 'booze up' than preparing and carrying out an organised festival. Such an occasion was not a mindless outburst by the lower classes, but involved considerable social planning and exhibited what Delves(7) has described as a 'subculture of artistry and skills'. The truth of these observations can be seen in the elaborate ritual components evolved by the bonfire boys during the process of creating a modified form of their celebration following the formation of the bonfire societies.

This argument may be developed further. What was occurring in Lewes at this time gives support to the contention that the working classes were capable of
developing their own separate cultural identity, albeit, as Thompson argues, 'constrained within the parameters of gentry hegemony' (8). Thompson is referring to the eighteenth century, but the same process of hegemony (9) can be detected in the nineteenth century, the gentry being superseded by a growing influential middle class who placed great emphasis on the qualities of discipline, religiosity and respectability. Street festivals, to conform to the tenets of their world view, had to be sanitised into an acceptable, orderly, harmless form. In some instances they attempted to achieve this by suppression, or if this failed, through more subtle and peaceful means (10). Rude suggests that through the latter strategy 'the people become willing partners in their own decision' (11), but the working class should not be cast in such a passive role. While they were undoubtedly aware of the constraints within which they had to operate they realised that there was room to manoeuvre and develop their own defensive strategies.

Some evidence supports the adoption of such strategies by the bonfire boys. In this way deference became an instrumental relationship entered into to achieve their own objective, the financial and active support gained by their 'deference' being beneficial to the societies. While seeking patronage, it was on their terms, a pragmatic way of securing the funds necessary for promoting the celebrations and maintaining the support necessary to withstand opposition. A similar explanation for their pursuit of respectability can be given. Discussing the notion of 'respectability' during the mid-Victorian period Bailey (12)
records the resilience that the working class showed towards encroaching middle class 'cultural imperialism'(13). He suggests that working class respectability was not necessarily the same as that of the middle class, claiming that 'working men generated their own kind of respectability' which they viewed in terms of 'role' rather than 'ideology'. The role of 'respectability' was used by the working class in their contact with the middle class for their own ends, a role that was made easier to play, in the case of the bonfire boys, because of their appeal to the Conservatism of their middle class supporters.

But again, while such an explanation couched in class terms gives an explanation to the evolving forms of the elaboration by attributing it to the innovative skills of the working class, the presence of middle class members indicates it is not an adequate explanation. While not rejecting class altogether as the basis for action, in view of the empirical evidence it is necessary to seek alternative explanations that take into account other influencing factors. But before doing this, evidence arising from the empirical data that indicates the difficulties of attempting to 'fit' such data into a two class model of society will be considered. As has been shown, popular customs and disturbances are often interpreted in terms of class conflict, but the presence of ideological divisions within the middle class and the social diversity of the bonfire society membership indicate that such divisions were not developing in Lewes during the nineteenth century.
The Absence of Class Antagonism

The application of the social drama approach to the period of conflict arising from the assault on Henry Blackman in 1846 uncovered opposing factions within the middle class, those supporting the celebrations expressing a 'popular' ideology while those opposing them expounding views reflecting a 'puritan' ideology. This diversity of ideology within the same class raises questions about the two class model of society said to be evolving during the nineteenth century. Neale(14) argues that the 'philosophic radicals' of Bath, by not sharing the same political aspirations as the rest of the middle class, introduces a division that prevents the development of a single class consciousness. Not only did the social drama arising from the Blackman incident expose a similar diversity among the Lewes middle class in 1847, but the controversy surrounding the banning of street fires in 1906 indicates that such a diversity remained sixty years on. While sharing the same economic interests the Lewes middle class were, and continued to be, divided by fundamental ideological differences arising from divergent views of society.

A similar diversity within the working class is also expressed through the celebrations. Towards the end of the century bonfire society membership was, in part, being drawn from the affluent section of working class, although as already argued, it is likely that others from lower status occupational groups among the working class were also
members. Considerable discussion centres on such a division, particularly among Marxist historians, who have found it necessary to modify their two class model of society in the light of empirical evidence (15). Those wishing to retain the two class model, have identified the 'aristocracy of labour' as those members of the working class, who because of greater affluence and social status do not always identify with their class and, according to Gray (16), constituted an entity in itself which arose at a particular stage of capitalist development, therefore having a historical specificity. It is questionable whether the term aristocracy of labour can be strictly applied to the more affluent working class members of the bonfire societies due to the lack of industrial development in the town, but even if it can not, there is further fragmentation of the two class model.

The working class bonfire boys do not exhibit the traits generally attributed to the aristocracy of labour. Although they came from the same occupational strata their ideological perspective, as expressed through the celebrations, was at variance with that of the aristocracy of labour. Gray (17) and Crosstick (18) argue that the characteristics of the aristocracy of labour was their search for social approval and a rejection of patronage. They strove to be 'respectable', to impress and find favour with their employers and through a life style of self improvement, sobriety and thrift to set themselves apart from the rest of their class. The bonfire boys appear not to have pursued these objectives. Reference has already been
made to their popular Conservatism and outspoken criticisms of Socialism. Through their orientation towards public houses, both as members of the bonfire societies and the many other voluntary associations that used the pub as a meeting place, they also indicate a support for popular culture based on drinking customs which was diametrically opposed to the cult of the respectable. The bonfire boys also sought patronage, both financial and moral, from influential inhabitants, expressing their gratitude by way of vice presidencies and guest speakers. In contrast to the aristocracy of labour, the bonfire boys expressed a deferential-reactionary ideology rather than an improving, respectable or Socialist one.

Nor were the bonfire societies class based organizations, many among their leadership coming from an intermediate group that could be defined, according to objective criteria, as either working or middle class. Adding directory evidence to that of the CEBs, a large number of this group were probably self employed or small employers of labour rather than affluent employees. These men share much in common with what Neale(19) defines as the 'middling class' which he argues came into existence due to the proliferation of petty producers, retailers and tradesmen during the industrial revolution(20). But while they shared similar occupational characteristics the Lewes 'middling class', or at least those who were members of the bonfire societies, differed ideologically, exhibiting neither the non-deferential characteristic described by Neale nor a support for a political programme like that of
Thus the presence of both working and middle class members among the bonfire societies' membership indicates that class consciousness and conflict, in the Marxist sense, were not being manifest through the celebrations. One explanation for this might be that class development, if it was occurring at all in Lewes, remained in its infancy. The speed, nature and regional concentration of industrialization upon which the development of class is said to rest varied considerably. Some towns became centers for large single industries, others exhibited a diversity of type and scale of production, while more remained relatively untouched by industrialization.

These variations created a diversity of local social structures and status hierarchies arising out of the power and production relationships experienced by individuals and groups under these different conditions. These in turn influenced class formation and class development. Provincial market towns, like Lewes, experienced only small 'workshop' scale industrial development and consequently are unlikely to have evolved the bourgeoisie-proletarian divide experienced in the industrial centres of the country, class antagonism, as a consequence, being far less pronounced.

But to explain away the lack of class development in Lewes in these terms does not account for what is actually emerging from the empirical data. On closer examination of the empirical data, it can more accurately be argued that conflict was the result of ideological differences that did
not essentially originate from class interests. There is no evidence to support the contention that class conflict, although not present during the early part of the century, was developing in Lewes towards the end. A comparison between the ideological divisions among the supporters and opponents of the celebrations during the social dramas of the late 1840's and the early 1900's indicate the absence of change. Although the personnel changed, the ideological perspectives manifest by the opponents and supporters of the celebrations remained fundamentally the same. At both times leading members of the town's middle class opposed each other expressing the same divergent 'popular' and 'puritan' ideologies. Likewise the bonfire boys on both occasions defended their activities with reference to custom, loyalty and patriotism.

The 1846 incident undoubtedly alienated many middle class inhabitants, but the assault on Blackman did not result in the total defection of middle class supporters from the bonfire boys. Contrary to the claim made by Storch(25), a 'deep rupture', both social and cultural, resulting in the dissolution of small town plebeian culture, did not occur in Lewes. Indeed, as has been clearly illustrated, elements of the lower middle class continued to give their support to the celebrations, the majority of the leadership at the turn of the century being drawn from this group. Thus, while it can be argued that some middle class support was openly manipulated to serve the purposes of the bonfire boys, much more was the result of their active membership of the societies. Because of the retention of
this support the celebrations never became, in a Marxist sense, a reflection of class conflict or class solidarity, but continued to draw support from among both working and middle classes, and as Yeo(26) suggests, conversely provoked opposition from both. Cultural rather than class hegemony appears as the unifying element between members from the different social classes. While differences of emphasis existed within the 'popular' ideologies of the middle and working class, there was sufficient correspondence for them to seek a common objective, the continuation of the 5th November Celebrations.

Symb 1 of Community?

But if a class model of society does not provide the appropriate framework in which to analyse the empirical data it becomes necessary to seek an alternative. Calhoun(27) is critical of Marxists' attempts to explain everything in class terms as it leads to the ignoring of other sources of motivation and as a consequence to a misunderstanding of the social origins of populist movements. Developing his argument, he criticises Thompson for his failure to confront the community based nature of many of the populist movements he describes, and for passing 'only the most fleeting attention to its sociological underpinning'(28). Rather than thinking in terms of class exploitation, Calhoun contends, people thought in terms of community, acting on the social basis of traditional communities based on craft and locality. Community-based movements expressed an essentially reformist ideology, 'guided as often by rich complexes of
symbols as by rationalized theories. It looked backward as much as forward and... for the most part, it had a long, traditional pedigree. It was a set of values in everyday life at the same time that it was a political ideology'(29). It was an 'inherent' ideology based on direct experience, oral tradition and folk memory that arose from community living(30).

This shift in emphasis from class to community as the origin of a popular ideology and the source for collective action is particularly relevant in the present context. In Chapters 8 and 9 the community orientation of the bonfire societies and the social relationships that existed between them as it emerged from the empirical data is considered. Membership was attributed either to an identification with community or through a web of family and friendship networks. Essential to both was the homogeneity of the groups of members involved as members of a single society and as a collective of bonfire boys. In the same way that Calhoun argues that action arose through personal bonds within social collectives, so too can it be claimed that the origins of the bonfire boys activities, whether in defence of, or in the carrying out of their celebrations, was rooted in community, rather than class.

Consideration of community has a second dimension. While it provided the source for the conservative, reformist ideology expressed by the bonfire boys and the social cohesion that sustained the celebrations, community also became in itself a symbol of social solidarity that was
given expression through the celebrations, by the regular re-enactment of custom. In Lewes the celebration never fulfilled a totally integrative function as it is sometimes thought to in rural areas. Although in many ways similar to the rituals of rebellion described by Gluckman, it did not perform the same function. While the celebrations brought together members of different social classes they also provoked conflict between rival factions, and as a consequence became the focus of division rather than cohesion in the community. However a sense of community among the bonfire boys living in the different localities of the town was manifest through the bonfire societies and, through them, the celebrations became an expression of the solidarity of neighbourhood rather than of the town.

To take this a little further, in Chapter 5 the desire to maintain their celebrations was in part attributed to latent motives(31) which manifest themselves through a desire to protect real and immediate interests, including the opportunity for a holiday and a night of enjoyment and release. Such motives doubtless continued to influence the bonfire boys reaction to opponents, but with the evolving of neighbourhood based societies other latent motives may be identified. Society membership not only afforded an opportunity for social activities that were not confined to the night of the 'Fifth', but also provided an occasion for the reaffirmation of community solidarity(32). The celebration became a time when members could both express a sense of belonging, and experience a state of 'communitas'(33) when they could feel at one with those
around them.

But while the societies were community-based and drew their membership mainly from their own neighbourhood there were members who did not come from the society territory. This lack of neighbourhood orientation among some members is more pronounced in societies where there are less clearly defined territory boundaries. There is a significant clustering of members within the territories of Cliffe, Southover and St Anne's (Appendix 5, Maps 5.2, 5.4 and 5.5), but the membership of Borough and Commercial Square is more dispersed, particularly among each others' territories (Appendix 5, Maps 5.1 and 5.3)(34). The fact that not all members exhibited this local orientation suggests other reasons for joining. These might relate to support for 'causes' being espoused by the societies. But it is more likely that the influence of family and friends was greater, an individual's personal network being unlikely to be confined to the neighbourhood in which he lived. The existence of wider personal networks based on family and friends were perhaps more strongly felt than their neighbourhood ties.

The importance of social networks in influencing membership, and in turn indicating the mechanisms that are operative in maintaining social solidarity reflect both the structural and qualitative aspects of social networks. In the present discussion social network analysis has been particularly useful in establishing social relationships that existed within neighbourhoods, but also among bonfire
boys as a total group within the Lewes population. Although certain limitations have been identified, specifically relating to the nature of historical sources, key areas arising from the dynamics of social interaction within the societies have been exposed through the application of network analysis. Only a small number of examples have been constructed here to illustrate the presence of extensive networks among society members and a more detailed and exhaustive analysis of this data, focusing on both ego centred and associational linked networks would establish the full extent of family and social networks among the bonfire boys and provide further data upon which to develop the present discussion.

Implications for Future Research

The importance of social network as the foundation for society membership can be brought forward in time and by so doing emphasises the value of using recurrent ceremonial drama as a way of detecting the gradual change being undergone by the society in which the event occurs. Today the bonfire societies continue to parade through their original territories, but the 1974 Survey indicates that the societies no longer rely on their traditional neighbourhoods as a source of membership(35). All societies now recruit their members from the whole town and many are drawn in from outside Lewes. Social networks based on family and friendship probably now account for the majority of recruits and the relationships enjoyed with in the networks contribute to the individual remaining a member. In the
contemporary situation it can therefore be argued that the source of loyalty and social solidarity is now focused exclusively on 'Society', neighbourhood no longer being consciously correlated with society membership by the bonfire boys.

This loss of community orientation and its replacement by society loyalty can be related directly to changes in the town, urban development having quickened and people having become more geographically mobile, trends which would merit further consideration. This very brief excursion into the present does however indicate areas for future research. Firstly the present study can be extended through time. The continuation of the Lewes celebrations from 1913 through until the present day allows for the recurrent ceremonial drama approach to be employed in tracing the gradual changes in the town that may be reflected through the annual celebrations.

There is a trend away from neighbourhood societies towards 'associational' societies. Changes in the religious and political manifestations and the changing meanings these have for the members can also be detected. While the societies still have political tableaux they have ceased to express partisan views, more often topics depicting events in a neutral, often humorous fashion. Similarly, while expressions of anti-Catholicism persist the meaning attached to these by the members appears to have altered significantly, it now being considered as an element of tradition rather than a comment on contemporary religious
matters. The present membership continues to be drawn from a cross section among the social classes, and patronage by leading townspeople and businessmen is still sought and received. Yet a spirit of defiance and anti-authoritarianism remains and for many participants, particularly among the young, the night still provides an opportunity for the release of high spirits and excessive drinking. However these elements, already identified in the nineteenth century may be declining, there now being far greater concern for creating a spectacle for spectators and raising money for charity. In this sense it may be argued that the celebration, while retaining its traditional form has changed considerably over the last seventy years, changes that may reflect the gradually changing social context of the celebration.

The adoption of the social drama technique in the historical context has been similarly vindicated, the comparison between two specific incidents giving valuable insights into both the social morphology of the town and the tensions and conflicts that divided it. Taken individually they provided a basis for comparative work, certain regularities in both their processual form and content enabling definite conclusions to be drawn. Cahnman and Boskoff(36) rightly observe that while differences will be observable by such comparison, essential elements may remain identifiable and aid further research of other incidents. Having identified similarities between the two social dramas prior to 1913 the question can be asked, will these insights assist in the analysis of a conflict situation surrounding
the celebrations in the present. Certainly the celebrations have continued to provoke controversy, if not outright opposition due to their continued expression of anti-Catholicism. Insights gained from the comparison of previous events would therefore provide working hypotheses from which to develop an analysis of a contemporary social drama.

The use of the dramaturgical approach may also be usefully employed in comparative research taking other towns and villages where the celebrations took place. In this way the gradual, or rapid development of these places could be traced as reflected through the recurrent ceremonial drama. At the same time consideration could be given to a comparison between the attitudes towards the celebrations being expressed by those opposing or supporting them. In this way the different pace of urban development may be related to changes in ideological perspectives, and in turn how both of these influenced the future development of the celebrations. Celebrations occurred throughout the southeast of England, in fast developing towns like Brighton and Eastbourne, in small market centres like Battle, Cuckfield and Mayfield, and in villages where the local squire retained considerable influence. In some places, like Guildford, the celebrations were suppressed, in others, including Eastbourne, they became closely associated with the town authorities, while in a few, like Lewes, they survived while still enjoying considerable independence.

Comparative work may also be developed through the
study of other recurrent ceremonial dramas that have both similarities and dissimilarities with the Lewes celebrations. Such a course of research does not have to confine itself to England. For example many similarities may be drawn between the social dynamics found in the Lewes celebrations and the 'festa parti' of Malta studied by Bissevain(37). The tracing of the historical and social development of Sienna through an analysis of the 'Palio delle Contrade', an annual event during which horses representing the ten contrade of the city compete in a single race around the city square, might expose similar underlying social tensions arising from people identifying with territory as they did during the Bonfire Night celebrations.

To conclude, the dramaturgical approach, as has been shown in this research, can be applied profitably to historical data. The present celebrations cannot be fully understood without reference to their past, they are incidents in a single historical process. Not only must such incidents be seen within the context of this process, having their own particular causal factors and consequences, but for analytical purposes they must also be used in a process of generalization during comparative work involving similar incidents. Thus the unique and the general, the past and the present become elements in both historical and analytical process. As suggested, recurrent ceremonial dramas provide a starting point for the analysis of similar phenomena regardless of place or time, but hypotheses derived from the observance of these similarities should not be allowed to
limit data collection. If the study of the past and the present are to converge through their respective disciplines it is imperative that developing theory is empirically grounded. For a comprehensive understanding of social phenomena a dialectic between theory and empirical data, and differing modes of analysis must occur.

Notes

1. Anthropologists more usually refer to recurrent events as 'ceremony' or 'ritual', although their conceptual clarity is sometimes disputed. See GLUCKMAN (1965), pp.250-252; GOODY, J. (1977), 'Against "Ritual": Loosely structured thoughts on a loosely defined topic' in MOORE and MYERHOFF (1977), pp.25-34.
10. Popular customs were under attack throughout the nineteenth century and while many survived many more were suppressed, often with considerable force. See HOWKINS, A. (1973), Whitsun in Nineteenth Century Oxfordshire, History Workshop Pamphlet, no.8, Oxford: Ruskin.
13. The Yeos' term 'cultural imperialism' has been adopted in this context for the same reason that they themselves employ it, because it is a 'more emotive and value laden term' than 'incorporation' or 'social control' used by sociologists, and perhaps describes more accurately what was happening. See YEO (1981), p.138.
15. FOSTER, J. (1974), Class Struggle and the Industrial
Revolution: Early Industrial Capitalism in Three English Towns, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, p.163. Foster acknowledges the difficulty when observing that small shopkeepers and clerks can be members of either the bourgeoisie or the proletariat, depending on the industrial composition of the town.

17. GRAY (1976), pp.94-102.
20. Cole similarly accords the development of more than two classes to the industrial revolution. See COLE (1955), p.41.
22. Some argue that social class had emerged by 1850 while others, with reference to empirical data have shown that there was no general universal development of class. See THOMPSON (1968); PERKIN (1969); NEALE (1972).
23. Morris argues that while large scale industry did develop there was not automatically a corresponding cline in small scale enterprise, small firms continuing to thrive. In many regions towns remained relatively untouched by industrialisation, experiencing only minor small scale factory development. Similarly Armstrong notes that change from old style agriculture and cottage production to the new industrial production was gradual. In 1851 half the population still lived in rural areas, agricultural labourers still being the largest occupational group while blacksmiths outnumbered the workers in the great ironworks. See MORRIS (1979), pp.50-51; ARMSTRONG (1972), p.200.
28. Ibid., p.42.
29. Ibid., p.98.
30. It is interesting to note here the importance Calhoun places on the influence of the pub as the centre for the dissemination of ideas within communities bearing in mind the pub orientation of the bonfire societies. Ibid., p.36.
31. Phythian Adams (1975, p.8) uses the term 'function', but the more purposeful term 'motive' is preferred here as it emphasises the 'intent' rather than the 'response' of the bonfire boys.
32. It should be emphasised that the idea of community arising from the actors' own perceptions does not necessarily have to include all those living within the socially constructed community. As Stacey (1960) discovered in Banbury, while some inhabitants were locally orientated, others were not.

34. There is an overlap of territorial space from which the two societies drew their membership. A little over one third of Commercial Square members did not live in the society's territory, many of these being resident in an area more immediately associated with the Borough. Similarly many of those belonging to Borough were resident in the Commercial Square area.

35. In 1974, using society membership lists, 15.9 per cent (N=74) lived in the traditional territory of their society. A further 18.0 per cent (N=84) lived in the new society territory which consisted of the traditional area extend to include recently built council estates. But 44.4 per cent (N=207) lived elsewhere in the town while another 21.7 per cent (N=101) were not Lewes residents.


APPENDIX 1

The Sorting of the Known Bonfire Population into Three Categories following Nominal Record Linkage.

The name search of press, court records and miscellaneous bonfire society documents from 1800 to 1913 produced 1,513 individuals who were in some way connected with the bonfire celebrations. During the process of nominal record linkage three distinct groupings began to emerge, those where a positive link was established, those links that were uncertain, and those where no link was achieved. The first and third groups presented no real problems, the named individual was or was not historically individuated. The difficulty centred on the second group, where two specific problems arose. Firstly, when linking names in this group with other nominal records it became apparent that different people sharing the same name were being identified. For example a John Smith was a signatory of the 1847 petition. Apart for the name no other linking item was recorded in the initial source. According to the 1851 CEBs seven individuals named John Smith were resident in Lewes at that time. In other instances as many as twenty identifications occurred for a single name. Such multiple links were therefore in most cases unresolvable. Secondly, some linkages between a name and one other nominal record were, for various reasons, untenable. Both multiple and untenable linkages were not initially removed from the KBP index, it being decided to do this on completion of NRL. In
this way all available data for a name could be taken into account before deciding whether to remove a named individual from the KBP.

Three strategies were employed to eliminate multiple and untenable linkages from the KBP index. The first used information contained in nominal records. The latter two were based on less certain criteria. Firstly, individuals were removed where there were indications that they were not alive at the time the name appeared in the initial source. Those who were either not born or were dead according to baptism or burial registers, or obituary notices were easily eliminated. Secondly, individuals were removed where there was a long gap between the individual's reported activity and the nominal records to which the name was being linked. It was considered that, in the absence of other linking evidence, proximity in time between the name appearing in the initial source and the nominal record was essential if a link was to be established. Thus, where there existed a wide lapse of time between the initial reference and the nominal record entry, and the name provided the only link then the individual was removed from the index. Thus J. Brooks who appeared in the 1851 census, although aged one, was removed, even though he could have been alive when his namesake attended the Borough dinner in 1909. The gap of 58 years with no other reference found renders any linkage untenable.

Finally, age was used as a determining factor. Where individuals were considered too young or too old to be linked to the KBP member they were removed from the index.
Individuals who were obviously too young were easily identified. In 1907, at the age of 20, A. Washer married Mary Ann Johnson. A person with the same name had attended the Southover dinner 12 years earlier. The former individual was removed from the index because he would have been only eight in 1895 and therefore too young to have attended a society dinner. How to determine when an individual was too old was more arbitrary. It was assumed that those over 70 at the time of reported activity would have been too old to be actively involved in the celebrations. One of the multiple identifications of H. Norman was, according to the census, aged 13 in 1851. He would have been 72 when he attended the Borough dinner in 1910, therefore he was removed from the KBP index. These strategies removed the untenable linkages, and as a result some named individuals were positively identified. But not all multiple identifications were eliminated.

Figure A.1: The three KBP categories arising from NRL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive Link</td>
<td>1031</td>
<td>68.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible Link</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Link</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>1513</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The KBP index was subsequently divided into four categories, the 'Positive', 'Possible', 'No Links' and 'Women'. The 'Positive' category included all those named individuals for whom a positive linkage had been established.
between the initial source and at least one nominal record. Figure A.1 shows that a positive link between the initial reference and at least one nominal record was established for just over two thirds of the KBP. For many of these individuals a comprehensive biography was achieved through linkages with a series of census, parochial registers and directories. The 'Possible' category consisted of the remaining multiple identifications that could not be removed from the index for the reasons already discussed. Thus, for example, three individuals sharing the name, E. Cosham, were identified during NRL, all of whom could be the E. Cosham referred to in the initial source. The 'No Links' category included all those where no link was made with any other nominal record. As a result there was a total absence of biographical data apart from a name and the society to which they belonged. The 'Women' category consisted of 29 individuals and because they were such a small group compared with their male counterparts they were removed from the KBP index and are discussed separately.

It was decided to leave the 'Possibles' and 'No Links' categories in the index. Although those contained in the 'Possible' category cannot be used with the same degree of certainty as those in the 'Positive' category, they are useful in providing supporting evidence during the analysis of the latter category. Similarly the 'No Links' category, because of the small amount of information that was sometimes recorded in the initial source (e.g. the description, 'a child', 'lad') may be used in the same way. Such a use of these two categories is particularly useful in
the analysis of the 'family connection' within the bonfire societies and the territorial distribution of their membership following the formation of the bonfire societies.
APPENDIX 2

The Sorting of the 1853-1913 Known Bonfire Population according to the nature of involvement.

For the period from 1853 to 1913 682 names were found in the various initial sources. Not all these names referred to individuals who were members or who were closely associated with the bonfire societies. It was therefore necessary to differentiate between the various groupings within the post 1853 KBP. This was done by determining how individuals were involved in the celebrations. Four groups were identified: 'Bonfire Boys', 'Supporters', 'Opponents' and 'Officials'. As Figure A.2 indicates, the largest group was the 'Bonfire Boys', representing 91.4 per cent of the total KBP individuals. This group included individuals who were members of one or more of the bonfire societies, were

Figure A.2 The Three Identification Categories and Four KBP Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KBP Group</th>
<th>Identification Category</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonfire Boys</td>
<td>606</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporters</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>62.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
reputed bonfire boys, or who were reported to be actively participating in some way in the celebrations. The 'Supporters' included individuals who were as judges at society fancy dress competitions, made financial contributions, or spoke out in support of the celebrations. The 'Opponents' were, as the group heading suggests, those individuals who openly opposed the celebrations, either at meetings or through the press. The fourth group consisted of a miscellaneous collection of magistrates, councillors and local government officials who, for various reasons, became connected with the celebrations.

The 'Bonfire Boys' group consisted of 1040 individuals who were either members of, or in some way associated with, the activities of the societies. This group was sorted into three sub groups according to the nature of their involvement in the celebrations, 'Society Member', 'Dual Member' and 'Others'. Figure A.3 shows that 61.9 per cent (N=644) of these were positively identified during NRL, the remaining 38.1 per cent (N=396) being either in the

**Figure A.3: Nature of Involvement among the 'Bonfire Boys' Group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Involvement</th>
<th>Identification Category</th>
<th>Totals</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>No Links</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society member</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual member</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others/Supporters</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
'Possible' or 'No Links' category.

The majority of individuals in the 'Bonfire Boys' group were bonfire society members, 79.6 per cent (N=828) belonging to one society and a small number, 4.5 per cent (N=47), to more than one. Individuals were identified as society members where their society affiliation was referred to in the initial source, the majority of these being press reports of the societies' annual dinners or lists of office holders.

Figure A.4: Society Affiliation of Bonfire Boys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Possible</th>
<th>No links</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBS</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSBS</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StABS</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSJBS</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Totals 527 60.2 141 16.1 207 23.7 875 100.0

The society affiliation of these bonfire boys is set out in Figure A.4. The marked variation in membership numbers between the established bonfire societies, Borough, Cliffe, Commercial Square and Southover, and those with only a brief existence, St Anne's, South Street Juveniles and Waterloo, is to be expected, but the large proportion of Commercial Square members, 37.9 per cent (N=332) of the total number, is less easy to explain. No additional sources
that may have increased the number of identified society members were available for Commercial Square, neither was the Society in existence for longer than Cliffe or Borough. The only explanation, given the evidence at present available, is that Commercial Square was the largest of the Lewes bonfire societies during the period being studied.

The society affiliation of the 47 'Dual' members remains undetermined due to the initial sources reporting their involvement in more than one society, suggesting possible dual membership. For instance, E. Lawrance attended the annual dinner of Southover in 1903 and 1904, but in 1911 he was reported among those at the Borough dinner. In practice such 'Dual' membership would appear unlikely, due to the difficulty of being involved in the activities of more than one society during the evening of the 'Fifth'. A number of explanations are possible. It was the practice among the societies for representatives from each society to attend the annual dinners of kindred societies, this often being acknowledged in press reports. According the the 'Express' of 25th November 1899, B.V. Reeves attended Southover Society's annual dinner and made a speech on behalf of the Borough Society. All other reports refer to Reeves as a Borough member. However in some instances such representation may have gone unrecorded, giving the impression that an individual was a member of two societies. Over a period of years the individual may have changed his society affiliation or, as in the case of Lawrance, he may have joined another society following the disbandment of his own. He may, of course, have overcome the difficulties
suggested and have belonged to two societies. Whatever the explanation for this apparent 'Dual' membership, it is not possible to designate the individuals in this group to a single society.

The third group, 'Others', consisted of individuals involved in activities associated with the celebrations, but who were not specifically identified as bonfire society members. Included among this group are people reputed to be bonfire boys(1), those involved in activities associated with society membership including being granted firework licenses, marshals of Jubilee and Coronation processions, and fancy dress competition entrants. By far the largest group consisted of people arrested on charges arising from

Figure A.5: Th Nature of involvement of 'Others'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of involvement</th>
<th>Identification Category</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Posit</td>
<td>Possib</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reputed Bonfire Boy.</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Those involved in bonfire society activity,</td>
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<tr>
<td>but society not recorded.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Court cases arising directly from bonfire</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>activity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Involved in 1870 disturbance.</td>
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<td>Involved in 1906 disturbance.</td>
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<td>Court cases with no indication of society</td>
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<td>membership.</td>
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<td>Supporters and subscribers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
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<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>70.9</td>
<td>10.9</td>
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</table>
the celebrations and witnesses who appeared on their behalf. Charges included disturbing the peace, throwing rockets, stealing barrels, lighting fires in the street, or being drunk. In Figure A.5 those arrested have been grouped into four categories; cases where they were obviously bonfire boys, but to which society they belonged was not recorded in the press reports(2); individuals whose charges arose specifically out of the 1870 and 1906 disturbances(3); and lastly people who were arrested for various crimes, like drunkenness, that give no indication as to whether they are bonfire boys or spectators. However they are included as 'Bonfire Boys' due to their obvious involvement in the celebrations. The final group of individuals included are the supporters and subscribers to the societies upon whose financial and material help the societies often depended(4).

Notes

1. In 1913 E.D. Charman and J.P. Martin were elected to the Town Council. In his firesite speech the 'Bishop' of Commercial Square referred to both of them as bonfire boys. (S.A.E., 7.11.13)

2. Five men, Frederick Baldwin, Charle Beard, Albert Fuller, Thomas Trash and Frederick Simmons, were charged with pulling tar barrels on a trolly during the celebrations in 1911. Although from other press reports it seems likely they were Commercial Square members, this was not actually stated. (S.A.E., 1.12.1911)

3. Harold Weston was, along with a number of Commercial Square members, arrested and charged with disturbing the peace during the fracas surrounding an attempt to build a fire in Commercial Square in 1906. It seems likely that Weston was also a member, but again this was not recorded in the press. Similarly a number of persons were arrested during disturbances arising from the opening of the Catholic Chapel in Lewes in 1870. The probability of some of these being bonfire boys was indicated when the Judge, during the ensuing trial,
instructed to the Landlord of the Pelham Arms, to ensure that the times of Borough Society meetings at his public house did not coincide with those of services at the chapel. Only a narrow passage way separated the Pelham Arms from the chapel. (S.A.E., 5.2.71)

4. A number of subscribers are probably included among the members of the bonfire societies, their attendance at dinners having been reported in the press.
APPENDIX 3

The processional routes of the Lewes Bonfire Societies


Map 3.3: Cliffe Bonfire Society processional routes, 1853-1913.

Map 3.4: Commercial Square Bonfire Society processional routes, 1857-1913.

Map 3.5: St Anne's Bonfire Society processional routes, 1887-1895.


Map 3.8: Waterloo Bonfire Society processional routes, 1875-1880.
APPENDIX 4

The procedures for identifying bonfire society members' addresses at the time of reported activity.

Before individual member's residence could be plotted their address had to be known. This presented a number of difficulties arising from the sources, the census, directories and registers of electors, either because they did not cover the complete period, or because they were not comprehensive lists of the population. As a result spaces occurred in the records of individuals' places of residence, particularly where this is being traced over an extended period of time. These 'gaps' present no difficulties where the individual's place of residence remained unchanged, but where members were more mobile the accurate tracing of changes of address and the duration of their stay at each becomes difficult.

The decision to use the address that coincided with the years the member's reported activity reduced the extent of this problem. In cases where this spanned a long period during which changes of address occurred the address that coincided with the first date of reported activity is used. This is done on the assumption that if residence was a factor influencing society allegiance then it is probable that the important address is the one at which the individual lived at the time of the initial report of society involvement. It is also assumed that where a member
leaves a locality that coincided with the society to which he belonged it was likely that he would remain with that society even though he might have moved into the territory of another society, society loyalty and established relationships being considered stronger bonds.

Only a small group of individuals did, however, appear to have made such a move. Three Borough, four Cliffe, six Commercial Square and one Southover member had previously lived in their society's territory, the majority of these having been resident for a long period prior to moving. Nine were born in their society's territory and of these, two had moved during childhood, but the others were resident from between 24 and 36 years. Similar long periods of residence were found among those who had moved into the society territory before moving out. One had been resident for only four years, but the remainder had lived there for between 14 and 41 years. Thus the majority of these society members who had moved out of their society territory before their activity was recorded had been resident long enough for them to have developed strong ties within that territory.

In some instances individuals identified as society members did not appear in the nominal records and therefore had no address ascribed to them. The only exception to this being a few society officers whose addresses were recorded in their society's programme. However it was possible to ascribe an address to some members who did not appear in the directories or registers of electors. Where a member whose address was the son of another identified member whose
address was known then it was assumed that the son, while not appearing in the printed sources would be likely to be living in the house of his father and was therefore ascribed the same address. The same procedure was adopted for sons whose father was not a member. Thus, if the individual was shown as a family member according to census or baptismal registers, the directory for the date of reported activity was referred to and where the father could be identified the son was attributed with the same address. This method of identifying addresses was only used in cases where the son was in his late teens or early twenties, it being assumed that older children would have married and moved away from home.

Difficulties also arose when correlating society procession routes with membership residence distribution. This was as a result of the incidence of changes in routes. As is discussed, a number of the societies during the course of their existence extended their processional routes, often encroaching into areas of the town previously occupied by another, sometimes longer established society. These changes present the possibility of a number of permutations. A member may have joined a society on the basis that at the time this was the society 'representing' his locality. Later a second society was formed within the established territory of the first. The member was then living not in the territory of his society, but in that of the new one. Such situations obviously occurred when Waterloo, St Anne's and Southover Bonfire Societies were formed within the territories of already established societies. This problem
has been largely resolved by referring to the date of the member's reported activity, the place of residence and the society processing the area at that time. Thus, for example, Charles Renham and John Lelliott, both members of the Borough Society, lived in the Southover area prior to the existence of the Southover Society. Following the formation of this society they remained members of the Borough, which for some time continued to process through the Southover area. Because of this, both members are recorded for analytical purposes as resident in the territory of the society to which they belonged, having joined the Borough when that society was the only society processing through Southover. In practice this affected only a few individuals.

A second permutation encountered was where individuals resident in a locality processed through by one of the established societies were not reported as active in that society until after the formation of a new society in the same locality. In these cases the individuals have been recorded as resident in the territory of the society to which they belonged, that is the territory of the established society. This strategy is based on the assumption that the individual was probably a member of the society prior to his reported activity. Like the person who retained membership of his first society after moving into a new area, so the person who found another society being formed within the territory of his society similarly maintained membership of his first society.
Appendix 5

Residential distribution of society members, 1853–1913

Map 5.1: Borough Bonfire Society: Residential distribution of members.

Map 5.2: Cliffe Bonfire Society: Residential distribution of members.

Map 5.3: Commercial Square Bonfire Society: Residential distribution of members.

Map 5.4: Southover Bonfire Society: Residential distribution of members.

Map 5.5: St Anne’s, Waterloo and South Street Juvenile Bonfire Societies: Residential distribution of members.

Map 5.6: Dual members residential distribution.
## APPENDIX 6

### Tonfire Boys and their membership of Lewes voluntary associations

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<th>CBS</th>
<th>CSBS</th>
<th>ABS</th>
<th>SBS</th>
<th>DUAL</th>
<th>OTH. SUP.</th>
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Abbreviations used in table:

ABS    St Anne's Bonfire Society
A.O.   Ancient Order
An.O.  Antedeluvian Order
Ass.   Association S.C.
BBS    Borough Bonfire Society
CBS    Cliff Bonfire Society
C.C.   Cricket Club
CSBS   Commercial Square Bonfire Society
F.C.   Football Club
Juv.   Juveniles
L.     Lodge
Lew.   Lewes
Min.   Miniature
OTH.   Others
Q.C.   Quoit Club
R.A.O. Royal Ancient Order
S.     South
SBS    Southover Bonfire Society
S.C.   Slate Club
Soc.C. Social Club
SUP.   Supporters
Sx.    Sussex
Sx.Reg. Sussex Regiment
Ton.C. Tontine Club
Yeom.  Yeomanry
APPENDIX 7

The Headquarters of the Lewes Bonfire Societies

Most societies resided in one public house throughout the period of their existence, but even where moves occurred it was common for the societies to remain at the same public house over a long period. From 1872 to 1913 the Borough was resident at the Brewer's Arms. The Commercial Square similarly only had two headquarters throughout the period, moving from the Lewes Arms to the Elephant and Castle in 1876, where they have remained until the present day. The Swan was the Southover's first headquarters where they stayed for three years before moving to the Kings Head, remaining there until they disbanded in 1905. Only the Cliffe Society deviated from this pattern, changing its headquarters a number of times, often staying at one public house for one or two years before moving on. The Society's first headquarters was the Old Ship where they probably remained until 1859. In 1860 they were at the Snowdrop, back at the Old Ship the following year and then at the Snowdrop again in 1862. The Society then went to the Wheatsheaf from 1866 to 1875(?) when they moved to the Swan in Malling Street for two years. It is unclear where their headquarters were between the years 1877(?) to 1887, but in 1888 they had returned to the Wheatsheaf where they stayed until 1894(?). Sometime after this the Society moved finally to the Dorset Arms, remaining there until the outbreak of the First World War. However the significant point is that even though
headquarters were changed, and in the case of the Cliffe, sometimes frequently, such changes occurred within the territory already delineated by the processional routes. (See Figure A.7 on following page.)
APPENDIX 8

The social networks of bonfire society members

Figure A.8: Links among Borough Society members.
Figure A.9: Links among Cliffe Society members.
Figure A.10: Links among Commercial Square Society members.
Figure A.11: Links among Southover Society members.

Notes

a. The initial letter of surnames appear along the horizontal axis in the same order as the full name on the vertical axis in each figure.
b. The numbers contained within the figures represent the number of times members are linked to each other. For example, in Figure A.8 Lenny is linked four times to W.D. Baxter through their common membership of four voluntary associations (excluding their bonfire society membership).
c. The numbers appearing down the right-hand edge of each figure represent the number of other members to whom the individual is linked. For example, in Figure A.8 Arter is linked to 20 other Borough members.
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Figure A.10: Links among Commercial Square Society members
BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Primary sources are located at a number of repositories. For the sake of brevity the following abbreviations are used. The names of other repositories are referred to in full.

B.R.L.  Brighton Reference Library.
E.S.R.O. East Sussex Record Office.
L.A.L.  Lewes Area Library (East Sussex County Council), Lewes.
P.R.O.  Public Record Office.
S.A.S.  Sussex Archaeological Society Library, Lewes.

Census

1841 Census Enumerators' Books: P.R.O. RG/HO 107/1120 and 1117.

Census of England and Wales, 1921: County of East Sussex, (1923), London: H.M.S.O.
Census of England and Wales, 1931: County of East Sussex, Part 1, (1933), London: H.M.S.O.

Court Records

Assize: Indictments, P.R.O. ASSI 35/267/5 (1827 Winter), ASSI 35/282/3 (1842 Lent), ASSI 35/288/9 (1848 Lent); Depositions, P.R.O. ASSI 36/4 (1842 Lent).

Newspapers

East Sussex News (E.S.N.): E.S.R.O., 1865-1941
The Sussex Agricultural Express (S.A.E.): E.S.R.O., 1837-1902; continued as 'The Sussex Express and County Herald', 1903-1938.


Non-parochial Registers

Bethesda: Baptism 1817-42, E.S.R.O. transcription.
Countess of Huntingdon: Baptism 1788-1805, E.S.R.O. NI/1/1/1 and 1808-37, P.R.O. RG4/2623.
Eastgate Particular Baptist: Baptism 1788-1849, E.S.R.O. NBI/6/1
Independent Tabernacle: Baptism 1817-1904, E.S.R.O. NC2/6-7 and NC2/3-4; Marriage 1889-1902, E.S.R.O. NC2/4.
Jireh: Baptism 1788-1840 and 1859-1952, E.S.R.O. NI/1/1/1 and NI/1/1/5-6; Marriage 1863-1915, E.S.R.O. NI/1/1/7.
Refuge: Births 1795-1815, P.R.O. RG4/2063.
Southover Baptist: Births 1783-1836, P.R.O. RG4/2966.
Westgate Unitarian: Baptism 1742-1948, E.S.R.O. NUI/1/3. This register also contains marriages, 1848-85.

Parish Registers

All parish registers are held at E.S.R.O.

All Saints: Baptism 1800-1935, PAR 410/1/1/8 and 410/1/2/1-3; Marriage 1781-1919, PAR 410/1/1/7-9 and 410/1/3/1-4; Burial 1738-1920, PAR 410/1/1/5 and 410/1/5/1-3.
St Anne's: Baptism 1800-1943, PAR 411/1/1/4 and 411/1/2/1-2; Marriage 1754-1898, 1754-1812 transcription and PAR 411/1/3/1-2; Burial PAR 411/1/1/4 and 411/1/5/1-2.
St John-sub-Castro: Baptism 1756-1909, PAR 412/1/1/5 and 7 and PAR 412/1/2/1-7; Marriage 1802-66, 1802-12 transcription and PAR 412/1/3/1-3; Burial 1803-1878, 1803-12 transcription and PAR 412/1/5/1-4.
Southover: Baptism 1800-1911, PAR 413/1/1/2 and 413/1/2/1-3; Marriage 1754-1896, PAR 413/1/1/3 and 413/1/3/1-2; Burial 1672-1892, PAR 413/1/1/2 and 413/1/5/1-2.
St Michael's: Baptism 1800-1921, PAR 414/1/1/5 and 414/1/2/1-3; Marriage 1751-1911, PAR 414/1/1/4 and 414/1/3/1-2; Burial 1799-1904 PAR 414/1/1/5 and 414/1/5/1-2.
Cliffe: Baptism 1800-1902, PAR 415/1/1/9-10 and 415/1/2/1-3; Marriage 1786-1902, PAR 415/1/1/7-8 and 415/1/3/1-2; Burial 1745-1932, PAR 415/1/1/5 and 415/1/5/1-2.

South Malling: Baptism 1800-1918, PAR 419/1/1/1 and 419/1/2/1-2; Marriage 1800-1916, PAR 419/1/1/3 and 419/1/3/1-2; Burial 1629-1977, PAR 419/1/1/1 and 419/1/5/1-2.

Poll Books

Poll Books for the Lewes Constituency recording the 16 contested Parliamentary Elections between 1790 and 1869 are held at E.S.R.O.


Register of Electors

Registers of Electors for the East Sussex Division, including Lewes, were used from 1868 when the poll books ceased to be published. From 1889 Registers of Electors for the Lewes Division were used. All these registers are held at E.S.R.O.


Trade and Street Directories

Trade and street directories were located in a number of repositories. In the list below the repository has been noted first, followed by the directories deposited there.

Bodlian Library: Pike 1907, 1908.
B.R.L.: Pigot 1832/4; Kelly 1845, 1870, 1890, 1903, 1905, 1909, 1911; Pike 1900/1, 1902, 1903, 1910.
E.S.R.O.: Bailey's British 1784; Wollgar 1790; The Universal British 1794; J.V. Button Sussex 1805; Woolgar's Spicilegia vol.1, p.525 1812; Pigot 1823/4 and 1828/9; Kelly 1855, 1866, 1867, 1887, 1895; Holman 1882.
Hastings Library: Kelly 1851.
S.A.S.: Robson 1838; Kelly 1862, 1878, 1882, 1907; Davis 1896, 1898; Pike 1904, 1905, 1909, 1912/3, 1913/4.
Worthing Library: Pike 1911.

Miscellaneous

Lewes Maps: E.S.R.O.; Edwards 1799, Shiffner Ms.2869; Marchant 1824, PM 29; Figg 1824, Abergavenny Ms.23;
Ordnance Survey 25 inch 1873, 1899 and 1911 Editions.  
Lewes Cemetery Registers: St Michael's Burial Board 1854-1928, E.S.R.O. DL/B1/1/1-3; St Thomas (Cliffe) and All Saints Burial Board 1873-1916, E.S.R.O. DL/B1/2/1-2.  
Local Organisations: Lewes, (1979), Lewes: Lewes District Council.  
Non-parochial Records: Miscellaneous documents, E.S.R.O. NI/5/6-8.  

Bonfire Society Documents

Some material relating to the bonfire societies is located in the E.S.R.O., S.A.S. and L.A.L., but the vast majority of programmes, photographs and minute books are held either by the societies or private individuals.

SECONDARY SOURCES


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