

THE FISHERMEN OF BALLAUGH

(1881) *



The 1881 census was held in the month of April and in the case of the Island, this was the time when the fishing fleets of Peel and Port St Mary were assembled prior to their departure to the Irish mackerel fishery, principally at Kinsale, but also prosecuted at other ports along the south-west coast of Ireland. From Ballaugh there were 28 fishermen enumerated onboard of 23 fishing boats. Just two boats had more than one fisherman from the parish onboard, the *Eleanor* and the *Emily*. Edward and James Clucas were to sail on the former along with Edward Cowell, whereas the latter had Edward and Robert Boyde together with Caesar Quilliam present. At first glance, it looks as though brothers are crewing together, but both Clucas are 20 years old and as regards the the pair of Boydes, they are aged 21. Edward Boyde's occupation is given as a tailor, all the others are returned as fishermen and so that is their sole occupation. The ages range from Edward Ranter (17) to Edward Corlett (53). Looking at age by decade, 3 were under 20, 17 aged between 20 and 29, 6 between 30 and 39, 1 between 40 and 49, and 1 between 50 and 59. Just 11 were married, made up of the 9 fishermen aged 29 and over, and only 2 of the 19 men under 29 years of age. As a postscript, the 1901 census records only one fisherman for Ballaugh, Robert Craine (43), enumerated onboard of PL17 *Damsel*. (Note he is not one of the fishermen enumerated in 1881.) There can hardly be a more stark illustration of the decline of fishing as an occupation in the parish as this. It would be interesting to take these names from 1881 and trace them forward in the later censuses to see what they working as and where they were living.

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Charles Boyde (2), *Ena*; Edward Boyde (21), *Emily*; Robert Boyde (21), *Emily*; Thomas Boyde (22), *Golden Eagle*; William Boyde (27), *Wizard*; James Brew (22), *Hart*; Thomas Brew (33), *Golden Plover*; William Cain (18), *Bessie*; William Caine (28), *Mary Kate*; Thomas Callister (28), *Dorah*; William Christrey (25), *Matchless*; Edward Clucas (20), *Eleanor*; James Clucas (20), *Eleanor*; Hugh Coffee (35), *Wave*; Edward Corkill (27), *Exquisite*; Edward Corlett (53), *Edith*; Edward Cowell (30), *Eleanor*; William Cowell (29), *Contest*; Robert Craine (26), *Hart*; John Fargher (33), *Water Lily*; James Kelly (25), *Rambler*; John Maddrell (22), *Bee*; John Morrison (32), *Arrow*; William Morrison (32), *Golden Stream*; Philip Quayle (28), *Hannah*; Thomas Quayle (18), *Mary Frances*; Caesar Quilliam (44), *Emily*; Edward Ranter (17), *Otter*.

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Boats bearing the names of women are ones named after the wife of the captain or owner. Taken from the *Census Enumerators' Book* for Vessels 1881, RG 11/5609, fol. 69.

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